

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA)

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): Biodiversity Conservation Initiatives through Grassroots Participation

Implementation Partners for this Project:

- Existing Local Community Forest Users Groups (CFUG) - Pyangpatal, Tappu Jaruwa, Bhalukateri, Bhedichowk, Tappu pate Jimi, Jarbute bhalupani, Singadevi Thumke, Chittrehile, Uttare, Charkane, Malinge Gaheri Masane,
- Newly formed Community Forest Users' Group; Sansaaridhap Mahila. Jaule danda Mahila, Pannitar Mahila, Thamkharka Birkhe Bhanjiyang, and Deurali Mahuwatar
- Local Clubs: Nature and Green clubs formed in the School.
- Local line agencies: Village Development committee, VDCS, District Forest Office, District Development Committee, other local Community Based Organization (CBOs), Local Institutions

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2009

Date of Report (month/year): 30th May, 2009

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

The support from CEPF for two years has been crucial for the initiation in Biodiversity conservation in Kanchenjunga – Singalila complex. It helped towards the protection, conservation and management of biodiversity by strengthening and developing capacity of the local organizations, identifying the hotspots of key indicator species in the community forest, forming a new community forest users group (CFUG), preparing and revising the operation plan (which are guidelines for the community forest users group) so as to include Biodiversity Conservation elements in the operation plan, forming CFUG advocacy forum network, forming ad hoc district level advisory committee for advocacy and advising in the field of Biodiversity conservation (BC), developing local resource person capable in biodiversity resource inventory, and developing social mobilizer capable in social mobilization in BC. During the inventory of key species (red panda, tree fern, Galaiche jhiau, Champ), it was found that they needed more protection and conservation in the locality. The prepared Operation plans are being practiced; however some post support is required for the Community Forest Users Group.

The project has therefore contributed to enhancing the capacity of stakeholders in getting involved in biodiversity conservation, integrating conservation in forest management and monitoring key species. It is too early at this stage to conclude whether the project has contributed to the increase in the presence of key species in the project area but it is expected that this will become clearer in the next few years after the project.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose: Biodiversity Conservation Initiatives (BCI) incorporated in the management of corridor forests thus conserving key floral and faunal species in the Kanchenjunga-Singalila Complex

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	

1. Management plan prepared/reviewed incorporating Biodiversity Conservation perspective/measures	-5 newly formed Community Forest Users Group Operation plans were prepared and 11 operation plans were reviewed. -In the new plans a separate chapter on biodiversity conservation in forest management was incorporated. -In previous plans there used to be just mentioned of biodiversity conservation.
2. Site condition improved thus key species increased (Red Panda, Birds)	-It is too early to report on the site condition at this stage of the project. However with the initial implementation of the operation plan it is expected that the habitat of key species like Red panda (<i>Alirus flugens</i>), wood snipe (<i>Galinago nemoricola</i>) would be improved -2 Community Forest User Groups have set aside zones in their community forest for complete conservation of Red panda
3. Corridor forest's users network/forum established	-Advocacy Forum of 3-5 members established in each of the 16 Community Forest User Groups (project beneficiaries) -2 Community Forest User Group Advocacy Forum Network established including members of the Community Forest User Group Advocacy Forum.-

Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.

16 community forest users group, the main key partners in the working area, have incorporated Biodiversity conservation prescription in the operation plans as a separate chapter. Some of the prescribed activities on Biodiversity conservation have been implemented by 8 community forest user groups and 2 Community Forest Users Groups have even put aside some area under strict protection for the key species protection and management.

Similarly, the CFUG Advocacy Forum Network was established in the area. They have developed their own operating guideline on management of Biodiversity in the area and are doing advocacy for the Biodiversity conservation. They have started by advocating members of Village Development Committee (VDC).

The project has achieved all its objectives and the works related with the protection of red panda and key floral species in the community forest has been started by the community forest users groups. These entire positive signs are due to significant increase in awareness level on biodiversity conservation among the users groups, local communities, Community Based Organizations, Non Governmental Organizations. This was possible due to effective implementation of different activities during the project period.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The sensitization and awareness building activities of the project resulted in the establishment of 5 Nature clubs in the project area by the communities' initiatives.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs:

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at completion
Output no. 1: Increased capacity of key stakeholders for inclusion of Biodiversity conservation priorities in the management plan.	
1.1 Community Forest (CF) Guideline and Community Forest Users group (CFUGs) operational plan (OP) prepared and reviewed with Biodiversity conservation Initiatives (BCI); (4 CFUG OP prepared and 11 revised with BCI inclusion.)	- 5 new Community Forest Users Group (CFUG) formed along with operation plans that included a chapter on biodiversity conservation. - 11 Community Forest Users Group operation plans revised with addition of separate chapter on biodiversity conservation - Community Forest (CF) Guideline incorporating biodiversity conservation advocated to the Regional Forest Directorate, Eastern

	Region
1.2; Number of key stakeholders and government staffs trained/ oriented (3 orientation organized benefiting 60 person; 15 CFUG provided support for OP implementation and 4 meeting/workshop organized benefiting 60 people.)	-5 orientation and initiation workshops were conducted for Community Forest Users Groups, government staff, and local NGOs on Biodiversity Conservation in all five Village Development Committee benefiting more than 60 people. -16 Community Forest User Groups were provided with both institutional and technical support to incorporate biodiversity conservation elements in their operation plans and to implement them.
Output no: 2; Established Network and forum of users and its key stakeholders for resource mobilization and partnership building.	
2.1 CFUGs group or cluster-wise network and forum established and workshops/meetings conducted (2 CFUGs or cluster-wise network established, 11 Advisory service/meeting conducted and 110 members benefitted, 2 CFUG-wise or Cluster-wise advocacy forum established)	-2 CFUGs Advocacy Forum Networks were established in 2 project sites with 13 members in one and 10 members in the other -The main role of the Forum network were to advocate for inclusion of biodiversity conservation in Operation plans and for setting aside part of Village Development Committee (VDC) 's fund for conserving biodiversity. - A guideline for operation of Advocacy Forum Network was developed for the sustainability of the Network and Biodiversity Conservation in the area. -16 CFUG Advocacy Forum was established. The key role was to advocate with other Community Forest Users Groups for Inclusion of Biodiversity conservation elements into their operation plans and motivate them to conserve key priority species of the area.
2.2 Government staff and NGO/CBO undertaken orientation (1 training organised benefiting 20 personnel and 2 events of orientation organised benefiting 60 person)	-10 District Forest Office (personnel and 5 CFUG members were trained on Biodiversity Resource Inventory
Output No: 3; Developed local resource professionals (LRP) for sustainable biodiversity – friendly management/ harvesting and monitoring of species composition in identified sites and corridor	
3.1 ; Local resource person developed (2 field based training designed/organised and 20 local resource person developed, 15 CFUGs ranked, 15 Motivator cum facilitator trained, 7 Local resource person selected and temporarily hired)	- Ranking of local institution (CFUGs) was completed based on set criteria and among 11 existing CFUGs, 3 CFUGs were ranked good, 7 were ranked moderate and 1 was classified as needing improvement. 5 Local Resource Persons (LRP) were selected by communities through a set of selection criteria designed by the project. - 1 field based training was conducted on sustainable management/ harvesting and monitoring of species composition to 11 LRP (Local resource person) including 2 social mobilisor from 6 different community Forest Users Group - Coordination meeting was conducted with Red Panda Network (RPN) project personnel and a transect was developed in the Pyangpatal Community Forest (Ilam) with the help of RPN personnel and LRP of Pyang VDC. The objective of fixing transect in the Pyangpatal Community Forest was to monitor the occurrence/presence of Red Panda, total of 16 points were fixed in the field - 7 points were at 2300 meter Above Sea Level (ASL) and 9 points were at 2400 meter ASL. All points were fixed at 100 meter distance horizontally.
3.2 ; Field based training organised and recipient person benefited (1 event organized and 20 person oriented)	-5 Social Mobilizers and 5 Local Resource persons selected and were trained on Biodiversity conservation and social mobilization -Refresher training was provided to Social Mobilizer and Local Resource Person on social mobilization for sustainable management and monitoring of Biodiversity and effective implementation of the Operation plan. -Major achievements of LRP and Social Mobilisors were <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivating fellow users towards biodiversity conservation • Significant support both technical and social on conducting resource inventory of the forest • Supports users in effective implementation of the operation plans

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a resource person in the area with regards to conserving biodiversity •
Output No: 4; Conducted Social Mobilization initiative for corridor forest management by involving local people and concerned key stakeholders of Trans-boundary area.	
4.1 ; Local Resource Persons trained and local social mobilisor developed and meetings/workshops conducted (2 LRP selected and temporarily employed, 4 meeting and Workshop conducted and 80 local institutional members benefited)	<p>- 5 Social Mobilisor were hired on 1st August, 2007, one for each Village Development Committee.</p> <p>- 2 Local Resource Person for each Village Development Committee were selected through respective Community Forest Users Group and were engaged in Biodiversity Conservation aspects of Community Forest activities. The selection process of the Social Mobilisor and Local Resource person were based on the recommendations made by the respective Community Forest Users Group/Committee on a given sets of criteria.</p>
4.2 ; Social mobilisation carried out through Local Resource Persons (LRP)/social mobilisor cum facilitator benefiting 200 people (2 types of extension materials produced and distributed, 2 Essay/poster competition organised and 40 students benefited and social mobilization carried for 200 person)	<p>-2 types of extension materials (poster and Booklet) on Biodiversity conservation was published and distributed among Community Forest Users Group, school teachers and students, local organizations, local communities, CBOs, District line agencies, other organization at district and central level.</p> <p>-An essay competition on Sustainable management of Community Forest and Biodiversity Conservation for secondary level school students was organize involving 6 local schools</p> <p>-3 local level trans-boundary coordination meeting cum workshop were conducted in trans boundary area which included 58 participants for India and Nepal</p> <p>Objectives of the workshop were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop conservation strategy for Biodiversity conservation. • Find ways to minimize illegal trafficking of endangered species (both flora and fauna) • Develop coordination with local institutions in the area. • Find out threat, challenges and opportunity in Biodiversity conservation.

Additional Activities:

Formation of 6 nature clubs established in the school of the project area have help a lot in creating awareness among users on conserving biodiversity through school students is significant. In addition, some insignificant support to school premises also favored the project in implementing its activities through users.

Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.

The project has achieved most of the planned outputs except creation of the long term funding mechanism. This is still not secured and the programme depends on long term support (both pre- and post- support for financial and technical) in Biodiversity Conservation. Above all, the project has achieved a remarkable step forward on raising awareness level of the community members, key stakeholders and other concerned local to district based NGOs/CBOs in the field of conserving biodiversity. It has left remarkable landmarks some of which are strongly implemented in the field even at this short period of time.

The key achievements of the project are as follows;

- 16 operation plans prepared with inclusion of biodiversity conservation as a separate chapter. All together 1801 ha of the forest area will be under the new operation plans which would benefits 1575 households of the project area
- The awareness towards conserving biodiversity has enforced users and its members in advocating VDC and its committee personnel to put aside parts of their fund for this noble cause.
- Creation of LRP and social mobilizers as an additional asset to users of the area as they are able to provide some support in both conducting biodiversity resource inventory and implementation of operation plans' prescriptions.
- CFUG's Advocacy Forum Network was established which are active in advocating importance of biodiversity conservation among locals as well as district based concerning institutions.

- Frequency of users' committee meeting has been increased in each community forest user groups, which is due to effective and efficient social mobilization during the project.
- Community Forest User Group Member, local resource person and social mobilizer are now capable in identifying the hot spots and habitat of key indicator species.
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Were any outputs unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the Project?

None

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

None applicable

VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

Describe any lessons learned during the various phases of the project. Consider lessons both for future projects, as well as for CEPF's future performance.

- to visualizing the impact of various Biodiversity conservation there is need for longer period of investment. Besides, the ultra poor subgroup of the users is seeking quick return (so as to enhance their livelihood) from Biodiversity Conservation.
- Most of the working Community Forests dominated with exotic conifer species, *Cryptomeria japonica* which needs to be replaced by more useful native broadleaf forest species in the area. Most of the CFUGs have agreed in converting the coniferous species dominated forest into an indigenous dominated broadleaf forest gradually through prescribing such actions into the operation plan.
- Control of habitat destruction and illegal trafficking of wildlife in the trans-boundary area have been initiated which has already shown some positive sign through creating awareness on BC. This could be attributed to conservation posters, booklets, excursion visit, training and workshop conducted on Biodiversity conservation along with involving nature clubs for the same purpose besides, forming advocacy forum / network for BC in the area.
- It was felt that the Biodiversity conservation as well as community development and income generation activities must be implemented in an integrated form together to raise the livelihood of the local people in the area. As this action could deliver very remarkable outcomes with regards to conserving the biodiversity of the area.
- Incorporation of Biodiversity conservation elements as a separate chapter in the operation plan of CFUG and making them capable in implementing conservation oriented activities were understood as a mandatory by most of the CFUG although it has not yet been incorporated into the National CF guideline.
- Awareness level among CFUG towards conserving flag species like Red panda by segregating a part of CF area as a protected habitat for the species is a good signal of internalizing how important the biodiversity conservation is.
- To give continuation to the biodiversity corridor, agro biodiversity conservation oriented activities need to be carried out in the farmland lying between community forests (which would then give continuity to the corridor)

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its Success/failure)

The programme was designed in 2007 based on recommendations from various Natural Resource Management and Conservation experts and was operated successfully for the whole period of the project.

Concerning local community consultation and discussion in the presence of district line agency personnel has supported a lot in helping to develop the activities implemented in the course of designing the project.

Here a series of meeting and interactions with DFO and its office based personnel, along with a separate meeting with concerned field based district line agency was also carried out. In addition, couple of meeting and discussion sessions with the Community Forestry Division of the Department of Forest/the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MFSC) was held. Inclusion of biodiversity conservation as a separate chapter is a new initiative and to design this part the Department of Plant Resources/MFSC was also consulted.

All these above mentioned actions along with some personnel communications of plant and animal sciences expert has also helped in developing the project.

Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)

Two years project has been successfully completed by incorporating biodiversity conservation elements in the operation plan of the users. In addition, social mobilization and other awareness raising activities along with nature clubs in the school of the working area have provided significant help in achieving the goals of the project. This theme and approach for the CF has been launched for the first time in the country, although conservation of biodiversity was little mentioned in the operation plans of CFUGs. To make them aware on Biodiversity, ECCA hired field personnel (social mobilizer) and engaged local resource person making them capable in various aspects of the biodiversity conservation. CFUG's advocacy forum and forum networks helped in advocacy and in motivating CFUGs members and others in each VDC. The effective social mobilization, training, workshop and excursion visits on Biodiversity conservation played a crucial role in incorporating BC elements in the operation plan of the user. This was the pre support to the users group for incorporating BC elements in the operation plan. Though technical backstopping and other necessary field follow up supports were provided through the project (during the project period), still more requests have been obtained. Further support would be necessary to institutionalize the learning and to further strengthen the CFUG as well as to expand the concept in the adjoining areas. This kind of activities in the field of Biodiversity conservation through CFUG's active participation has been a pioneer work which needs to be continued not only in the working area and Ilam district but in the nation as a whole.

VII. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor Type of Funding* Amount Notes

None

***Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

A Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)

B Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF funded project)

C Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF funded project.)

D Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)

Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability.

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) was the only one donor providing full funding to achieve the target, goal, objectives of the projects in the intended time frame. None other fund was secured and used. However, it was hoped that CEPF will be providing its funding support to continue the program so as to provide technical backstopping and field follow up, before the achieved actions are diluted in the course of time. ECCA from its side has been trying to make follow up through bringing some fund for which it has been developing and applying to different international donors. However, the proposal is not directly related to BCIGP but linking livelihood improvement of locals and ultra poor through biodiversity conservation oriented activities. ECCA has no special support programme in foreseeable future. But it has initiated its presence in Ilam district through becoming a co-partner with NCDC in monitoring Maikhola's river water monitoring under Norwegian support.

VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- One of the main gaps is the lack of post formation or post operation plan implementation support as this part is rather very crucial to give continuity to the prescriptions mentioned with regards to biodiversity conservation
CEPF from its side should initiate to provide the support so that users' will have a kind of track to follow even after ceasing such support.
- Biodiversity conservation along with livelihood means focusing to ultra poor would give more meaningful way of involving large part of community in this noble cause of conserving biodiversity. As it is known fact that ultra poor are the least involved subgroup of the community in any field of community forestry.
New initiative for giving continuity to conserving biodiversity should include livelihood part as one of the main activities.
- Although out of 16 operation plans (11 revised and 5 newly formed CFUG) only 8 have been officially approved, rest are yet to be approved. This has caused delayed in formal implementation of the operation plans.
CFUG Advocacy Forum Network (CAFN) should be motivated to raise voice on approval of the operation plans. CAFN should be made proactive in this regards to motivate and advocate DFO and its line agency to get approval

Biodiversity Conservation concerned project must be of long term period because this type of work with the CFUGs are new for them and needs more backstopping to implement the programme prescribed in the operation plan. Besides, advocacy work in including the Biodiversity conservation elements into the National Community Forestry Guideline should be continued to make it as a mandatory.

IX. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF aims to increase sharing of experiences, lessons learned and results among our grant Recipients and the wider conservation and donor communities. One way we do this is by making the text of final project completion reports available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these reports in our newsletter and other communications. Please indicate whether you would agree to publicly sharing your final project report with others in this way.

Yes

If yes, please also complete the following:

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