

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Palau Conservation Society

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): Feasibility Study for the Management of Invasive Alien Species on Kayangel Atoll, Palau

Implementation Partners for This Project: Palau Conservation Society, Kayangel State, Environmental Quality Protection Board, Division of Environmental Health

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): February to June 2006

Date of Report (month/year): July 2006

II. OPENING REMARKS

Kayangel Atoll is located in the Republic of Palau (Micronesia) in the Northern Pacific. The state of Kayangel is made up of four islands and separated from the main Palau archipelago by 34 kilometers of lagoon and open sea. There is very little development on the island and access is only by boat. Invasive alien species (IAS), notably rats, mice, and cats, have been identified as the key threat to the terrestrial biodiversity of Kayangel. Kayangel was selected as a site for this feasibility study because of the presence of critical species, its physical setting, and the level of community support.

The local people of Kayangel have attempted on their own to control rat and mice population. The efforts have been concentrated in and around the homes only on the main island of Kayangel. This simple control method has not worked because it has been fragmented on an individual household basis and not a concerted community effort. There has been some government support through the Division of Environmental Health and Sanitation in providing traps to the locals, but this too has been sporadic and concentrated in and immediately around the village. These previous efforts also have lacked the bio-security measures necessary for control, if not eradication.

III. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

What were the initial objectives of this project?

The objective of this project is to conduct a feasibility study of invasive species management on Kayangel Atoll to determine priority actions and appropriate methods for IAS eradication.

Did the objectives of your project change during implementation? If so, please explain why and how.

The initial discussions of this project was focused on rats and cats. During the implementation, the confirmation of the presence of mice added a new dimension to the discussions. The evaluation of the appropriate eradication method took into account the presence of mice on at least the big island of Kayangel.

Briefly describe the methods used in achieving the objectives of this project.

The approach that PCS has taken in achieving the objective of this project has been to involve as many people as possible in the initial discussions and the assessment of the project site and eradication methods. Discussions with the community and the state government have been underway for the past year and will continue as the project design is finalized and the eradication project is implemented. Other local partner organizations and agencies, some of which have had experience with smaller scale rodent eradication and the handling of hazardous materials, have been active participants in the discussions and the community and site visits. Overseas partners and consultants were also invited on site visits and were instrumental in the site assessment, identification of non-target species and other risks, and evaluating eradication methods. This intense consultation with the community, state government, and local and overseas agencies will continue as the project design is finalized and the eradication is implemented.

Partners	Involvement in the project
Environmental Quality Protection Board	Advised on pesticide transport, storage and use
National Environmental Protection Council	Houses the National Invasive Species Committee that endorses this project and will review the Feasibility Report
Pacific Invasive Initiative	Expertise on rodent eradication, provided guidelines to the project, link to technical expertise at NZDOC, facilitated peer review of the feasibility study
Kayangel State Government	Link the community, involved in initial project discussion, contributed staff time during site visits
Division of Environmental Health	Provided expertise in rat control
BirdLife Pacific Partnership	Technical assistance especially in the area of non-target species
US Fish and Wildlife Service	Involved in initial discussions of the project, provided supplemental funding, and reviewed the feasibility study report
New Zealand Department of Conservation	Provided technical assistance in rodent eradication

Was your project successful in achieving the expected objectives? If no, explain why not. If yes, please explain how the project was successful and the key factors that contributed to its success.

This project was successful for a number of reasons. First, and probably most important, is the level of support at the state and community level. Second, is the input of the partner organizations, including but not limited to PII, NZDOC, and USFWS, and their commitment to the success of the project. Finally, the unceasing commitment of the implementing agency has been the drive behind the success of this feasibility study. All of these factors combined have contributed to the overall success of this project, and will likely determine the success or failure of the proposed eradication.

Describe what was achieved in terms of:

capacity development;
developing partnerships;
raising awareness of invasive species and generating community support for their management;
involving the local community and other stakeholders;
providing benefits to the local community and other stakeholders.

There has been tremendous achievement in capacity development both local and institutional. The initial site visits with our overseas partners provided an opportunity for interaction with the local community who expressed their support of this project and for the proposed eradication. It was also an excellent opportunity for the staff to actively participate in the site assessment including identification of non-target species, the nature of the understory, identification of problematic areas and obvious risks, and other issues relevant to the evaluation of appropriate eradication techniques and bio-security measures.

During this project, two PCS program managers, Senior Terrestrial Officer and Environmental Education Coordinator, one PCS community-based conservation coordinator, and one Kayangel State conservation officer participated in a technical exchange to two rodent eradication sites in Fiji. One was an uninhabited island off the north coast of Viti Levu, a bird sanctuary and a proposed Important Bird Area. The other site was a bigger island south of Suva with a small human population. The two sites opted for two different eradication techniques and presented almost contrasting topography, vegetation, and inherent risks. This firsthand experience of these other demonstration projects will likely prove to be valuable as the project design is formulated and finalized.

The approach that PCS has taken to the project has catalyzed partnerships with local government agencies, overseas consultants and organizations, and with the local community and the state of Kayangel. These partnerships have proved to be essential in the implementation of this feasibility study and PCS is committed to continuing to nurture this network of partners.

The discussions and consultations that PCS has had with the local community has been very productive and ensures that the community has an input in the direction of the feasibility and the future eradication project. This interaction has also served to raise awareness of invasive species management and has directly translated into high level of support from the community.

What was the impact of the project at the local level?

The main impact at the local level was raised awareness about invasive species, particularly rats and mice. The community feels that this project is long overdue and is extremely supportive of PCS and the project.

What was the impact of the project (if any) at the national level?

This project is endorsed by the National Invasive Species Committee and presented at the launching of the Pacific Invasive Learning Network.

Did your team experience any disappointments or failures during implementation? If so, please explain and comment on how the team addressed these disappointments and/or failures.

The team did not experience real failures or disappointments. The biggest challenge was PCS's lack of experience in rodent eradication. However, this was dealt with by engaging local and overseas partners who have done similar work.

Describe the key positive and negative lessons learned from this project that would be useful to share with other organizations interested in implementing a similar project.

There are two remarkable positive lessons learned from this project. One is the importance of building and confirming community support for the project and maintaining constant dialogue and consultation throughout the duration of the project. The second notable lesson is the value of the technical exchange that allowed for active staff participation and contributed to the building of critical partnerships.

How has the project been promoted? (Please enclose/attach press clippings, brochures, publications, videos, websites, photos, etc). Please describe the products developed during the project and how and to whom these were disseminated.

There were no products developed and disseminated. See attached photos.

Describe any follow-up activities you wish to implement and how you intend to do so (eg other invasive species management actions you wish to pursue, or how you plan to scale up the project to a broader area).

The follow-up activities will be to:

1. Finalize the operational plan
2. Continue to build capacity of key staff when opportunities arise
3. Continue to maintain positive dialogue with the community and state of Kayangel
4. Fundraise for the proposed eradication project

Please provide any additional information you think may assist CEPF in understanding any other aspects of your completed project.

IV. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

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

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
USFWS	B	14,850.00	

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

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

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

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

This project will continue. PCS hopes to engage additional support from CEPF to implement the proposed eradication. Additional funding support for the project will be solicited from BLI, USFWS and other partners.

V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project is supported by the Australian government's Regional Natural Heritage Program through the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint initiative of Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

VI. INFORMATION SHARING

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

Yes _____
 No _____

If yes, please also complete the following:

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