

CEPF Final Project Completion Report

Organization Legal Name	People Resources and Conservation Foundation
Project Title	Testing Community-managed Forests with Financing from payment for forest environmental services in Vietnam
CEPF Grant or Number	CEPF-056
Date of Report	24 December 2017

CEPF Hotspot: Indo-Burma Ecosystem Hotspot

Strategic Direction: Strategic Direction 4. Empower local communities to engage in conservation and management of priority key biodiversity areas. Investment Priority 4.1 Raise awareness about biodiversity conservation legislation among target groups at priority sites, 4.2 Pilot and amplify community forests

Grant Amount: USD 19,195.0

Project Dates: 01 May to 30 Oct. 2017, with a non-cost extension to 30 Nov. 2017

PART I: Overview

1. Implementation Partners for this Project

<i>Tuyen Quang Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (TQ DARD)</i>	
Involvement	Overall endorsement of project activities, lobby new approach on community-managed forests at provincial level. PRCF's official counterpart, through a Memorandum of Agreement to support biodiversity conservation in Tuyen Quang.
<i>Tuyen Quang Forest Protection Department (TQ FPD)</i>	
Involvement	Overall support and monitoring of project implementation; provision of direct official support to PRCF on project activities; on behalf of Tuyen Quang province TQ FPD is the direct official counterpart for project implementation.
<i>Lam Binh Watershed Management Board (LB FMB)</i>	
Involvement	Contributed through participation in discussions and field surveys related to the location and status of forestlands in the landscape. Participated in land use planning and the establishment of forest management and protection protocols.
<i>Na Hang District People's Committee (NH DPC)</i>	
Involvement	Contributed with the carrying out of forestland site and status surveys, monitoring of forest inventories, and responsible for the approval of Five-Year Forest Management Plans.
<i>Sinh Long Commune People's Committee (SL CPC)</i>	
Involvement	Main government counterpart/ partner of project involved in the whole process of proposing forest management interventions. Responsible for all endorsements at the commune level, and for approval of One-Year Forest Management Plans
<i>Five target villages</i>	
Involvement	Project beneficiaries and direct stakeholders, of particular importance for the project, as they participate in all of its implementation aspects on the ground.

2. Overall project results/ impact

The project was able to involve households from each of the five target villages into working together, in a participatory manner, towards the production of all key and needed documentation to establish and manage community forest areas, through community forest management measures. The various planning and management documents are presented below.

Project impacts thus far include the additional interest by communities and local government authorities into managing local forests for sustainability and conservation. The latter is of particular importance, given that local production forests are increasingly under pressure, and the community forest management measure offers an alternative for local communities to benefit from the forest resources while supporting conservation efforts. Of particular importance, the forest management measure introduced by the project will help stabilize these forestlands, which would otherwise be subject to clearing or degradation because of agricultural expansion.

Project results (documentation)

- Feasibility study for community based forest management at five villages in the Sinh Long commune, within the Francois Langur Conservation Landscape;
- Guidelines for community-based forest management in Sinh Long commune;
- Forest protection and development regulations for each of the five target villages;
- Organizational structures for village forest management (including Village Management Board, Village Inspection Team, and Village Forest Protection Team);
- Participatory Forest Inventory in selected CFM forests of each of the five villages
- Dossier proposal for follow-up on forest allocation to five target villages for long-term stabilization of forests
- Five-Year Forest Management Plan (for each of five target villages)
- One-Year Forest Management Plan (for each of five target villages)
- Forest Patrolling Plan (for each of five target villages)

3. Actual progress towards the overall project goal

Overall project goal	Summary of actual progress towards this goal
The biodiversity of Sinh Long's forests is better protected, through the establishment of community-managed forests, sustainably financed through Payments for Forest Environmental Services (PFES).	The project was able to work with local communities and commune and district authorities into defining all needed documentation to establish and manage community forest management areas, for allocation to the village community, as opposed to individual households. Payment for environmental services will start once target forest have been allocated to the five villages, and community forest management begins implementation.

4. Success/ challenges of the project toward achieving its overall goal

The most significant success of the project is that of securing the devoted participation for local communities and government authorities into attaining the project goals

5. Unexpected impacts (positive or negative)

An unexpected positive impact of the project is the interest of local communities to participate into conservation of biodiversity in the landscape, inside and beyond the to-be-allocated forestlands.

PART II: Project Objectives and Activities/Deliverables

6. Project objectives and progress

Objective 1: The feasibility establishing community-managed forests at Sinh Long is established, and a framework for doing so is developed with communities, and agreed with the provincial government.		
Activity description	Deliverable(s)	Summary of actual progress/results for this activity
Activity 1.1 Conduct a study to assess the feasibility of establishing community-managed forests at five villages adjacent to the natural forest. This will be done through participatory approaches to consulting stakeholders at all levels (from community to province).	Feasibility study conducted, including consultations with stakeholders from five target villages.	The Feasibility Study was conducted as planned, to assess the possibility of establishing Community Forest Management areas at five target villages in Sinh Long commune. Result of the study indicated strong interest by local communities and government, and good potential to establish CFM in 691 hectares.
	Feasibility study report produced.	Feasibility study for community based forest management at five villages in the Sinh Long commune, within the Francois Langur Conservation Landscape (Feasibility Study Report), produced in English and Vietnamese, serving as a baseline for further work into the actual definition of CFM at the target villages.
Activity 1.2 Conduct multi-stakeholder consultation meetings to develop a framework for community forest management at Sinh Long, incorporating both conservation and development measures.	Five multi-stakeholder consultations meetings conducted, with a total of at least 100 participants.	Multi-stakeholder consultations carried out as planned at each of the five target villages, with the participation of more than the sought 100 participants (170 people participated in initial consultations, with several other consultation meetings engaging additional villagers).
	Framework developed, and approved by provincial government.	Documents comprising the proposed CFM framework for Lam Binh have been submitted to the government, with some of these documents still in process of approval by the district and commune government authorities. However, a letter of endorsement by the Sinh Long commune is in place for all project products (attached as an annex to this report).
Activity 1.3 Conduct participatory land-use planning at five villages to review and define current land types and usage by the local communities. The results will help determine solutions for payment mechanisms and forest protection interventions.	Five land-use plans produced.	Land-use plan categorization maps produced on the basis of existing government land-use plans for five target villages (i.e. Lung Khieng village, Phieng Thoc village, Phieng Ngam village, Na Tau village, Nam Duong village). Plans depict, for each village, land use, forestland categorization, and forest conditions.

Objective 2: Communities are able access PFES, providing sustainable funding to improve forest protection, biodiversity conservation, and community development, as a result of the establishment of the necessary community-level governance structures, and signed agreements with the Commune People's Committee.		
Activity description	Deliverable(s)	Summary of actual progress/results for this activity
Activity 2.1 Facilitate the establishment of Community Forest Management	Five CFMCs established.	Community Forest management Committees (CFMCs) were established at each of the five target villages through participatory workshops, through which members were selected by villagers themselves, and PRCF acted as a facilitator into the process.

<p>Committees (CFMCs) at five villages. Membership of the committees will be decided by the community members themselves.</p>		<p>Several village organization structures related and needed for CFM implementation were established at each village. These were: Village Management Board, Village Inspection Team, and Village Forest Protection Team</p>
<p>Activity 2.2 Develop regulations for the CFMCs, determining their management structure, roles, functions, and responsibilities.</p>	<p>CFMC regulations agreed. CFMCs formally recognized by Provincial Government</p>	<p>CFM Forest Protection and Development Regulations were defined in a participatory manner for each of the target villages. These regulations were submitted to the district government for approval together with other CFM-related documentation.</p>
<p>Activity 2.3 Facilitate the development of long-term forest management contracts between the Commune People's Committee and the Community Forest Management Committees. These will define a minimum of 100ha per village, and include provisions to increase the area under community management based on management performance.</p>	<p>Long-term contracts between Commune People's Committee and five CFMCs signed.</p>	<p>Long-term contract between the five target communities and the district and commune government authorities were drafted and submitted together with the Five-year and One-year plans, for approval by the district and commune people's committees. As the five-year plan is approved by the Na Hang district, this is followed by an approval of the one-year plan by the Sinh Long commune, which is followed by the forest-use contracts.</p> <p>At the time of writing, all documentation had been produced and submitted to the commune for further submission and processing by the district. Delay in processing is due to government bureaucracies and not the project itself. It is foreseen that the two plans are endorsed in the beginning of 2018, and that the forest use contracts are agreed and signed thereafter.</p>
<p>Activity 2.4 Facilitate the establishment of a payment mechanism, harnessing PFES conservation funds, in compliance with forest protection and community development needs, and implementation protocols.</p>	<p>PFES funds allocated to communities and channeled through CFMCs.</p>	<p>The allocation of PFES funds for monitoring and patrolling of the allocated forestlands for CFM was not seen through by the project, due to the delay in signing off the five-year plan and one-year plan, followed by the forest land-use contracts. However, the process of PFES allocation was initiated and draft dossiers for forest allocation to the five target communities were produced.</p> <p>Further, the project facilitated the definition of forest patrolling plans in each of the five target villages.</p>

7. Tools, products, methodologies resulting or contributing to results of this project

Product	Description
Feasibility study for community based forest management at five villages in the Sinh Long commune, within the Francois Langur Conservation Landscape	Assessment of the biophysical condition of target forests, household socioeconomic conditions in each of the target villages, and of the administrative environment in Sinh Long commune and Na Hang district towards establishment of community forest management.
Guidelines for community-based forest management in Sinh Long commune	Set of guiding principles and needs for the establishment of community forest management at target locations.
Forest protection and development regulations for each of the five target villages	Community-defined forest protection and development measures that are in line with government regulations but include community interpretation and peer control measures.
Organizational structures for village forest management (including Village Management Board, Village Inspection Team, and Village Forest Protection Team;	Village-based management and monitoring teams to carry out various aspects of community forest management, selected by the stakeholder communities themselves through guidance by PRCF.
Participatory Forest Inventory in selected CFM forests of each of the five villages	Forest inventory data collected by local communities themselves, under guidance and supervision by PRCF staff and staff from the commune and forest protection department.
Dossier proposal for follow-up on forest allocation to five target villages for long-term stabilization of forests	Document proposing the allocation of target production forests to the stakeholder communities in each of the five target villages, for thereafter subject to community forest management approaches.
Five-Year Forest Management Plan (for each of five target villages)	Five-year planning document to manage and develop the target forests under community forest management, highlighting conservation aspects of the forest. The plan is produced by local communities themselves through guidance and facilitation by PRCF, with participation of commune authorities, for approval by the Na Hang district.
One-Year Forest Management Plan (for each of five target villages)	One-year planning document to manage and develop the target forests under community forest management, highlighting conservation aspects of the forest. The plan is produced by local communities themselves through guidance and facilitation by PRCF, with participation of commune authorities, for approval by the Sinh Long commune.
Forest Patrolling Plan (for each of five target villages)	Planning document to carry out forest patrolling for protection and monitoring of change, produced by the local communities themselves through guidance and facilitation by PRCF, with participation of commune authorities, for approval by the Sinh Long commune.

PART IV: Lessons, Sustainability, Safeguards, and Financing

8. Lessons Learned

Project Design Process

The project was designed as a result of discussions with local stakeholder communities and government authorities, which confirmed interest and willingness to work on the various aspects of it. An experienced professional in the subject-matter carried out the project design.

Project Implementation

The project was implemented with the full participation of stakeholder communities and relevant commune and district government agencies. Without such involvement, the project would have failed. Experienced staff and consultants were engaged into technical aspects of implementation, which rendered the project a success. Without deep technical knowledge and experience in the subject-matter, what the project delivered in such short time and limited budget would have not been possible.

Other lessons learned

The project comprised a component of a larger program of activities in a conservation landscape; with clear objectives and impact to conservation goal. All project stakeholders were well informed on how the project's objectives would fit into the larger conservation scheme. All stakeholders participated enthusiastically in project activities to meet its objectives.

9. Sustainability / Replication

All planning and implementation aspects of the project are replicable, and can be used to support local communities into securing production forestlands to practice sustainable forest management for conservation and development purposes. However, the majority of target forestlands must be in good condition, and local commune and district authorities must be willing to support project activities and collaborate and move forward into the designation and thereafter allocation of subject forestlands.

Summary of success/ challenges on project sustainability/ replicability

In terms of success: the project was able to engage local communities and government authorities in definition and establishment of community forest management measures in five target villages in the Sinh Long section of the Francois Langur Conservation Landscape. All project products were attained in a participatory manner where stakeholder villagers were fully involved, and PRCF (project) staff acted as facilitators and technical advisors into the process. Although with small forestland areas remaining suitable for sustainable forest management, through the community forest management initiative the project was able to start the process of stabilizing forest remnants in production forestlands immediately adjacent to the proposed Francois Langur Conservation Area.

In terms of challenges: although the approach into community forest management was readily accepted by local authorities, who showed great interest and support, the process of securing the initial permissions for project implementation and thereafter approval of key technical documentation proved lengthier than what was expected. Indeed, at the time of writing the five-year and one-year management plans had not yet been approved by the district and commune authorities (the five-year plan is approved first by the district and thereafter the one-year plan is approved by the commune).

10. Safeguards

Implementation of required action related to social or environmental safeguards

1-Planned measures to mitigate impacts and assist affected groups

The project's main objective was to establish 'community forest management—CFM' areas, through which local stakeholder communities (five village sites (Lung Khieng, Phieng Thoc, Na Tau, Nam Duong, and Phiang Gnag), retain access. Such access remains with the communities as forestlands are allocated to each of the five villages on a community-basis (as opposed to household basis), except for those areas critical for the survival of the endangered Francois Langur.

Ongoing and proposed projects funded by other donors within the PRCF Conservation and Development Program in Tuyen Quang (which includes areas of both Sinh Long and Lam Binh communes) are promoting sustainable agriculture and forest activities, and establishing village self-help groups fitted with savings and loans schemes, to benefit the entire community of nine Sinh Long villages (including Khuoi Phin, Ban La, Trung Phin, and Phieng Ten villages). To complement the self-help groups, training is provided to villagers on livestock and agriculture commodities subject to development through the savings and loan program. Several training programs targeting households from the five villages (funded through other donors) took place during the course of this project.

Mechanism to monitor safeguard issues

Monitoring of social safeguard issues took place on a regular basis through field visits to the project site, and through monthly reporting by project field staff, including any issues brought forth by the local communities through grievance boxes placed at each village center, or as a result of monthly village meetings and consultations by project staff.

Further, as part of the larger program in the landscape, PRCF produced a poster explaining the program goals and objectives and providing direct contact details with project offices in Hanoi, and CEPF (IUCN) offices in Hanoi. These were presented and explained periodically during village meetings and consultations, and through members of the Youth union at each village, to ensure understanding by Dao, and Mong stakeholders.

Participatory discussions on social safeguard issues take place regularly, resulting in a six-month safeguard monitoring report submitted to CEPF, as part of the larger program (and larger CEPF-funded project) in the landscape. Further, on an annual basis, the program conducts a participatory social monitoring workshop to assess project compliance to social safeguard policies.

Any grievance surfacing or raised from the above communications was to be submitted to CEPF directly within 15 days, together with a participatory plan for remedial action. However, no grievances have surpassed, or were reported during the course of the project herein.

11. Additional Funding

Details on additional funding that supported this project

a. Total additional funding: USD 9,155.0

b. Type of funding: 'A'

Donor	Funding Type	Amount USD	Notes
The McKnight Foundation	A ⁽¹⁾	30,000.0	a- Project conservation direction time b- Project Team Leader time c- Training in Agriculture and Livestock d- Provision of funds for savings and loans e- Piloting agricultural commodities
People Resources and Conservation Foundation	A ⁽²⁾	9,155.0	f- Project conservation direction time g- Project Team Leader time h- Project field Officer time i- Telephone/ Fax/ Internet j- Provision of equipment/ supplies

⁽¹⁾ A- Project Co-Financing (PRCF contributions to the project direct costs)

⁽²⁾ A- Project Co-Financing (PRCF in-kind contributions to the project direct costs)

12. Additional Comments/Recommendations

Further comments/ recommendations

The project was able to advance community forest management at the five target villages in Sinh Long to the point where all documentation requirements were submitted to the district and commune authorities. Remaining approvals by local government authorities are the Five-Year Management Plan (to be approved by Na Hang district), the One-Year Management Plan (to be approved by the Sinh Long commune), and the long-term contracts between each of the stakeholder villages and the commune. These documents are still in process of endorsement/ approval by the government, but there is all indication the they will be approved during the first part of 2018, for follow-up forestland allocation to the communities. In anticipation to this, the project has produced dossier proposal for the needed follow-up on forest allocation to the five target villages. The recommendation is to provide further support into finalization of the community forest management initiative to the point of forestland allocation and thereafter forest protection and monitoring to the point when payment for forest environmental services are in place.

PART IV: Impact at Portfolio and Global Level

13. Contribution to Portfolio Indicators

No indicators specified

(a) CEPF Portfolio Indicators and project contribution(s) to them

Indicator	Narrative

14. Contribution to Global Indicators

(b) Key Biodiversity Area Management

Number of hectares of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) with improved management

No KBA specified under this project

Name of KBA	# of Hectares with strengthened management *	Is the KBA Not protected, partially protected or Fully protected? Please select one: NP/PP/FP

15. Protected Areas

Number of hectares of protected areas created and/or expanded

No protected areas created or expanded through this project

Name of PA*	Country(s)	# of Hectares	Year of legal declaration or expansion	Longitude**	Latitude**

16. Production landscape

Number of hectares of production landscapes with strengthened biodiversity management

Name of Production Landscape ⁽¹⁾	# of Ha ⁽²⁾	Latitude	Longitude	Description of Intervention
Lung Khieng village	155.7	22°32.404'N	105°24.646'E	CFM ⁽³⁾ development
Phieng Thoc village	189.7	22°33.350'N	105°24.502'E	CFM development
Phieng Ngam village	128.6	22°35.219'N	105°24.302'E	CFM development
Na Tau village	93.6	22°34.284'N	105°22.268'E	CFM development
Nam Duong village	39.4	22°34.839'N	105°21.608'E	CFM development

⁽¹⁾ The production landscape does not have an official name, but it is referred to as the Francois Langur Conservation Landscape, which comprises the proposed Community-based Francois Langur Species and Habitat Conservation Area, and production and protection forests surrounding it. The CEPF Key Biodiversity Area is the Sinh Long forest (VNM80).

⁽²⁾ This refers to the number of hectares in the village earmarked for CFM and proposed for allocation (community land use certificate) to the village for management under CFM measures looking at the stabilization of forest remnants in the landscape.

⁽³⁾ CFM = Community Forest Management, which is a form of Sustainable Forest Management, looking at both conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of forest areas by the stakeholder local communities.

17. Beneficiaries

17a. Total number of beneficiaries – Combined

Report on the total number of women and the number of men that have benefited from formal training and increased income since the start of your project to project completion.

Total # of men benefiting*	Total # of women benefiting*
~202	~198

**Estimated number on the basis of village population benefiting from the intervention; however, the project's initiative of community forest management is yet to result into increased income*

# of men benefiting from formal training*	# of women benefiting from formal training*
110	75

**These are the number of people trained in various aspects of community forest management in the five target villages.*

17b. Number of men and women benefitting from increased income

# of men benefiting from increased income*	# of women benefiting from increased income*
0	0

**Stakeholder communities will benefit from increased income in the future, but not just yet.*

17c. Total number of beneficiaries – Combined

Total # of men benefiting*	Total # of women benefiting*
110	75

**Stakeholder communities will benefit from increased income in the future, but not just yet.*

18. Benefits to Communities

18a. Information for communities benefited from project start to project completion

Name of Community	Community Characteristics (mark with x)							Type of Benefit (mark with x)							Est. # of Beneficiaries			
	Subsistence economy	Small landowners	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	Improved access to ecosystem services	# of households benefiting	# of men and boys benefiting
Lung Khieng village	X	X	X									X	X	X		109	~55	~54
Phieng Thoc village	X	X	X									X	X	X		86	~43	~43
Phieng Ngam village	X	X	X									X	X	X		115	~58	~57
Na Tau village	X	X	X									X	X	X		31	~16	~15
Nam Duong village	X	X	X									X	X	X		59	~30	~29

18b. Geolocation of each community

Name of Community	Latitude	Longitude
Lung Khieng village	22°32.404'N	105°24.646'E
Phieng Thoc village	22°33.350'N	105°24.502'E
Phieng Ngam village	22°35.219'N	105°24.302'E
Na Tau village	22°34.284'N	105°22.268'E
Nam Duong village	22°34.839'N	105°21.608'E

19. Policies, Laws and Regulations

Not applicable under this CEPF Grant

19a. Name, scope and topic of the policy, law or regulation

No.	Name of Law, Policy or Regulation	Scope (mark with x)			Topic(s) addressed (mark with x)														
		Local	National	Regional/International	Agriculture	Climate	Ecosystem Management	Education	Energy	Fisheries	Forestry	Mining and Quarrying	Planning/Zoning	Pollution	Protected Areas	Species Protection	Tourism	Transportation	Wildlife Trade
1																			
2																			

19b. 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				

20. Best Management Practices

No.	Short title/ topic of the best management practice	Description of best management practice and its use during the project
1	Community Forest Management in Tuyen Quang province	Although the Community Forest Management approach is by no means new internationally, it is fairly new to Vietnam, with just a few initiatives under development in several provinces. The activities in Tuyen Quang are new to the province, and as a part of a larger program to support community-based conservation management, it could be said that are new to the country. A program mimicking that under development by PRCF at Sinh Long is under development in the Gia Lai highlands, in a failed state forest company site between two protected areas. Lessons, experiences, processes, and practices from Sinh Long will be brought to the Gia Lai site. All of the elements for a best practice approach into forest governance by local stakeholder communities is in place. And, thus far it could be said that activities at the site have been successful into gaining support and interest of both local communities and government authorities, bot for conservation and development of forests (production forests) adjacent to what is being proposed as a conservation area. However, forestry and forest management is a long-term process that cannot be proven successful until several years after.

21. Networks & Partnerships

No new partnerships established through this project

No.	Name of Network/ Partnership	Year established	Country(s) covered	Purpose
1				

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.

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