EMI Small Grants – Final Project Completion and Impact Report

Instructions to grantees:
CEPF requires each grantee to report on your project results and impacts at the end of your grant.
To monitor CEPF's global indicators, CEPF will combine the data that you submit with data from other grantees, to determine the overall impact of CEPF investment. These impacts will be reported on in CEPF's annual impact report and other communications materials.

Your Final Completion and Impact Report will be posted on the CEPF website.

Please ensure that the information you provide relates to your entire project, from start date to end date.

Organization Legal Name:	*Oceania Ecology Group Pty Ltd*
Project Title:	Species Champions and Caretakers for the Giant Rats of Bougainville, Guadalcanal and Vangunu Islands
Grant Number:	GA19-01
Project Dates:	1 Sep 2019–31 Dec 2021
Date of Report:	31 December 2021
CEPF Hotspot:	East Melanesian Islands
Strategic Direction:	3
Grant Amount:	$19,990.39

PART I: Overview

1. **Implementation Partners for this Project *(list each partner and explain how they were involved in the project)***

The Kainake Project - Partners on southern Bougainville, assist with data collection, community liaison, provide personnel to track rodents and identify key conservation areas

Zaira Community Conservation Area, Vangunu Island – Nixon Jino (Zaira Ranger) coordinated activities on Vangunu between visits by Kevin Sese. Zaira community assisted with data collection, community liaison, and provide personnel for camera trap deployment in areas of primary forest. A village forum was held at Zaira to help determine appropriate conservation actions for *Uromys vika*.

Kevin Sese - University of the South Pacific masters graduate, biologist from Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. Kevin undertook work on *Uromys rex* and *Uromys vika* and liaised with Guadalcanal communities to improve conservation status.

John Lamaris - Masters graduate from the University of Queensland, Papua New Guinean biologist from New Ireland. John undertook work on *Solomys salebrosus* at Kainake and liaised with the community to build information on the conservation status of this species.

Kopiu Village, northern Guadalcanal, assisted with data collection, community liaison, provided personnel for field work.

2. Summarize the overall results/impact of your project

This has been an ambitious small grant that proposed to work across three remote areas of the Solomon Islands archipelago to improve the conservation status of three very poorly known threatened endemic rodents (*Solomys salebrosus*, *Uromys rex* and *Uromys vika*).
The strategy to improve conservation status hinged on:

1. Generating more information about these 3 species so that their conservation needs can be met; and
2. Raising awareness with communities where these species can be protected, to highlight their importance in a global conservation context, and encourage communities to act as champions for their protection.

For 2 of 3 species nominated in this project, we had excellent results and generated significant impacts towards these goals. We generated significant information about the diet and habitat preferences of *Uromys vika* and *Solomys salebrosus*. This has helped to clarify conservation planning for their protection. Close collaboration with project partners at Kainake and Zaira has further highlighted the importance of their conservation work and reaffirmed their roles as conservation champions for two highly threatened endemic mammals.

3. Briefly describe actual progress towards each planned long-term and short-term impact (as stated in the approved proposal)

List each long-term impact from your proposal

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

Impact Description	Impact Summary
Improve the conservation status of 2 of the 7 species of EMI priority rodents, and a third, recently described Critically Endangered rodent.	High impact. We have confirmed two conservation areas as critical sites for *Solomys salebrosus* and *Uromys vika*. This should provide justification for legislative protection of both the Zaira and Kainake conservation areas on Vangunu and Bougainville islands respectively.
Improve the conservation status of remaining Solomon Islands priority giant rats not directly investigated by this proposal by generating ecological information	Very high impact. As part of this project we have improved knowledge of habitat use and requirements for the endemic rodents of the Solomon Islands archipelago. We have improved methods available to record their presence, and generate information about the resources that are most important (18 species of food tree).

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

Impact Description	Impact Summary
Identify crucial resources for *S. salebrosus* as well as important habitat areas on southern Bougainville	Very high impact. In this project we were able to confirm the identities of 18 food plants used by *Solomys salebrosus*. Our radiotracking study was limited to two individuals but both remained within the Kainake conservation area, and seemed to prefer riparian forests.
Identify conclusively, the Uromys rodent present on northern Guadalcanal	Low impact. Despite extensive efforts to document native rodents on Guadalcanal, we were unable to confirm the identity of rodents consuming ngali nuts on the island. The conservation status of the three species of Uromys on Guadalcanal remains very uncertain.
Determine the best conservation areas and management measures for *Uromys vika* on southern Vangunu.	Very high impact. During our project we were able to confirm several locations in the Zaira Resource Management Area that support Uromys vika. These are the only documented records of this species other than the holotype specimen from which the species was described in 2017. They confirm ZRMA as the most important conservation area for this IUCN Red List Critically Endangered mammal.
Rangers will be employed on a short-term basis at Kainake and Zaira. This will highlight the potential financial benefits of conservation and increase the involvement of communities in conservation management.	Very high impact. Rangers at Kainake and Zaira were employed for long periods of the project to assist with data collection, maintain equipment and lead field work. Scientific interest in conserved forests and associated paid employment have reinforced one of the many benefits of maintaining conservation areas in Bougainville and Solomon Islands.
The project will provide additional training to rangers at the project sites - teaching them to operate camera traps, radiotrack wildlife, record data, keep records, use GPS, and manage threatened species.	Very high impact. Rangers from Kainake and Zaira worked with biologists John Lamaris and Kevin Sese and learned new skills in deploying camera traps, using handheld GPS units, recording data, and radiotracking wildlife. There was immense benefit derived from the rangers' opportunity to work alongside two Indigenous biologists who have wide field experience in Melanesia, and study experience in Australia and Fiji. Fantastic opportunities to discuss alternate models of conservation operating in Melanesia and the broader Pacific were also enabled.
Strengthen conservation areas on Bougainville, Guadalcanal and Vangunu, by clarifying their value for	Very high impact. Through this project we have confirmed that both the Kainake and Zaira conservation areas are critical sites for the conservation of two threatened species of endemic

the conservation of threatened endemic mammals	rodent. These two sites are now the only known conservation areas in the world that are confirmed to support *Solomys salebrosus* or *Uromys vika*.
Provide Indigenous biologists Kevin Sese and John Lamaris with additional skills and experience in data collection, community liaison and threatened species monitoring and management, further increasing opportunities for careers in conservation.	Very high impact. John Lamaris and Kevin Sese demonstrated exceptional leadership, successfully deploying camera traps, radiotracking *Solomys salebrosus*, and recording invaluable data on these poorly known species. Their leadership in this project has further bolstered their credentials for working in conservation, and further tertiary study

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

Because Solomon Islands archipelago endemic rodents are so rare, collecting information on their biology to assist with conservation planning is extremely challenging. We successfully overcame this challenge for 2 of three species. For the third species (*Uromys rex* of Guadalcanal) we were unfortunately able to confirm areas that are important for conservation.

5. Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The communities at Kainake and Zaira are inspirational in a global conservation context for their vision to preserve areas of native forest on their land. The opportunity provided by this project for Kevin Sese and John Lamaris to work in these communities had major positive impacts that were not foreseen in this project. Both Kevin and John are very experienced conservationists in Melanesia and emerging leaders in their fields. The chance for them to spend time with communities was beneficial to their careers and to the communities who were able to learn from them.

PART II: Project Products/Deliverables

6. List each product/deliverable as stated in your approved proposal and describe the results for each of them:

#	Deliverable Description	Deliverable Update
1	Maps of important conservation areas for endemic rodents on Bougainville, Vangunu and Guadalcanal.	Achieved (2/3). We have been able to produce these for *Solomys salebrosus* and *Uromys vika*. Unfortunately we were unable to detect *Uromys rex* on Guadalcanal and thus cannot provide additional clarity on critical conservation areas for this species.
	Village forums to discuss conservation of endemic rodents with communities on Bougainville, Vangunu and Guadalcanal.	Achieved. Village forums were held at Kainake (Bougainville), Zaira (Vangunu) and Kopiu (Guadalcanal) to discuss the ecology and conservation of endemic rodents, identify any necessary/possible changes to the configuration of

		conservation areas and design and implement locally relevant conservation actions
	Questionnaire surveys at Guadalcanal, Zaira and Kainake to establish what is known of native rodents, how often they are seen, where they are seen, and conservation needs.	Achieved. We collected questionnaire survey data from communities and gathered vital information about the ecology and conservation needs of native rodents.
	A report updating knowledge of the ecology and conservation status of 3 giant rats.	Achieved. A draft report on the ecology and conservation needs of Solomon Islands endemic rodents has been collated.
	Seek additional funding during the life of this project to continue implementation of the project's aims.	Achieved. Data have been compiled from this project ready to submit an application to the Australia Pacific Science Foundation (due March)

7. Please describe and submit any tools, products, or methods that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.

- Maps of important conservation areas for endemic rodents on Bougainville, Vangunu and Guadalcanal (submitted)
- Summary of questionnaire results from Zaira and Kainake (submitted)
- A report updating knowledge of the ecology and conservation status of 3 giant rats (submitted) This work is currently being drafted into a scientific paper for journal submission to make the results widely available, and will also be written as a popular article for non-scientific audiences.

PART III: Lessons, Sustainability, Safeguards and Financing

Lessons Learned

8. Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building.

"Lessons learned" are experiences you have gained that you think would be valuable successes worth replicating, or practices that you would do differently if you had the chance.

Consider lessons that could inform project design and implementation, and any other lessons relevant to the conservation community. CEPF Lessons Learned Guidelines are available here: https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/cepf-lessons-learned-guidelines-english.pdf.

The reliance on two local biologists to deliver this project on the ground (due to COVID travel restrictions) provided some lessons in what can be achieved when remotely coordinating a project. Both team members (John Lamaris and Kevin Sese) completed phenomenal work and there were major benefits in the opportunities for cross-cultural links and learning. For example, Kevin Sese (from Guadalcanal) and John Lamaris (from New Ireland) each had the opportunity to travel to Vangunu and Bougainville respectively. Both Kevin and John are well educated and experienced in conservation work. Zaira (Vangunu) and Kainake (Bougainville) are communities with long, inspirational histories in community conservation. I think the opportunity to link

experienced biologists with these communities brought great benefits for both and I would really try hard to include this element in any future projects.

Sustainability / Replication

9. Summarize the success or challenges in ensuring that your project will be sustained or replicated, including any unplanned activities that are likely to result in increased sustainability or replicability.

Success in this project stems from linking with established and reliable community-based organisations, and partnering with in-country biologists. Both biologists are seeking to continue the type of work undertaken in this project, increasing the likelihood of these results being sustained. The long-established relationships between Oceania Ecology Group, Zaira Village and The Kainake Project were also fundamental to success and ensuring that the gains made in this project are continued into the future. In the case of the Kainake Project, talks have already begun about possibilities to rehabilitate vegetation along river corridors that were preferred habitat for giant rats. In the case of Zaira, partner projects such as the establishment of a ngali nut supply chain and agroforestry initiative will hopefully see Zaira conservation work strengthened.

The major challenges, as always, are external to this project. Zaira is constantly facing challenges to the conservation designation of their land (via commercial logging). Oceania Ecology Group over many years now has helped to apply subtle pressure to try and see confirmation of Zaira as a protected area (via international and Solomon Islands media releases, discussions with political advisors, public presentations, and pressure from external parties such as the IUCN small mammal specialist group). However, these efforts have seemed futile to date. Nonetheless, such efforts will be continued.

Safeguards

10. If not listed as a separate Project Component and described above, summarize the implementation of any required action related to social or environmental safeguards that your project may have triggered.

Additional Funding

11. 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 CEPF investment

a. Total additional funding (US$) No additional funding

b. Type of funding

Please provide a breakdown of additional funding (counterpart funding and in-kind) by source.

Donor	Type of Funding	Amount	Notes

Additional Comments/Recommendations

12. Use this space to provide any further comments or recommendations in relation to your project or CEPF.

We highly recommend that information from this project be incorporated into any future revisions of Key Biodiversity Areas identified for the East Melanesia Biodiversity Hotspot.

PART IV: Impact at Portfolio and Global Level

Contribution to Portfolio Indicators

In order to measure the results of CEPF investment strategy at the hotspot level, CEPF uses a set of Portfolio Indicators which are presented in the Ecosystem Profile of each hotspot. If CEPF assigned one or more Portfolio Indicators to your project, please list these below and report on the project's contribution(s) to them.

Indicator	Actual Numeric Contribution	Actual Contribution Description

Contribution to Global Indicators

Please report on all Global Indicators (sections 16 to 23 below) that are relevant to your project.

13. Benefits to Individuals

13a. Number of men and women receiving structured training.

Report on the number of men and women that have benefited from structured training due to your project, such as financial management, beekeeping, horticulture, farming, biological surveys, or how to conduct a patrol.

# of men receiving structured training *	# of women receiving structured training *	Topic(s) of Training
25	2	Biological surveys including use of camera traps and handheld GPS, mapping conservation area boundaries, collecting questionnaire data, recording scientific data, radiotracking wildlife

**Please do not count the same person more than once. For example, if 5 men received structured training in beekeeping, and 3 of these also received structured training in project management, the total number of men who benefited from structured training should be 5.*

13b. Number of men and women receiving cash benefits.
Report on the number of men and women that had an increase in income or cash (monetary) benefits due to your project from activities such as tourism, handicraft production, increased farm output, increased fishery output, medicinal plant harvest, or payment for conducting patrols.

# of men receiving cash benefits*	# of women receiving cash benefits*	Description of Benefits
34	35	Payment for assisting with data collection, maintenance of equipment and village forums. Paid catering and accommodation (village stays) at Kainake, Zaira and Kopiu villages

**Please do not count the same person more than once. For example, if 5 men received cash benefits due to tourism, and 3 of these also received cash benefits from increased income due to handicrafts, the total number of men who received cash benefits should be 5.*

14. Protected Areas
Number of hectares of protected areas created and/or expanded
Report on the number of hectares of protected areas that have been created or expanded as a result of your project. Protected areas may include private or community reserves, municipal or provincial parks, or other designations where biodiversity conservation is an official management goal.

Name of PA*	Country(s)	Original # of Hectares**	# of Hectares Newly Protected	Year of Legal Declaration/ Expansion	Longitude***	Latitude***
N/A						

** If possible please provide a shape file of the protected area to CEPF.*
*** Enter the original total size, excluding the results of your project. If the protected area was not existing before your project, then enter zero.*
**** Indicate the latitude and longitude of the center of the site, to the extent possible, or send a map or shapefile to CEPF. Give geographic coordinates in decimal degrees; latitudes in the Southern Hemisphere and longitudes in the Western Hemisphere should be denoted with a minus sign (example: Latitude 38.123456 Longitude: -77.123456). To obtain the latitude and longitude of your protected area, use googlemap, right click on the center of your protected area, and select "What's here?", and copy the latitude and longitude appearing in the popup window.*

15.Key Biodiversity Area Management

Number of hectares of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) with improved management
Please report on the number of hectares in KBAs with improved management, as a result of CEPF investment. Examples of improved management include, but are not restricted to: increased patrolling, reduced intensity of snaring, invasive species eradication, reduced incidence of fire, and introduction of sustainable agricultural/fisheries practices. Do not record the entire area covered by the project - only record the number of hectares that have improved management.

If you have recorded part or all of a KBA as newly protected for the indicator entitled "protected areas", and you have also improved its management, you should record the relevant number of hectares for both this indicator and the "protected areas" indicator.

Name of KBA	KBA code from Ecosystem Profile	# of Hectares Improved *
Marovo-Kavachi	*SLB12*	*3500*

** Do not count the same hectares more than once. For example, if 500 hectares were improved due to implementation of a fire management regime in the first year, and 200 of these same 500 hectares were improved due to invasive species removal in the second year, the total number of hectares with improved management would be 500.*

If you want to know more about the monitoring of protected area management effectiveness and the tracking tool, please click here.

Download the METT template which can be found on this page and then work with the protected area authorities to fill it out. Please go to the Protected Planet website here and search for your protected area in their database to record its associated WDPA ID. Then please fill in the following table:

WDPA ID	PA Official Name	Date of METT*	METT Total Score
N/A			

** Please indicate when the METT was filled by the authorities of the park or provide a best estimate if the exact date is unknown. And please only provide METTs less than 12 months old.*

Please do not forget to submit the completed METT together with this report.

16. Production landscapes
Please report on the number of hectares of production landscapes with strengthened management of biodiversity, as a result of CEPF investment. A production landscape is defined as a landscape where agriculture, forestry or natural product exploitation occurs.

- For an area to be considered as having "strengthened management of biodiversity," it can benefit from a wide range of interventions such as best practices and guidelines implemented, incentive schemes introduced, sites/products certified, and sustainable harvesting regulations introduced.
- Areas that are protected are not included under this indicator, because their hectares are counted elsewhere.
- A Production Landscape can include part or all of an unprotected KBA.

Number of hectares of production landscapes with strengthened management of biodiversity.

Name of Production Landscape*	# of Hectares**	Latitude***	Longitude***	Description of Intervention
N/A				

** If the production landscape does not have a name, provide a brief descriptive name for the landscape.*

***Do not count the same hectares more than once. For example, if 500 hectares were strengthened due to certification in the first year, and 200 of these same 500 hectares were strengthened due to new harvesting regulations in the second year, the total number of hectares strengthened to date would be 500.*

**** Indicate the latitude and longitude of the center of the site, to the extent possible, or send a map or shapefile to CEPF. Give geographic coordinates in decimal degrees; latitudes in the Southern Hemisphere and longitudes in the Western Hemisphere should be denoted with a minus sign (example: Latitude 38.123456 Longitude: -77.123456).*

17. Benefits to Communities

CEPF wants to record the benefits received by communities, which can differ to those received by individuals because the benefits are available to a group. CEPF also wants to record, to the extent possible, the number of people within each community who are benefiting. Please report on the characteristics of the communities, the type of benefits that have been received during the project, and the number of men/boys and women/girls from these communities that have benefited, as a result of CEPF investment. If exact numbers are not known, please provide an estimate.

Please provide information for all communities that have benefited from project start to project completion.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics (mark with x)							Country of Community	Type of Benefit (mark with x)									# of Beneficiaries	
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists / nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Other*		Increased access to clean water	Increased food security	Increased access to energy	Increased access to public services (e.g. health care, education)	Increased resilience to climate change	Improved land tenure	Improved recognition of traditional knowledge	Improved representation and decision-making in governance forums/structures	Improved access to ecosystem services	# of men and boys benefitting	# of women and girls benefitting
Zaira, Vangunu		X	X					Solomon Islands							X	X		10	12
Kainake, Bougainville		X	X					Autonomous Region of Bougainville							X	X		19	17
Kopiu, Guadalcanal		X	X					Solomon Islands							X	X		5	6

*If you marked "Other" to describe the community characteristic, please explain:

18. Policies, Laws and Regulations

Please report on change in the number of legally binding laws, regulations, and policies with conservation provisions that have been enacted or amended, as a result of CEPF investment. “Laws and regulations” pertain to official rules or orders, prescribed by authority. Any law, regulation, decree or order is eligible to be included. “Policies” that are adopted or pursued by a government, including a sector or faction of government, are eligible.

18a. Name, scope and topic of the policy, law or regulation that has been amended or enacted as a result of your project

No.		Scope (mark with x)			Topic(s) addressed (mark with x)															
	Name of Law, Policy or Regulation	Local	National	International	Agriculture	Climate	Ecosystem Management	Education	Energy	Fisheries	Forestry	Mining and Quarrying	Planning/Zoning	Pollution	Protected Areas	Species Protection	Tourism	Transportation	Wildlife Trade	Other*
1																				

** If you selected “other”, please give a brief description of the main topics addressed by the policy, law or regulation.*

18b. For each law, policy or regulation listed above, please provide the requested information in accordance with its assigned number.

No.	Country(s)	Date enacted/ amended MM/DD/YYYY	Expected impact	Action that you performed to achieve this change
1				
2				

19. Biodiversity-friendly Practices

Number of companies that adopt biodiversity-friendly practices

Please list any companies that have adopted biodiversity-friendly practices as a result of your project. While companies take various forms, for the purposes of CEPF, a company is defined as a for-profit business entity. A biodiversity-friendly practice is one that conserves or uses natural resources in a sustainable manner.

No.	Name of Company	Description of biodiversity-friendly practice adopted during the project	Country(s) where the practice has been adopted by the company
1	SolAgro	Our project has demonstrated the importance of ngali nuts (Canarium indicum) for Solomon Islands native rodents. A partner, CEPF funded project based at Zaira (led by SICCP and SolAgro) is developing a system of agroforestry, planting ngali nuts amongst native forests to both benefit biodiversity and provide a source of additional income (ngali nut products). A supply chain was established for Zaira to provide ngali nuts for commercial products.	Solomon Islands

20. Networks & Partnerships

Number of networks and/or partnerships created and/or strengthened

Report on any networks or partnerships between and among civil society groups and other sectors that you have created or strengthened as a result of your project. Networks/partnerships should have some lasting benefit beyond immediate project implementation. Informal networks/partnerships are acceptable. Examples of networks/partnerships include: an alliance of fisherfolk to promote sustainable fisheries practices, a network of environmental journalists, a partnership between one or more NGOs with one or more private sector partners to improve biodiversity management on private lands, or a working group focusing on reptile conservation.

Do not list the partnerships you formed with others to implement this project, unless these partnerships will continue after your project ends.

No.	Name of Network / Partnership	Year established	Did your project establish this Network/ Partnership? Y/N	Country(s) covered	Purpose
1	Partnerships between Oceania Ecology Group, the Kainake Project and Zaira	2010–2016	N	Solomon Islands and Autonomous Region of Bougainville	Providing scientific advice and support to assist with progress towards protected area legislative protection.

	Resource Management Area were strengthened				

21. Sustainable Financing Mechanism

List any functioning sustainable financing mechanisms created or supported by your project. Sustainable financing mechanisms generate funding for the long-term (generally five or more years). These include, but are not limited to, conservation trust funds, debt-for-nature swaps, payment for ecosystem service (PES) schemes, and other revenue, fee or tax schemes that generate long-term funding for conservation. To be included, a mechanism must be delivering funds for conservation.

21a. Details about the mechanism

Fill in this table for as many mechanisms you worked on during your project implementation as needed.

NO.	Name of financing mechanism	Purpose of the mechanism*	Date of Establishment**	Description***	Countries
1	N/A				

**Please provide a succinct description of the mission of the mechanism.*

***Please indicate when the sustainable financing mechanism was officially created. If you do not know the exact date, provide a best estimate.*

****Description, such as trust fund, endowment, PES scheme, incentive scheme, etc.*

21b. Performance of the mechanism

For each Financing Mechanism listed, please provide the requested information in accordance with its assigned number.

No.	Project intervention (mark with x)			Has the mechanism disbursed funds to conservation projects?
	Created a mechanism	Supported an existing mechanism	Created and supported a new mechanism	
1				

22. Red List Species

If your project included direct conservation interventions that benefited globally threatened species (CR, EN, VU), as per the IUCN Red List, add the species below.

Examples of interventions include: preparation or implementation of a conservation action plan, captive breeding programs, species habitat protection, species monitoring, patrolling to halt wildlife trafficking, and removal of invasive species.

Genus	Species	Common Name (Eng)	Status (VU, EN, CR or	Intervention	Population Trend at Site

			Extinct in the Wild)		(increasing, decreasing, stable or unknown)
Solomys	salebrosus	Bougainville Giant Rat	EN	Prohibited hunting in the Kainake Conservation area, species habitat protection, species monitoring	Stable
Uromys	vika	Vangunu Giant Rat	CR	Species habitat protection, species monitoring	Stable (inside the Zaira Conservation Area)

Part V. 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.

Provide the contact details of your organization (organization name and generic email address) so that interested parties can request further information about your project.

Organization Name: Oceania Ecology Group Pty Ltd
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