

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development
Project Title:	Strengthening Communities' Resilience to the Potential Risks from Proposed Dams on the Mekong Mainstream
Date of Report:	30 November 2012
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CEPF Region: Indo - Burma Hotspot

Strategic Direction: 3. Engage key actors in reconciling biodiversity conservation and development objectives, with a particular emphasis on the Northern Limestone Highlands and Mekong River and its major tributaries

Grant Amount: US\$50,000.00

Project Dates: 1 May, 2011 to 31 October, 2012

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

WARECOD recognizes that partnership and multi stakeholders' participation largely contributed to the project success. We will work closely with the following key local partners:

Name of Partner	Partner with in	Level of involvement	Comments
An Giang Department on Nature Resources and Environment	Dialogue 1	Vice president of An Giang's People Committee had a short sharing on their opinion about the Mekong mainstream dams. The Department provided some key contacts and helped inviting participants from local authorities.	Dialogue 1 focuses on the authorities and local government officials so An Giang department did help us in connecting with local officials
An Giang University:	Dialogue 1 & 3	Share research finding in dialogues	We keep updated for each other on the research in the Mekong delta
Can Tho university	Dialogue 1, 2 & 3 2 field trips For film making	The experts from Can Tho university (Dr Duong Van Ni, Dr Le Anh Tuan and Mr Nguyen Huu Thien) played a critical role in this project. They understand the situation of the Mekong delta and	We were happy to work with these experts. Their experience and knowledge are valuable to our work and we are looking forward to working with them

		had connections with not only government officials but also with local communities in the whole Mekong delta. We consulted them on how to conduct the fieldtrips effectively and about film-making process.	in other Mekong projects.
Mekong Delta Network for Environment Protection and Response to Climate Change (MekongNet)-	Dialogue 1 & 3	participate in workshops and share information with participants	
Center for Biodiversity Conservation – Ho Chi Minh City	Conference on "integrated watershed forest and river basin management in Vietnam" campaign held on June 5th 2011	We organized a conference on "integrated watershed forest and river basin management in Vietnam" with the participation of nearly 100 people. There was an exhibition within the conference. Some newspapers, Lam Dong Television and Vietnamese Television (VTV) helped channel the information to the public.	
FORWET		Participate in Dialogue 1 and share research findings	
PanNature	Film-making	We consulted them during in film-making process as they had experience in communication works and had much connections with mass media	
Mass media including journalist, television and radio broadcasting	Dialogue 1,3 Film-making, Communication campaign on June 5th 2011 Fieldtrips	The journalists and reporters had news about our work on their broadcasting channels. Especially in the 2 fieldtrips, the journalists were key participants	We still keep contacting with the journalists for information exchange.
International Rivers	Factsheets	Thanks to the support from IR, we translated the factsheets into Vietnamese and distributed them to people who are interested in Mekong	Later in 2012, IR provided a small fund to compile articles from 2 field trips in a Proceeding called "The challenges of

		issues	Mekong delta” which was distributed to local communities in the south and audiences of WARECOD’s workshops.
University of Canterbury			We planned to consult with the University of Canterbury in our works. Due to some difficulties in proceeding it, we sought support from Stimson institute instead.
Stimson	Dialogue 1: resource persons	Mr Cronin and Mr Hamlin from Stimson center shared their views about the role of CSOs in the issues	Thanks to their documentary film “Mekong-the tipping point”, we got new ideas for our own film.

Conservation Impacts

Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

The Mekong river in Indo-Burma region ranks the second to Amazon in the world in terms of biodiversity. For thousands of years, this is the home of approximately 1,500 different species. The fauna and floral here, unfortunately, are facing with dangers from illegal hunting, overexploitation and even development projects, which will, in turn, have great effects on the live and livelihoods of riparian communities. The Mekong is categorized by CEPF as one of the hotspots that needs conserving.

Recently, the controversial issue of Mekong mainstream dams has been drawing attention of not only regional countries but also international public. The Strategic Environmental Assessment by ICM submitted to the Mekong River Commission (MRC) has pointed out the significant impacts that the cascade will pose on the biodiversity, fishery and food security, along with many other social and culture of affected communities. Since 2006, interest in hydropower has escalated in the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB), coupled with increasing private sector investment in power infrastructure. In order to raise the importance of protecting the Mekong delta to various stakeholders, especially from grass-root level, we conducted the project “Strengthening Communities’ Resilience to the Potential Risks from Proposed Dams on the Mekong Mainstream” funded by CEPF. Many stakeholders were beneficial from our project in terms of receiving information, connecting people together who either knew the issues very well or heard about them for the first time. They had chances to understand more about the Mekong delta and its threats. We have used as many communication approaches as possible, which was why a series of diverse activities was implemented, including workshops, communication campaign, field trips, factsheets, documentary film. During the course of implementation, we were happy to see many local communities said that they knew about the Mekong dams for the first time or now they understand much more about the challenges the Mekong delta is facing thanks joining the project. It was also our joy to bring local communities together with government officials to share

their views and stories about the difficulties caused by development projects on the river or the hardship of resources management at their local. Some local farmers were able to raise their voice and asked the government officials to channel their voices to higher level. Potentially affected people can voice up was one of the evidences for the success of our project. It helps local people to be more active in protecting the river and its biodiversity.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.

Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal):

- Public awareness raised in regards to the potential impacts of the 11 proposed dams on the lower Mekong river on locals and the environment in the Mekong Delta
- Local people, including authorities' behaviour and attitude towards environment protection and natural conservation changed
- Put pressure on decision makers for informed, participatory and meaningful decisions
- Better living conditions and environment for riparian communities along Mekong river

Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:

- Stakeholders in the Mekong delta have been more well-aware of the potential impacts of the dams on the Mekong mainstream. The stakeholders include farmers in 13 provinces in the Mekong delta, scientists, government officials, journalists. They received information on this issue from various means: two-way communication such as dialogues; one-way communication such as factsheets, proceedings and articles. The journalist and reporters shared the news on our work, which helped to disseminate the information further. We keep contact with local communities to learn that they included Mekong dam topic into their regular meetings.
- Local communities and government officials understand better about the urgency of environment protection and natural resources conservation.
- A National Assembly member promised to raise the issue of Mekong mainstream dam to the meetings of National Assembly.
- Better living conditions and environment for riparian communities along Mekong river: obviously, this goal will take much time and effort to reach because it is not possible for a single organization at a certain time to complete it. To our knowledge, helping people understand how the river was important to their lives so that they themselves will protect the free river and its resources. That is the very first step to reach this goal. Mekong is a big interest of WARECOD and we will continue working in this region in various projects. Again, we will cooperate with other domestic and international organizations whose interest and target are similar.

Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal):

- Awareness raised among targeted decision makers and opinion formers in government, party and media organizations in An Giang and other Mekong Delta provinces about potential impacts from mainstream dam development
- Stakeholders' concerns and voices brought onto the stages
- Stakeholders' voices channeled to decision makers and donors at different levels

Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:

- Farmers, media organizations and government officials knew and understood better the challenges of upstream dams toward the Mekong delta of Vietnam, specifically toward the water and food security. Our workshops' participants were 30-50 people each in various expertise, locality, careers and interest. The environmental journalist group (5 persons from famous newspapers in Mekong delta) produced about 12 articles inspired from our field trips. VTC 16 who cooperated with us in making the film is the channel on agriculture and rural of Vietnam so our voices were channel effectively.

- Opinions and concerns from farmers, scientists were brought to government agencies and public thanks to journalists and TV station.
- Stakeholders' concerns were heard by decision makers at provincial and national levels. The presence of 1 National Assembly in 3rd Dialogue was the motivation for us in our work and he promised to bring the issue to the meetings at national level.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected:

Species Conserved:

Corridors Created:

Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

Success:

- The short term objectives have been achieved and we tried to continue raising awareness for local people in the Mekong delta about the threats from 12-dam cascade which may result significant negative impacts for their lives in future.
- The voices from different levels were recognized, which were supportive to the advocacy work of the Vietnam Rivers Network.

Challenges:

- Unfortunately, the final decision about Mekong mainstream dams has not been made yet and the Xayabru dam is under construction. Still there are other dams planned for the Mekong mainstream waiting for approval so it is important to continue advocate for stopping other dams on the Mekong mainstream.
- Since there are many sources of information, we needed to carefully choose reliable information to deliver to audiences, especially the farmers. Otherwise they would be flooded with too much information and got confused.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

Our dialogues received the attention of many farmers who enthusiastically voiced their opinions about the development projects, water and food issues.

Project Components

Project Components: *Please report on results by project component. Reporting should reference specific products/deliverables from the approved project design and other relevant information.*

Component 1 Planned:

Key awareness messages about potential risks from mainstream dam construction to biodiversity, human wellbeing and economic development in the Mekong Delta communicated to key decision makers and opinion formers via mass media

Component 1 Actual at Completion:

We invited representatives from related government agencies such as Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Science and Technology from all provinces in the Mekong delta to come to our dialogues in which they could communicate straightly to farmers who were very concerned about their livelihoods. Our dialogues created a mutual space for

decision makers and citizens to talk about their concerns and action to protect the Mekong delta of Vietnam together. The contents of that communication were posted on newspaper and TV.

The Deliverables include:

- 1,000 factsheets, 1,000 leaflets and 100 posters on the findings of the SEA of mainstream dam development produced and distributed.
- Two fieldtrips for journalists, one in the dry season and one in the rainy season to record changes of rivers and challenges from mainstream dams development. Fieldtrip 1 was conducted from September 29th to October 2nd, 2011 with the active participation of 11 journalists and environment experts from the Can Tho University. The tour started in Can Tho, then to Dong Thap (where Tram Chim National Park is located), heading for An Giang (famous for aquatic resources) and returned to Can Tho. We discussed and interviewed local communities on the changes in water resources in their local as well as changes in their farming (such as building dykes to extend more crops). We also cared about how their livelihoods have been changed due to changes in flows and timing of flows of the Mekong river. Other topics included flooding season in the Mekong delta, potential impacts of Mekong mainstream dams. After the fieldtrip, 11 journals covered these issues on the newspapers. (See attached for journals in Vietnamese). Not only the writings were publicized, also a series of pictures of the trip was shared on the newspapers and internet.
- One film about the water river and its connection with the life of Mekong Delta's people in cooperation with local television, which was broadcasted on local television. During the 2nd fieldtrip, a group of reporters from VTC16 joined and recorded footages for the film. VTC16 is the first professional channel on Agriculture and Rural Development, which results from the cooperation between Ministries of Culture and Communication and Agriculture and Rural Development. The channel can be reached on both national digital channel and website (vtc16.vn). The finished product was on air on VTC16 on October 12th, 2011. Moreover, 200 copies were produced and delivered to VRN's partners and interested members and posted on WARECOD's website. This has been shown in every VRN's activity. Roughly estimation of 45,000 views of this documentary film and we have been attempting to send it to more and more people. Recently, the audiences of Dialogue 2 of this project have been very interested in watching and discussing about it and we presented them with some copies of the video, so that they can show other people in their communities.
- At least 5 updates on mainstream dam related issues and project activities were later broadcasted on radio stations. The topic was covered in local meetings by the farmers who attended in our dialogues as well.

Component 2 Planned:

Multi-stakeholders' concerns and debates about the potential impacts of the proposed dams on the environment, river ecosystems and communities' livelihood brought onto the stage as well as a collaborative effort towards tackling the problems and challenges rooted from dam construction reached throughout dialogues and linking activities.

Component 2 Actual at Completion:

Our works addresses various issues, from conservation of natural resources such as water and aquatic resources to protection of the livelihoods of people. Other information including impacts of climate change, reactions of different parties to the issue (America, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand) were also intensively and extensively shared among participants. The participants raised their opinions about the work or their concerns and questions on how to improve the situation. In short, our work revolved the conservation of the biodiversity of Mekong, which nurture the livelihoods of the most vulnerable communities. We identified the role of each stakeholder (communities, CSOs, government agencies) in the conservation of Mekong delta.

The Deliverables include:

- In collaboration with Ho Chi Minh-based CBD, we organized a conference on "integrated watershed forest and river basin management in Vietnam" with the participation of nearly 100 people. There was an exhibition within the conference. Some newspapers, Lam Dong Television and Vietnamese Television (VTV) helped channel the information to the whole public.

- Dialogue on challenges of the proposed dams on the Mekong mainstream to the biodiversity of the Mekong Delta held and attended by representatives from government agencies, research institutes, civil society organizations and media organizations.

Dialogue 1: As proposed to CEPF in advance, we conducted a trip to visit a famous project in Kien Giang Province which is using leperonia to make households products (baskets, bags, boxes, hats...). This kind of grass is food for crane (*Grus antigone sharpii*), a precious kind of birds of Vietnam and the world. We discussed with visitors about the impacts this area will endure if the dams gain approval. The dialogue is organized in the next day with the presence of many government officers from provincial level (such as Vice president of An Giang People's Committee, representatives from Department of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Science and Technology, etc); two experts from Stimson Center, and other experts on dams, ecology and fishery. Local journalists and TV station also took part in and wrote about the dialogue. Main topics were the progress of dam cascade proposal, stakeholders' opinions about the issues, impacts of the dams to the whole river basin and to Mekong delta of Vietnam in particular, and role of civil society organizations. 61 invitees came and shared ideas with the Dialogue.

Dialogue 2: was held on 25th and 26th, November, 2011 in collaboration with Can Tho University. Media, researchers and government agencies joined this event. Apart from these, farmers in 5 fields: rice, aquaculture, fruit orchard, animal husbandry, cash crop were invited and actively participated. They talked about the changes in their locals in terms of rain level, flows, erosion, salt intrusion and their impacts on food security and energy security. They also share their prediction about these issues in the next few years. In the last day, the participants promised to disseminate information in order to raise awareness of the communities. 64 persons, including farmers from provinces in Mekong delta, attended the Dialogue.

The 3rd Dialogue was organized in Jul 12, 2012 with the participation of variety of stakeholders, including university lecturers, scientists, environmentalists, journalists, government officials, mass organizations' representatives, and farmers. Some interesting ideas were raised included the discrepancies between awareness of different stakeholders, Laos's reaction to the objections of other countries, the attention of Vietnamese government to the Delta and so on. The last Dialogue was participated by 34 persons.

Were any components unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

NO

Please describe and submit (electronically if possible) any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.

- 1000 factsheets completed last year. They are continued to be distributed when we're doing our other activities in the region.
- 2 fieldtrips resulted 13 articles were posted on newspapers, WARECOD and VRN's website and CEPF's the Babblar had an article about our trips.
- Documentary film "The disappearance of flooding season" is a story of recent changes in the Mekong Della and people whose livelihoods depend on the mighty river. It also refers to the potential impacts of the Mekong to our fertile delta and what had been done about this issue. WARECOD completed in October 2011, in corporation with VTC16 (Channel for Agriculture and Rural Development), based in Ho Chi Minh City.

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

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

- The design must take into account the differences in working environment between regions and stakeholders. For example, the working style of agencies in the North might be different from that of the South. Working with farmers might require a simpler way of delivering information, compare with scientists or government officials,
- The project officers must bear in mind that reality might take longer than plan. So it is better not to set the schedule too tight to implement activities.

Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

- Good partnership helped to ensure good results. When working with stakeholders in the issue, we had chances to make new acquaintances which helped us a lot in implementing later activities,
- Flexibility while implementation could give better results, given the same budget amount and the same resources. For example, we could change the schedule according to the circumstances; and we saved much time and energy,
- Early and well preparation leads to better outcomes.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

- It is necessary to connect with other organizations working on the same issue to learn experience, avoid overlapping or seek for collaboration opportunities,
- Well-informed community could significantly contribute to the project implementation and success

Additional Funding

Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of the CEPF investment in this project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
International Rivers	B	1000 USD	Fund for the proceeding: "Challenges of the Mekong delta" (http://warecod.org.vn/vn/an-pham/Nhung-thach-thuc-cua-DBSCL/16.aspx)

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

- A** Project co-financing (Other donors or your organization contribute to the direct costs of this project)

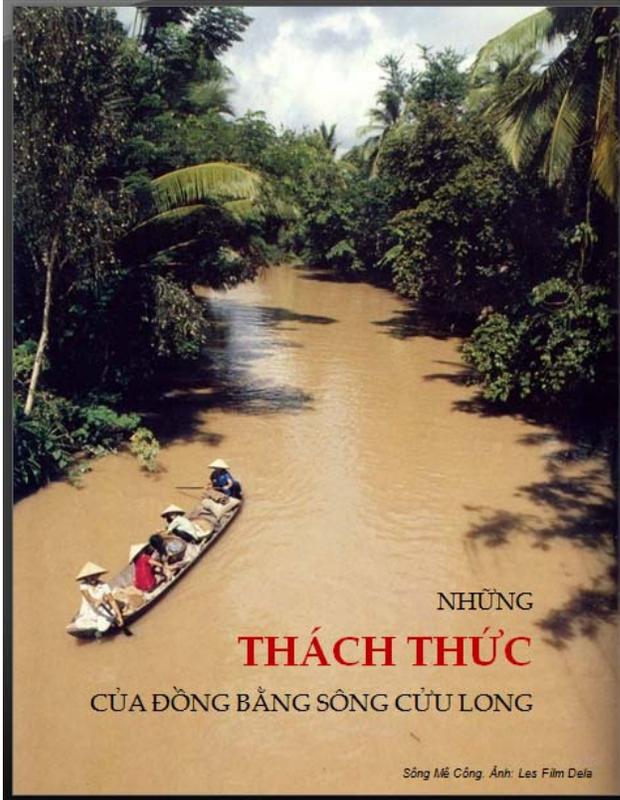
- B** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF funded project.)*
- C** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Sustainability/Replicability

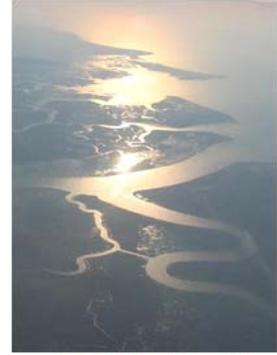
Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.

All our communication works are made with the purpose of spreading information on the biodiversity of the Mekong delta and the threats from Mekong mainstream dams. To be specific:

- At least 5 famous newspapers wrote articles and VTC16 (Channel for Agriculture and Rural) broadcasted on the results of 3 dialogues organized in the Mekong delta of Vietnam. These dialogues were attended by wide range of stakeholders (from scientists, academics, lecturers, farmers, journalists) and they promised to send the information to interested people. The farmers agreed to include this issue in their local meetings.
- 1,000 factsheets on Mekong mainstream dams and Xayaburi dam in particular were printed and sent to participants in 3 dialogues. Besides, we sent them to students in Can Tho University which is the largest University in the Mekong delta. These factsheets were distributed in diverse events by WARECOD on water management and Mekong river basin. To increase the number of readers, we posted the soft copies on WARECOD's websites and sent to our colleagues, friends and stakeholders.
- At least 13 articles written from 2 fieldtrips with journalists around Mekong delta in rainy and dry seasons were posted in 5 popular newspapers in the Mekong delta (including Saigon Times, Saigon Tiep thi, Nong nghiep, Thanh nien) which covered various readers. Not only the 5 newspapers and online-magazines but also WARECOD, VRN website and newsletter and CEPF's The Babblers published these articles. In an effort to replicate the effect of the articles, we proposed a small fund from International Rivers in July 2012 to compile these articles into a proceeding, called "The challenges of the Mekong delta". 700 copies were printed and distributed in a number of our workshops and dialogues over the countries. Here is the first and second cover of the proceeding:



Sông Mê Công về đến lãnh thổ Việt Nam được gọi là sông Cửu Long. Là hệ thống sông lớn nhất Việt Nam, Sông Cửu Long được đánh giá là khu vực có nguy cơ bị tác động nhiều nhất trước các tác động của biến đổi khí hậu. Hiện tại, lưu vực này đang đứng trước nhiều thách thức do các hoạt động khai thác và sử dụng nước không bền vững ở phía thượng nguồn, biến đổi khí hậu cũng như các hoạt động phát triển, canh tác không hợp lý tại đồng bằng. Các kế hoạch và công trình thủy điện trên sông Mê Công là thách thức lớn nhất đối với môi trường và sinh thái vùng hạ nguồn. Trên dòng chính sông Mê Công, Trung Quốc có kế hoạch phát triển 15 bậc thang thủy điện, phía dưới hạ lưu có 12 công trình đang được đề xuất. Ở đồng bằng, theo quy hoạch sẽ có 180 công trình trong đó 94 công trình đã được xây dựng...



Sông Mê Công, Ảnh: panoramio.com

Mạng lưới Sông ngòi Việt Nam



Tài trợ và thực hiện:



- A 30-minute documentary film named “The disappearance of flooding season” was made in collaboration with VTC16. This film recorded the challenge for the citizens living in the Mekong delta under the circumstances of changing flooding season. Owing to the exploitation-production method, climate change and impacts from development activities from upstream, it is becoming more difficult for the people in Mekong delta of Vietnam to earn a living. The film also mentioned the challenge from the Mekong mainstream dams which pose significant threats towards the water and food security of Vietnam. This film is broadcasted on VTC16, posted on Youtube and our website and has received positive feedbacks from audiences.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

No safeguard monitoring trip is required in this project. However, during the project, the communities were consulted and informed about our activities. We always made clear about our activities, objectives, how we wanted them to involve in the project and encouraged them to raise their ideas or feedbacks on the activities of the project. In the activities that engaged the local communities, we asked for their voluntary involvement. When providing them with information on Mekong dam cascade, we used various reliable sources of information such as from MRC’s website and International Rivers’ website.

Additional Comments/Recommendations
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Information Sharing and CEPF Policy
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CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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*****If your grant has an end date other than JUNE 30, please complete the tables on the following pages*****

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Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF Global Targets

(Enter Grant Term)

**Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant.
Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.**

Project Results	Is this question relevant ?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved during the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.	Describe the principal results achieved from 1 July, 2012 to 31 October, 2012 (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	NO			Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	NO			Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	YES			During the course of the project, we worked to raise awareness of stakeholders in the Mekong delta of Vietnam on the rich and precious natural resources of this area. Our communication campaign spread information through a wide range of means such as dialogues, factsheets, documentary films and articles.
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	NO			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	NO			

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table

If you marked "Other", please provide detail on the nature of the Community Characteristic and Socioeconomic Benefit: