

# **Project Completion Report**

## **Strengthening Governance and Management Needs of Communities in East Rennell**

### **Live & Learn Solomon Islands with support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund**

<b>Organization Legal Name</b>	Live & Learn Environment Education (Solomon Islands)
<b>Project Title</b>	Strengthening Governance and Management Needs of Communities in East Rennell
<b>CEPF GEM No.</b>	64258
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#### **1. CEPF Region: (Context of Lake Tegano, East Rennell, Solomon Islands)**

In 1998, East Rennell received World Heritage status, but the impetus to list the site in the first place came more from outside the country rather than from government officials. While the justification for listing East Rennell was for its unique environmental attributes, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture was responsible for managing the site until 2011. Over the past 14 years, the only allocation of Solomon Islands Government (SIG) funds to support East Rennell conservation activities was in 2012, after management responsibility passed to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Meteorology, and an allocation of SBD 500,000 was sent via the provincial government. However, the East Rennell villagers reported that the funds have not reached the communities.

Rennell Island is unique from geographical, ecological, cultural, and historical perspectives. The Island is the world's second largest raised coral atoll with Lake Tegano recognized as the largest lake in the insular Pacific (Thosel and Molloy 1998, UNEP-WCMC 2008). With the exception of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands have a greater diversity of animal species and higher level of endemism than any other Pacific island nation (Munch-Petersen 1988, Filardi et al. 1999). All habitats represented on the island are found in East Rennell along with 43 bird species, of which four species and nine subspecies are endemic to the Rennell and Bellona Islands, and ten endemic plants that have been identified and recorded on Rennell. Additionally, Lake Tegano is the only known location of the endemic sea krait (*Laticauda crockeri*). Culturally, Rennell and Bellona Islanders are of Polynesian decent, not Melanesian like the main population of the Solomon Islands, and the islanders maintain an oral history tracing the migration to Rennell back 26 generations from the Wallis and Futuna island group. East Rennell comprises both marine and terrestrial areas, includes the largest freshwater lake in the insular Pacific region, and is home to several endemic bird, mammal, flora and reptile species. Its biodiversity value is without

question, as demonstrated by it being a World Heritage Site and a priority site for CEPF investment in the Solomon Islands.

In fact, the most frequent comment heard during four community meetings was the discontent in regard to the World Heritage Status, which has not led to any benefits over the last 14 years. Less than 10 tourists visited the site last year. However, there have been bilateral aid projects to assist these communities, which include the construction of three eco-lodges, water projects, a computer lab with satellite internet connection (no longer functional), and the provision of funds for a learning mission to Cairns, Australia.

In 2003, Live & Learn supported the establishment of the Lake Tegano World Heritage Site Association (LTWHSA), which represented all four communities bordering Lake Tegano. The purpose of the LTWHSA is to support the management of the World Heritage Area according to the developed management plan. The project was to provide support for the LYWHSA and aligned with Strategic Direction 1 and CEPF Investment Priority 1.2 on *raising awareness about the values of biodiversity and the nature of threats and drivers among local communities at priority sites*. East Rennell comprises both marine and terrestrial areas, includes the largest freshwater lake in the insular Pacific region, and is home to several endemic bird, mammal, flora and reptile species. Its biodiversity value is without question, as demonstrated by it being a World Heritage Site and a priority site for CEPF investments in the Solomon Islands.

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

**Table 1: Stakeholders and Roles.**

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Role</b>
LTWHSA	<p>The project worked in strengthening the capacity of LTWHSA's governance structure and effectiveness. The LTWHSA is riddled with internal conflict and politics and have during parts of the project not been fit for purpose.</p> <p>However, it is important to continue to support local structures and systems in managing the world heritage resource and LTWHSA is the only structure, which has a level of representation and any credibility.</p> <p>Vested interests have tried to undermine LTWHSA's charter and to date this has not been successful with a new committee elected by the communities during March. Live &amp; Learn has taken a strong position of now interfering internally with LTWHSA and have been advising the committee on issues of governance and good practice.</p>
IUCN	Live & Learn and IUCN have been sharing information and knowledge on progress, challenges and ways forward. A number of joint proposals were developed to ensure continuation of activities.
Rennell/Bellona Provincial Government	Supportive of the LTWHA and of the project but plays no active role. The Provincial Government has requested that the LTWHSA committee come up with a strategic plan, so that the Provincial

	Government can advocate on the LTHSA's behalf for funding from the National Government. This proposed project aims to help the LTHSA develop this strategic plan. LLEE would also support the LTHSA in its advocacy work, both through the Provincial Government and directly with the National Government if necessary.
Ministry of Environment of the Solomon Islands Government	Over the life of the project the Ministry showed keen interest in supporting the protection and preservation of the World Heritage Site. Slow processes and involvement of the SI government meant the department's intended desire to support was also slow in coming. There is however some good will from the Ministry in supporting East Rennell activities.

## **2. Describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile**

The greatest threat to East Rennell is the risk of logging of native forests. Logging will have significant consequences for the natural values of East Rennell. It would have a direct impact if logging was allowed to proceed within the East Rennell Protected Area (ERPA). Logging in West Rennell may also affect the ERPA as the forest ecosystem across the whole island is linked.

The potential consequences of logging include loss of plant and animal species resulting in reduction of biodiversity through construction of roads, log storage areas, log loading areas and camps. Many people of East Rennell are opposed to logging, even so, with limited options for generation of a cash income and the dissatisfaction with the expected benefits from World Heritage listing logging is a potential source of income for the communities in East Rennell. This puts the area at risk. If East Rennell becomes a protected area and the management plan is implemented, the direct threat of logging would be reduced with formal legal protection, but the indirect impacts of logging in West Rennell would still exist.

The grant that Live & Learn received from CEPF enabled the protection of ecological values underpinning ERPA and indeed its listing as a World Heritage Site. This took place through the strengthening LTHSA governance and capacity to take a lead role in the monitoring of the World Heritage site at Lake Tegano.

## **3. Summarize the overall results/impact of your project**

Despite significant undermining of the LTHSA by vested logging and mining interests the project improved the effectiveness and confidence of the LTHSA. Particularly in the areas of:

- Providing mentoring support to the Chairman of the committee on maintaining links between the committee and the four community groups residing around the lake;
- Linking LTHSA with Honiara-based landowner groups to neutralize mining and logging pressures on East Rennell;
- Supporting the LTHSA towards new elections and changing their Constitution to include longer committee terms.

- Initiating discussions about a transition from short-term solutions (e.g. small livelihoods grants) towards longer-term solutions (e.g. payments for ecosystems services and REDD+) and creating interest in these solutions.
- Ongoing monitoring of the site.
- Signing of new partnership agreement between LTWHSA and Live & Learn? Solomon Islands better defining roles and responsibilities.

#### **4. Actual progress toward long-term impacts at completion**

Of the priority sites for CEPF investment in the Solomon Islands East Rennell is likely to be the most advanced along the route of obtaining protection under the *Protected Areas Act*. The experience of the East Rennell communities gained through this project could be translated to other priority sites and more broadly in the Solomon Islands. However logging began on West Rennell in 2008 in two locations and is still operational. A further three concessions were proposed in 2011 including an area that covers most of East Rennell, and in March 2012 timber rights hearings were held in Tabaitahe and Teabamagu villages, and due to an extensive education and advocacy campaign by Live & Learn Solomon Islands there was not sufficient community support to continue the process. Additional information on Rennell's logging concessions is provided in the following section.

- Concession Area A1 (Tehakamagoku)— A Timber rights hearing was conducted in 2007 and felling was started in 2008. Approximately 6 shipments (around 60,000 cubic metres) have already been made so far, no landowners received money from it. The Samling Sang Logging Company is the Contractor. Amos Teikagei is the Licensee. The customary landowners filed a case with the high court alleging breach of contract due to lack of promised payments, and the case was scheduled to be heard in March 2012, but no additional information was available on the outcome.
- Concession Area B1 (Magaone & Aga'eha, white lines) – A Timber rights hearing was conducted in April 2007. Solomon Eco Lumber is the Licensee; but transferred the license to the Samling Sang Logging Company. Extensive road system construction took place, as well as the establishment of a log pond located just 4 kilometres away from the Tehakatu'u Marine Protected Area.
- Concession Areas C1, C2 & C3 (Agapogabu, Namalaga & Temagabai) – Joses Saueha is the Licensee and the timber rights hearing was conducted in March 2012, however, insufficient support was gained from customary landowners. Joses Saueha proposed to cover three locations shown in Figure 4 (C1, C2 & C3).



The fact that logging has not occurred in East Rennell is a direct result of Live & Learn Solomon Islands work with the LTWHSA and the four communities particularly as there currently are very few opportunities for income generation in East Rennell and great pressure to engage in logging activities. Live & Learn supported LTWHSA to give evidence at two timber rights hearing in Honiara where two logging submissions were subsequently overturned.

## 5. Actual progress toward short-term impacts at completion

**Table 2: Progress towards short-term impact.**

Proposed impact	Actual impact
Helping the LTWHSA to develop a strategic action plan. This will improve the likelihood of the LTWHSA receiving funding support from the Solomon Islands Government.	A strategic action plan was not achieved but a strategic direction was developed involving a shift from dependency on small livelihoods grants to a longer terms Payment for Ecosystems services mechanism. This was also endorsed by the land-owners groups locally. This was mainly in response to the history of failed small-grants provision (namely on livelihoods) in Rennell, which is not proven effective.
Helping the LTWHSA to finalise and submit an application to make East Rennell a Protected Area. A step-by-step guide on how to do this	This was not achieved due to lack of clarity from the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) on how to fully operationalize the Protected

<p>has already been prepared for the LTWHSA committee by LLEE, under the project funded by SEWPAC. The LTWHSA committee has been provided with some training on the application process, but will need further support to complete the process.</p>	<p>Areas Act in a World Heritage context. This needs to be clarified before such an application is feasible. Further the LTWHSA was too dysfunctional for this to happen.</p> <p>While governance support could not be fully implemented as agreed, Live &amp; Learn's advocacy for the identified community groups (LTWHSA and Council of Chiefs) to get their acts together and get organized has allowed ongoing discussion of the reasons why that is necessary. This has resulted in greater awareness among the people of East Rennell of the importance of capacity support within community groups to combat the challenges of logging and mining that are threatening East Rennell.</p>
<p>Helping the LTWHSA to implement the recommendations in the Management Plan. These are likely to include selecting rangers and setting tasks and activities in addition to monitoring performance, identify ways to fill knowledge gaps and raise awareness of the Management Plan rules in the community as well as more broadly in Rennell and Bellona.</p>	<p>This activity did not get traction as they were no long-term funding to support the Ranger program despite commitments from a range of international donors and bilateral aid organizations.</p>
<p>Helping the LTWHSA to administer the enforcement mechanisms under the Management Plan, which will improve compliance with the rules of the Protected Area</p>	<p>A number of training and capacity building activities were undertaken to support this activity and will be on-going.</p>
<p>Helping the LTWHSA to advocate for further support from Provincial and National Governments and other civil society groups, for example for livelihood support and to develop plans that address threats to the site such as biosecurity, waste management and food security. This would help to address some of the threats to the site that the East Rennell communities cannot address on their own as well as supporting the community in their decision to choose conservation over commercial income-generating activities.</p>	<p>The project facilitated a great deal of dialogue between the LTWHSA and the provincial governments and this dialogue is on-going. It must be noted that the Provincial Government has limited capacity to do so.</p>
<p>Working with the chiefs and the LTWHSA to increase awareness within the communities about the reasoning behind Protected Area and customary resource management rules, to try to build support for compliance within the</p>	<p>The project saw great engagement from Chiefs and landowner groups and a very solid commitment to reject any proposal for logging permits on conservation ground.</p>

communities. The effectiveness of this awareness building will be assessed during the project.	<p>Live &amp; Learn has had regular meetings with Chiefs and landowner groups and undertaken extensive education activities on PES and REDD+ as long-term economic solutions for East Rennell. LTWHSA and the general population are still keen to see East Rennell to be protected. The impacts of logging and mining activities in West Rennell have caused greater determination among communities to ensure East Rennell does not go through the same experience. They are more determined to ensure interest groups are carefully screened before doing any activities in East Rennell. There is now another East Rennell Task Force (Landowners – Honiara based) that has collaborated with the Live &amp; Learn and LTWHSA to ensure East Rennell is protected.</p> <p>However the inability of the LTWHSA and the Council of Chiefs to be properly organized so that necessary governance training and support can be provided has meant that they will continue to be disadvantaged in dealing with issues at hand.</p>
Funding and training rangers to assist with the enforcement of the Protected Area rules and the gathering of scientific data about the values of the area.	This idea never got traction due to lack of on-going funding commitments and reluctance to on-going investments on East Rennell.

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

The successes have been described in the above section but understanding the challenges are very important in moving forward.

- Lake Tegano World Heritage Site Association (LTWHSA) has been undermined by internal power struggles, tribal politics and a constitutional rule, which sees office bearers bound by re-election every year. This has caused inconsistency and immense dysfunction leading to a LTWHSA committee not fit for purpose. Individuals within the communities with vested interest claimed to be representing the committee leading to confusion, division and deception.
- The isolation of Rennell meant minimal hands-on support for the identified community groups. Logistics have been costly which impacted on any regular and ongoing support from Honiara.

- Logging and mining interest groups has a regular presence in East Rennell and this impacted negatively on everyone's commitment and support for conservation and management of the World Heritage Area particularly at influential leadership level. Mining in West Rennell and prospecting proposals for East Rennell were both undesirable for the keeping the focus of the four communities and the LTWHSA. The envy East Rennellese have on Western Rennellese who appeared to have money from logging and mining activities cannot be underestimated. It has been quite tempting for many East Rennell land owners to give in to offers from interest groups which delay total commitment to activities aimed at protecting and conserving East Rennell
- The project design did not factor in the above challenges and therefore did not provide sufficient budget support in some areas.
- The Council of Chiefs (one of the community groups identified in the project design) failed to organize themselves and therefore was not able to participate meaningfully.
- Former office holders of the LTWHSA were financially influenced by logging and mining interest groups to East Rennell and therefore could no longer advocate for the importance of protecting East Rennell.
- The rivalries among the four communities have been real challenges to the timely implementation of the project. The historical and religious differences among these communities have been factors that impacted negatively on our activities or any other undertaking for the matter.

## **7. Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?**

N/A

## **Project Components and Products/Deliverables**

### **Component 1 (as stated in the approved proposal)**

*List each component and product/deliverable from Grant Writer*

Engage the broader community and consult with elders and customary leaders, including members of the Council of Chiefs, to ensure the role and structure of the LTWHSA reflects community and customary expectations, while maintaining capacity to perform its functions

## **8. Describe the results from Component 1 and each product/deliverable**

**(Component 1)** Engage the broader community and consult with elders and customary leaders, including members of the Council of Chiefs, to ensure the role and structure of the LTWHSA reflects community and customary expectations, while maintaining capacity to perform its functions

April 16 2014 Initial meeting with paramount chief East Rennell Newman Tegheta –
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confirmed his council's stand on East Rennell – to be protected.

31 Oct 2014 A consultation meeting supported and funded by Live & Learn - to meet with tribal groups of west Rennell nearby villages to discuss and to establish a formal world Heritage boundary to West Rennell and link LTHWSA activities with the elders and land owners to the West of the world heritage nominated site.

Attended the consultation meeting were (4) representatives of East Rennell council of chiefs and five (5) members of the World Heritage management committee.

There were three (3) Tribal groups that were represented at the meeting: (Temuginuku Tribe, Teluga Tribe and Tehakatu'u Tribe).

The main outcomes of the consultation meeting were:

- Land owners and elders of the West end of the boundary be made aware of LTHWSA activities – free flow of information
- Land owners and elders of the West end of the boundary to be involved in any training opportunities LTHWSA are part of.

Live & Learn has coordinated meetings between LTHWSA and the newly formed Task Force to ensure they work together and that the Task Force addresses issues and matters that LTHWSA are not addressing or not capable of addressing.

Advocating for greater awareness of activities in East Rennell has been ongoing.

## **9. Describe the results from Component 2 and each product/deliverable**

**(Component 2)** The review of and recommendations of the LTHWSA constitution was completed through Live & Learn legal support.

Critical sections for some immediate amendments were identified:

### *5.1 The Committee*

*Two appointed voting members:*

- *The Sitting Provincial Member for Ward 1 (Hutana and Tegano)*
- *The Sitting Provincial Member for Ward 2 (Niupani and Tebaitahe)*

### *5.3 Committee Appointment and Requirements*

*(a) The term of appointment to the Committee is for one year.*

The one-year tenure of office bearers and committee members meant regular turn-over of committee membership and nothing is achieved as a result. Unfortunately internal divisions within the committee continue to delay the committee deliberation on suggested constitutional amendments through new committee was elected in March 2016.

## **10. Describe the results from Component 3 and each product/deliverable**

**(Component 2)** Increase the LTWHSA committee's knowledge and skills in decision-making through governance education”

Live & Learn conducted ongoing training for LTWHSA leadership on project strategic planning biodiversity & REDD + demonstrating how the committee can make decisions, prioritize and how to introduce new activities to management group.

Live & Learn has also provided ongoing management, governance and leadership support for the LTWHSA Committee leadership as they tried to cope with the ongoing challenges that have hindered the full implementation of the agreed deliverables.

## **11. Describe the results from Component 4 and each product/deliverable**

**(Component 4)** Apply newly established decision-making system to issues on the LTWHSA agenda

This component has been introduced to the new committee as a priority item and seeks to resolve some of the current tension. Live & Learn will support the LTWHSA on-going towards achieving this output through core activities in our Solomon Islands program.

## **12. If you did not complete any component or deliverable, how did this affect the overall impact of the project?**

No

## **13. Please describe and submit any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results**

CEPF Global Monitoring Data

N/A

## **14. Did your organization complete the CEPF Civil Society Tracking Tool (CSTT) at the beginning and end of your project? (Please be sure to submit the final CSTT tool to CEPF if you haven't already done so.)**

N/A

	Date	Composite Score
Baseline CSTT		
Final CSTT		

- 15. List any vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species conserved due to your project**

N/A

**Hectares Under Improved Management**

Project Results	Hectares*	Comments
<b>16. Did your project strengthen the management of an existing protected area?</b>	37,000	East Rennell World Heritage Area, Solomon Islands
<b>17. Did your project create a new protected area or expand an existing protected area?</b>	0	N/A
<b>18. Did your project strengthen the management of a key biodiversity area named in the CEPF Ecosystem Profile (hectares may be the same as questions above)</b>	0	N/A
<b>19. Did your project improve the management of a production landscape for biodiversity conservation</b>	0	N/A

\* Include total hectares from project inception to completion

- 20. In relation to the two questions above on protected areas, did your project complete a Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), or facilitate the completion of a METT by protected area authorities? If so, complete the table below. (Note that there will often be more than one METT for an individual protected area.)**

N/A

Protected area	Date of METT	Composite METT Score	Date of METT	Composite METT Score	Date of METT	Composite METT Score

- 21. List the name of any corridor (named in the Ecosystem Profile) in which you worked and how you contributed to its improved management, if applicable.**

N/A

**Direct Beneficiaries: Training and Education**

<i>Did your project provide training or education for . . .</i>	Male	Female	Total	Brief Description
<b>22. Adults for community leadership or resource management positions</b>				
<b>23. Adults for livelihoods or increased income</b>				
<b>24. School-aged children</b>				
<b>25. Other</b>				

- 26. List the name and approximate population size of any “community” that benefited from the project.**

*Community name, surrounding district, surrounding province, country*      *Population size*

Community	Province	Country	Population
Hutuna	Rennell/Bellona Province	Solomon Islands	300
Tegano	Rennell/Bellona Province	Solomon Islands	120
Niupani	Rennell/Bellona Province	Solomon Islands	250
Tevaitahe	Rennell/Bellona Province	Solomon Islands	260

## **27. Socioeconomic Benefits to Target Communities**

Based on the list of communities above, write the name of the communities in the left column below. In the subsequent columns under Community Characteristics and Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit, place an X in all relevant boxes.

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

## **Lessons Learned**

- 28. 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**

Short-term solutions in form of livelihoods grants are **not effective** achieving protection of the East Rennell World Heritage, longer term solutions are needed and greater strategic commitment from development partners.

Politics in East Rennell is fierce and mixed with mining, logging and fishing interests. Individuals are directly pursuing their own economic interests and **systems needs** to be developed within local organizations to drive transparency and accountability.

Commitment to World Heritage values at community level is evident **but fragile** as no long-term support is being proposed and provided.

Endless stakeholders meetings, monitoring visits and reports have been done for East Rennell but **no long-terms plans and finance** have been put in place to protect World Heritage values. Communities are loosing heart as one monitoring trips (some times in groups of 6-8 people) are carried out with no on-going support.

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

N/A

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

N/A

**31. Describe any other lessons learned relevant to the conservation community**

Please see section 28

## **Sustainability / Replication**

**32. Summarize the success or challenges in ensuring the project will be sustained or replicated**

The World Heritage Area **will not** sustain unless strategic and long-term support is provided by the Solomon Islands Government and the International Community.

**33. Summarize any unplanned activities that are likely to result in increased sustainability or replicability**

NA

**Safeguards**

**34. If not listed as a separate Project Component and described above, summarize the implementation of any required action related to social, environmental, or pest management safeguards**

N/A

**Additional Comments/Recommendations**

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

From the experience gained through this project we recommend trialing a Payment for Ecosystems Services project to commence within 3-6 months.

Attached to this report is an example of what such program could look like. Has this been submitted?

**Additional Funding**

**36. 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**

NA

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes

\* Categorize the type of funding as:

- 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)*

### **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](http://www.cepf.net), and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

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