CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Auckland Uniservices Ltd.
Project Title:	Developing an Internet-Based Networking Portal for Invasive Species Practitioners in the Caribbean
Date of Report:	
Report Author and Contact Information	

CEPF Region: Caribbean Islands

Strategic Direction: 3.2 Enable local and regional networking, learning and best-practice sharing approaches to strengthen stakeholder involvement in biodiversity conservation

Grant Amount: $29,774.00

Project Dates: May 1, 2013-December 31, 2013

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

CAB International

The project concept was conceived in collaboration with CAB International. CABI is the lead agency managing and maintaining the Caribbean Invasive Alien Species Network (CIASNET) website, a collaborative effort of national, regional and international agencies to develop a Caribbean region portal for all issues related to invasive species and pests and diseases that have environmental impacts on native species and natural areas and socio-economic impacts on livelihood and food security.

Auckland Uniservices building on its long experience of developing invasive species networks proposed to develop addition functionality to the CIASNET site- namely a skills register, a searchable document library and providing space to host webinars and discussion forums. A 'roles and responsibility table was developed at the beginning of the project (see below)

CABI roles and responsibility	ISSG roles and responsibility
Appointment of webmaster (role is the technical management of the website and to keep all its functions on-going)	Appointment of developer of the tools
Appointment of Network coordinator (the role of the coordinator is to promote the portal, recruit members, update resources working with CABI and ISSG, facilitate links between practitioners and experts, moderate the list service and the forum and blog pages and organize webinars.	Design and development of Skills Register/ references database and other functionality- multi-language function, forum space, blog space etc.
Working with ISSG and IT developer to integrate tool within the CIASNET site	Desktop review and gathering of information and data to build inventories of threatened species, key biodiversity areas and invasive species and their impacts, as well as projects related to IAS

	management in the CEPF eligible countries to make available on CIASNET. Will serve as baseline.
Promoting the network through national workshops (either face to face or virtual)	Integration into CIASNET site and training of Webmaster
Management of portal, develop partnerships and buy-in from countries so that the Network coordinator position is secured	Participation in steering committee
Recruit members and coordinate the steering committee who will all work for the optimized working of the portal and its long-term sustainability	

Conservation Impacts

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

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

1. Conservation of species and genetic diversity in the 45 priority key biodiversity areas in the Caribbean Islands through enhanced collaboration via regional networking, and management of invasive alien species.

2. A vibrant community of civil society members, invasive species management practitioners, conservation managers and members of allied sectors in the priority key biodiversity areas in the Caribbean region networking, exchanging experiences, best practices and lessons learned on invasive species management

Actual Progress toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:

The International Union for Conservation of Nature, (IUCN) describes invasive species as "animals, plants or other organisms introduced by man into places out of their natural range of distribution, where they become established and disperse, generating a negative impact on the local ecosystem and species."

Invasive species negatively impact endemic and native species and natural areas. The impacts of invasive species are recognized as the second major cause (after habitat loss) of decline in biodiversity. The strategic goal of the CEPF project is the conservation of species and the ecological integrity of the 45 priority key biodiversity areas (KBAs). KBAs are sites of global significance for the conservation of biodiversity. The issue of biological invasions is classified as a cross-cutting theme by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The successful management of the threat of invasive species requires collaboration and engagement across several sectors such as quarantine, customs, biosecurity at the airport and ports (for prevention of the introduction of species at the border); civil society and

communities, trade sectors such as the nursery trade, pet and aquarium trade, tourism etc. (to prevent spread); and protected area managers, conservationists, Department of Environment officials, agricultural extension officers and others (control and management of existing invasive species). While the CIASNET site is providing valuable information on the presence and threat of invasive alien species, and pests and diseases of agriculture, it was not optimally engaging all stakeholders whose focus is conservation of endemic and native species and natural areas and the threat of invasive species on them.

It is envisaged that enhanced functions on the CIASNET site (-including installation of a skills-register, a searchable document library including data and information on native and invasive species at island and site level, a space for discussions and sharing of experiences and holding focused discussions via webinars and multi-language capability) will provide a focal point of activity and engagement for stakeholders of the various relevant sectors.

The functions have recently been installed and site is to go live shortly. Thus far, the concept of the project and the developments has been promoted via existing networks in the Caribbean and there has been very positive feedback on the project activities.

The implementing partner of the project has secured a coordinator whose role includes the promotion of the site and its enhanced functions and recruitment of experts and practitioners to participate in the community

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

1. Trilingual online network for invasive species management established/ enhanced and promoted to key stakeholders in 11 eligible CEPF countries in the Caribbean region

2. At least 100 IAS experts registered in the skills database in the first 6 months. Please note that these are members who have no objections to be called upon for any assistance to stakeholders

3. At least 200 relevant documents related to IAS in the Caribbean Islands is uploaded to the references database in the first 6 month period

4. At least 2 forum discussions are initiated every week in the first 6 months.

5. To increase the number visitors to the site (a reflection of the use of the portal) from the current average of ~1500 hits per day to at least 2250 hits per day by the end of 6 months.

Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:

The enhancements to the site have just been implemented and the site is to go live shortly.

The multi-language functionality has been installed. The skills register includes a registration form for experts to enter their details that includes several options of expertise such as biomes, taxa and geography and relevant themes such as legislation, biosecurity, eradication, research etc.

230 journal articles, documents including links to electronic versions, published reports as well as datasets of interest have been compiled for inclusion to the document library. All the source

documents will be maintained on the CIASNET server and experts and stakeholders who register to the CIASNET network will have access to the source information in PDF or other formats. Members will also be encouraged to upload and submit documents to the moderator for inclusion.

A webpage dedicated to a discussion forum and webinar advertisement have been created. Implementing partners CABI will shortly be advertising proposed discussions once the site goes live.

Data and information compiled on the impact of invasive species on native and endemic species and natural areas has been recorded in Excel files allowing users to perform simple analysis and also make it easy to update and revise. The data and information includes annotated country-wise inventories of native and endemic species and introduced and invasive species at island and site level. Annotations include higher taxonomy, organism type, biome type, common names, conservation status, invasive species impact mechanism and outcome of this impact.

Summaries will be developed as the next step- describing the invasive species threat, management action, completed, ongoing and planned and conservation outcomes as a result of this management action. Network members and protected area managers will be encouraged to develop these datasets with all data and information generated as part of their projects and activities.

The Invasive Species Specialist Group has developed a database dedicated to Island Biodiversity and the threat of Invasive species known as IBIS. The prototype was developed with co-funding from the CEPF Polynesia-Micronesia programme. Web services are being developed on the database (including spatial functionality) by the Joint Research Centre (European Commission) as an activity of the Biodiversity and Protected Area Management (BIOPAMA) project. BIOPAMA proposes to develop Regional Observatories for Biodiversity data including invasive species information in the Pacific, Caribbean and Africa region. The data and information compiled and structured as part of this project will be presented to Caribbean stakeholders

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: NA
Species Conserved: NA
Corridors Created: NA

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

Several challenges were encountered during implementation of the project. The information component was successfully completed and within the timeline. However, the site enhancements proved a challenge. Compatibility of new software to the existing site was more difficult than though during project design. The iterative process proved to be time-consuming. A decision was taken to develop a second site for final implementation. This has been completed and is undergoing final testing to go live.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

No unexpected impacts were encountered. One positive impact was the development of a positive and growing working relationship between CABI and ISSG that has extended beyond this project.

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: Development of specific tools and enhancement of CIASNET site

Component 1 Actual at Completion: All planned tools- skills register and document library have been developed and new webpages designed. Final testing is being completed before the site goes live. Over 200 reference documents of relevance to the Caribbean region and the subject of invasive species and their impacts on native species and areas of high biodiversity value have been collated and stored in the document library.

Component 2 Planned: Developing the information component of CIASNET

Component 2 Actual at Completion: The information component was completed successfully. Comprehensive literature review and contacts with experts resulted in current and authoritative data and information being collated. All the information has been recorded in Excel files. These files will be stored in the document library as well as present online in the IBIS database

Component 3 Planned: On-going sustainability of the network portal

Component 3 Actual at Completion: This component is yet to be evaluated as the site is yet to go live. However, informal discussions held with stakeholders in the Caribbean indicates that there is interest and anticipation in the use of site and expansion of networks

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

All the components have been realized. The site is to go live shortly. The problems encountered in the incompatibility of new enhancements within the existing site and the delay in implementing and trialing different solutions has caused delay in the realization of the final product

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

The enhancement can be viewed on the CIASNET site shortly, as soon as the enhancements go 'live'. This launch date will be communicated

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)

Some of the IT aspects did not perform as had been envisaged during the project design stage, particularly integration of the new tools into the old existing structure. The lesson learned was that

an iterative processes such as this needs to be given a longer length of time- than that committed by the project team.

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

The project was a positive collaborative exercise between the two project partners who are globally recognized as leaders in the provision of invasive species information. Access to information and networking within the region has been very successful.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Nil

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.
NA

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes

*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.

It has been difficult to evaluate the sustainability or replicability of the project components as the enhancements are yet to be used by stakeholders. An evaluation will be made by the end of the complementary project completion period of the implementing partner CABI

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.

NA

Additional Comments/Recommendations

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

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

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 July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. (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.	NA			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?	NA			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.	NA			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	NA			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1below.	NA			

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

Table 1. Socioeconomic Benefits to Target Communities

Please complete this table if your project provided concrete socioeconomic benefits to local communities. List the name of each community in column one. In the subsequent columns under Community Characteristics and Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit, place an X in all relevant boxes. In the bottom row, provide the totals of the Xs for each column.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics								Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit												
									Increased Income due to:											
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists/nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Communities falling below the poverty rate	Other	Adoption of sustainable natural resources management practices	Ecotourism revenues	Park management activities	Payment for environmental services	Increased food security due to the adoption of sustainable fishing, hunting, or agricultural practices	More secure access to water resources	Improved tenure in land or other natural resource due to titling, reduction of colonization, etc.	Reduced risk of natural disasters (fires, landslides, flooding, etc)	More secure sources of energy	Increased access to public services, such as education, health, or credit	Improved use of traditional knowledge for environmental management	More participatory decision-making due to strengthened civil society and governance.	Other
Total																					

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