

CEPF Final Project Completion Report

Instructions to grantees: please complete all fields, and respond to all questions, below.

Organization Legal Name	<i>Ecological Solutions Solomon Islands</i>
Project Title	Baseline Biodiversity Inventory of Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara River Corridor, on Choiseul Island, Solomon Islands
CEPF GEM No.	64270
Date of Report	February 1, 2016
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CEPF Region: East Melanesian Islands

Strategic Direction: 1 – Empower local communities to protect and manage globally significant biodiversity at priority key Biodiversity Areas under-served by current conservation efforts.

Grant Amount: USD\$ 72, 700.00

Project Dates: June 1 2014 to August 30 2015.

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

Choiseul Provincial Government – access to field sites, logistics support, and opportunity to partner with resource based management outcomes of the province.

Lauru Land Conference and Tribal Community – access to field sites, logistics support, and opportunity to partner with a traditional indigenous organization that supports resource and cultural heritage site managements.

Landowners and rural communities – access to field sites, logistic support, and engage and train the resource owners in the field studies, monitoring and community based management.

Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology of Solomon Islands Government – research partnership, access to environmental legislation expertise, government support.

Solomon Islands Community Conservation Partnership – office support, technical and logistic support, and in-kind support

Solomon Islands National University – research and publication partnership, participation of students from school of natural resources, and increase field based activities.

Conservation Impacts

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

This project has contributed towards the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile by conducting a baseline biodiversity survey of the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River Corridor.

The above unique flora and fauna and the number of species recorded from this survey have contributed new information that raise the Ecosystem Profile of the Mt Maetambe to Kolobangara River hotspot in the Eastern Melanesian Hotspot area.

The survey also identified the threats to flora and fauna of the Mt Maetambe to Kolobangara River. This also provides an opportunity for monitoring and at the same time mitigation strategies to reduce any major negative impacts on the flora and faunas.

We also provide basic survey techniques and taxonomic trainings for local customary landowners, Solomon Islands National University Students and Young local scientists.

3. Summarize the overall results/impact of your project

The summary result of the biodiversity survey is below:

Mammals – 3 Species

Bats & Flying foxes – 10 Species

Reptiles – 25 Species

Frogs – 18 Species

Birds – 58 Species

Freshwater fish – 50 Species

Freshwater Invertebrates – 25 Species

Flora – 157 Species

Full results can be found here: <http://ecologicalsolutions-si.com/files/110494600.pdf>

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

List each long-term impact from Grant Writer proposal

Register The Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara River KBA as a Conservation Area under the Protected Area Act 2010 of Solomon Islands Government.

4. Actual progress toward long-term impacts at completion

We are now working towards the mapping of the customary land boundaries of the customary land along the Mt Maetambe to Kolobanagra River. This will be followed by the protected area scoping and consultation meeting.

We will also be working towards wildlife monitoring of keystone species document during the survey. A monitoring protocol will be developed

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

List each short-term impact from Grant Writer proposal

Document baseline biodiversity of Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara KBA. Furthermore, demarcate and map land boundary for each trip with the record of their genealogy. Development of Management Plan for Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara River KBA.

5. Actual progress toward short-term impacts at completion

Baseline biodiversity of Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara KBA has been documented. Furthermore, the land boundary for each tribe was demarcated and mapped in draft form, with a record of their genealogy. Development of a management plan for Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara River KBA has not yet begun, pending the mapping of customary land boundaries.

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

The project was a success because it has achieved the following:

1. Conducted one of the largest Biological Survey Expedition on the Island of Choiseul with a scientists participating from six different countries.
2. Successfully documented flora and fauna of the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River Corridor.
3. Conducted mentoring of young local scientists by senior local scientists and international scientists.
4. Provided opportunities for two local female scientists to participate in the biological expedition.
5. Involved three SINU newly graduate students during the field surveys in Choiseul.
6. Provided basic trainings on field survey techniques and taxonomic identification for local guides.
7. The project brought together conflicting families and tribes to resolve their differences and work together to support the conservation efforts in Choiseul.

Despite the many successes, there are still a lot of challenges that we experienced:

1. One of the major challenges is the leadership dispute within some of the tribal groups that we are working with.
2. Land boundaries and land ownership disputes still exist between the adjacent tribes.
3. The expedition itself was very expensive.

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

Yes, working with customary landowners or tribal groups will always be a challenge when dealing with land ownership and land boundaries. However, this does not mean that there will be no positive or negative impacts. With this kind of work we must be prepared for positive or negative impacts. The only important thing is that we must be prepared to address the issues with tact and according to our social safeguard policies. For example, some of the porters and guides demanded more money for their work with the scientific expedition team. We did not expect these demands but we manage to resolve their demands amicably.

Project Components and Products/Deliverables

Component 1 (as stated in the approved proposal)

List each component and product/deliverable from Grant Writer

Component 1: Stakeholders meeting and planning for the Mount Maetambe-Kolombanagara River

1. Lists of traditional landowners with customary rights over the Mount Maetambe-Kolombanagara River Corridor" and "Maps showing customary rights of traditional landowners to resources within the corridor.
2. Compliance with CEPF Social Safeguard Policies monitored and reported to CEPF.

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

1. Lists of traditional landowners with customary rights over the Mount Maetambe-Kolombanagara River Corridor" and "Maps showing customary rights of traditional landowners to resources within the corridor.

We identified almost all the traditional landowners with customary rights over Mount Maetambe-Kolobangara. We invited them to a meeting and asked them to participate in a mapping exercise by drawing their land boundary within the project site. A draft map showing all the customary land and their traditional owners was completed

We are currently mapping the customary land boundaries within the project site using GPS under a separate CEPF grant.

2. Compliance with CEPF Social Safeguard Policies monitored and reported to CEPF.

The ESSI team complied with the CEPF Social Safeguard Policies. Compliance was monitored and two semi-annual monitoring reports were submitted to CEPF.

Component 2 (as stated in the approved proposal)

List each component and product/deliverable from Grant Writer

Component 2: Multi-taxa biodiversity survey of the Mt Maetambe and Kolobangara River Corridor. The findings from the Bio RAP survey will be used as the awareness materials for the surrounding communities and the traditional landowners at the project site.

1. Catalogue of voucher specimens collected during field survey
2. Collection, export and (where required) CITES permits for any specimens exported to museums outside of the Solomon Islands.
3. Report on preliminary findings of field survey
4. Full species inventory, containing final taxonomic determinations of voucher specimens and field records.

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

1. Catalogue of voucher specimens collected during field survey

Most of the specimens collected from the field survey were catalogued into our database. Future survey plans are to survey Mt Maetambe, Koloma, Voba and Kona customary lands and the lower part of Kolombangara River, if funding is available in the future.

2. Collection, export and (where required) CITES permits for any specimens exported to museums outside of the Solomon Islands.

Biological specimens collected during the expedition were exported to overseas research institutions and museums for taxonomic and molecular studies. The staffs at the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology of the Solomon Islands Government were very helpful with the export permits and the CITES permit for species that are listed under the CITES Appendices before the export permits were granted.

3. Report on preliminary findings of field survey

A preliminary summary report of the expedition was completed in January 2015. This report was submitted to CEPF and also posted on ESSI website.

- 4 Full species inventory, containing final taxonomic determinations of voucher specimens and field records.

The final lists of all the species recorded and collected during the field expedition, based on verification of the species by taxonomic experts, were compiled and published in the final expedition report.

Component 3 (as stated in the approved proposal)

List each component and product/deliverable from Grant Writer

Component 3: Media Campaign

1. Documentation and dissemination of the field surveys, to share findings with local communities and the wider public.
2. At least two media reports on the survey featured in local newspapers, radio and television
3. A video documenting the survey uploaded onto the Ecological Solutions, Solomon Islands (ESSI) website and YouTube.
4. Report on activities to raise biodiversity awareness and disseminate survey results among local communities.

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

1. Documentation and dissemination of the field surveys, to share findings with local communities and the wider public.

The expedition summary report was printed and distributed to tribal members and other key stakeholders. The summary result was presented to all the tribes or customary landowners that we worked with in Choiseul.

The expedition result was presented in the CHICCHAP and LLCTC meetings in Choiseul and was presented in a regional meeting in Suva, Fiji.

2. At least two media reports on the survey featured in local newspapers, radio and television.

We used the following media to disseminate the results of our work: a. local newspapers, b. social media such as Facebook and c. ESSI's website. Currently we do not have a local TV station in the Solomon Islands.

3. A video documenting the survey will be uploaded onto the Ecological Solutions, Solomon Islands (ESSI) website and YouTube.

A video documentary of the project and the field expedition is still in progress, and was not completed by the end of the project.

4. Report on activities to raise biodiversity awareness and disseminate survey results among local communities.

The expedition summary report was distributed to key stakeholders, and a community awareness program was held with all the communities where male, female, youths and school children all attended the presentations. We are now copying the expedition summary report, the final report and the pictures from the survey to flash drives and will give one flash drive to each tribe. We are working on producing posters and a special issue of *Melanesian geo* magazine that will be distributed to communities and school as part of the biodiversity awareness program. The expedition summary report, final report and media releases about the project have been posted on the ESSI website.

Component 4 (as stated in the approved proposal)

List each component and product/deliverable from Grant Writer

Component 4: Preliminary Report

1. Report on stakeholders meeting and planning

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

1. Report on stakeholders meeting and planning

A preliminary report was compiled, printed and given to key stakeholders. The preliminary report provided platform for stakeholders planning for the second phase of the project. The preliminary report was also posted on the ESSI website.

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

The component that we are currently working on is the awareness materials. We have posters that are ready to be printed; we have also collected articles for a special issue that will be published on *Melanesian geo* magazine and a short educational DVD about the expedition and the importance about the findings of the expedition and why it is important to conserve Mt Maetambe to Kolobangara River.

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

This project has contributed the baseline knowledge of the biological wealth of Mt Maetambe to Kolobangara River Corridor. The information compiled from the expedition results provided the foundation and gives value to why it is important to protect this unique site.

We are looking forward to printing the educational materials like the posters, *Melanesian geo* and the short DVD. These products will be distributed to the communities and schools in Choiseul.

CEPF Global Monitoring Data

Respond to the questions and complete the tables below. If a question is not relevant to your project, please make an entry of 0 (zero) or n/a (not applicable).

14. List any vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species conserved due to your project

The following species of conservation concern were recorded during the survey:

1. Plants

1. *Pterocarpus indicus* - Vulnerable

2. Birds

1. *Accipiter imitator* – Vulnerable
2. *Haliaeetus sanfordi* – Vulnerable
3. *Pitta anerythra* – Vulnerable
4. *Reinwardtoena crassirostris* – Near Threatened
5. *Ducula rubricera* – Near Threatened
6. *Rhipidura cockerelli* – Near Threatened

3. Mammals

1. *Pteropus mahaganus* – Vulnerable
2. *Pteropus rayneri grandis* – Near Threatened

4. Reptiles

Most of the reptiles recorded are Least Concern except for Poncelet's crocodile skink- *Tribolonotus ponceleti* is listed as Data Deficient and 10 other species were recorded as Not Evaluated.

5. Frogs

1. *Palmatorappia solomonis* – Vulnerable
2. *Litoria lutea* – Vulnerable

3. Three other species are recorded as Not Evaluated.

Hectares Under Improved Management

Project Results	Hectares*	Comments
15. Did your project strengthen the management of an existing protected area? Yes	399	<i>Sirebe and Vuri tribal Community Conservation initiatives. These are two existing community based conservation initiatives</i>
16. Did your project create a new protected area or expand an existing protected area? Yes	78 000	<i>This includes almost all the customary land that are part of the Mt Maetambe to Kolombangara Rive Corridor Watershed. Despite the fact that there are almost four logging companies that are operating within the project site, we are hoping to rehabilitate those areas and declared the whole watershed as a protected area under the protected area act.</i>
17. 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) Yes	78 399	<i>Mount Maetambe – Kolombangara River Corridor Watershed</i>
18. Did your project improve the management of a production landscape for biodiversity conservation Yes	78 399	<i>Mount Maetambe to Kolombangara River Corridor Watershed</i>

** Include total hectares from project inception to completion*

Please note that the above results are being worked towards but were not actually achieved under this project.

19. 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.)

NO

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

20. 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.

Mount Matambe to Kolombangara River Corridor

Direct Beneficiaries: Training and Education

<i>Did your project provide training or education for . . . Yes</i>	Male	Female	Total	Brief Description
21. Adults for community leadership or resource management positions	110	94	204	In most of our consultation meetings, community awareness meeting and GPS trainings, we put emphasis on community leadership and resource management. We encourage the customary land owners that we are working with to strengthen the community governance and encourage their traditional ecological knowledge for resource management
22. Adults for livelihoods or increased income				
23. School-aged children	105	87	192	Most of our community awareness programs involved school-age children. We talked about our project to them in terms of the importance of conserving the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River Corridor or water shed because Mt Maetambe is the primary water source the island of Choiseul, the unique flora and fauna recorded and the cultural significant of the place that warrant protection under the protect area act 2010
24. Other				

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

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

In this project we are not working with communities but tribal groups that owns customary land tenure of the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River. Most of the tribal members are spread throughout the Choiseul Island and are residing in a number of different villages around the island of Choiseul. Below are the tribes that we are working with.

These are tribes that we expect to benefit in the medium term, through protected area development but we cannot claim that they benefited significantly from the survey.

No	Tribal name	Surrounding District	Surrounding Province	Country	Population size
1	Matakali	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
2	Voba	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
3	Kona	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
4	Koloma	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
5	Jito	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
6	Garasa	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
7	Batono	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
8	Siporae	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded

No	Tribal name	Surrounding District	Surrounding Province	Country	Population size
9	Vuri	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
10	Sirebe	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
11	Paleka	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
12	Padezaka	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded
13	Zodi	North and South Choiseul	Choiseul Province	Solomon Islands	Yet to confirm. Will be able to confirm once all the genealogy are recorded

Vuri										x											
Sirebe										x											
Paleka																					
Padezaka																					
Zodi																					

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

Lessons Learned

27. 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

There are a number of lessons learned during the project design and implementation

1. Proper planning and budgeting. Our team underestimated the budget for this work therefore, we learnt how to work within the limited project budget. The field expedition was really expensive therefore; we re-directed some of the budgeted activities to pay for the expedition debts. This meant we had to scale down on some of the communication activities.
2. Develop a healthy working relationship with the chiefs, and members of their tribe.
3. Use the existing community governance dynamics to address any concerns or issues arise during the project period.
4. Treat everyone equally with respect.
5. Listen carefully and take advice or instructions from chiefs or village elders.
6. Honesty, accountability and transparent should be the key principles of working relationship and partnerships.
7. Constant communication with all the stakeholders and partners provides confidence to all the partners within the project site

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

Having the right partners and stakeholders at the project design stage contributed to the success of our project. We had partners with the right customary landowners, the Lauru Land Conference of Tribal Community (LLCTC), Choiseul Provincial Government, Solomon Islands Government, local and international NGOs, educational institutions, research institutions and museums. This partnership contributed towards the success of our project. The project was also designed in a way that training of customary landowners, young and upcoming local scientists that are partnering with international scientists

Despite the success story, I would also like to highlight our shortcomings; they were

1. Under budgeting of the activities stated in the final proposal
2. Too many partners also slows down the timing of the final report to be produced in time

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

The project was successfully implemented according to our project design. The implementation of the project was smoothly carried out with the involvement of all the key stakeholders and partners. The project was successful implementation of customary landowners and young and upcoming local scientists in the field. This also includes the training of three newly graduate students from Solomon Islands National University and two young female scientists as part of the expedition. The project was carried out as it was schedule in the field but the shortcomings are due to the long delay from all collaborators to turn in their field reports for the compilation.

30. Describe any other lessons learned relevant to the conservation community

1. The conservation community worked together to achieve common goals despite the differences within each tribe.
2. The conservation community came together in reconciliation with each other to resolve some internal differences among themselves.
3. The conservation community involved most of the male young people and few of their elders to be participating in the field expedition.
4. The conservation community appreciated the involvement of local scientists including the two females and three newly graduates from Solomon Islands National University.

Sustainability / Replication

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

Success

This project was a success because it was under the leadership of a team of locals from Choiseul Island who are part of some of the customary landowners within the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River Corridor. The team also conducted previous work with the following tribes Matakali, Siribe, and Vuri from 1996 to 2010. Therefore, the team members had a long relationship working with these three tribes and expanded their work to other tribes. It is the team's passion that they want to protect the biodiversity and cultural importance of the highest point on Choiseul Island and one of its watersheds.

Challenges

Some of the challenges encountered during the project were:

1. When I did not visit the tribes in the first four months of 2015, they all thought that this project had come to an end. I sent a letter to all the tribal leaders informing them of my trip to meet them in the month of May 2015. Once the meeting was conducted with tribal members and chiefs in a very transparent matter then that drove all their question and doubts away. This also brought back confidence that the project was still on track.
2. There were rumours circulated within the different tribes that all the specimens that were collected during the field expedition were for sale at the overseas market. People were told that I made a lot of money from the specimens. False rumours and unsubstantiated information from individuals or groups of people can be detrimental to the project.
3. Under budgeting of the field expedition and diverting funds to pay for all the expedition expenses jeopardized other planned activities.

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

In some of the trips that I took to visit the project sites and have consultation meeting with the customary landowners are highly usually appreciated. Furthermore, spending a quality time with them and have informal discussions are always valued. I believe these traits helped our team to progress well with our project. One of the future plans that we are currently discussing with our partner LLCTC and Choiseul Province is to look for funds that can support sports activities that can be used as a vehicle to

promote environmental stewardship to all the youths around the island of Choiseul. This will attract sports that engage young females and males.

Safeguards

33. 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

This wasn't listed as a project component but based on the results we get from the camera traps that was set up during the expedition, we have records of wild cats in the Mt Maetambe area. We thought that the wild cats contributed to the extinction of the Choiseul ground pigeon. Therefore, we are now thinking of designing a project that will help to manage or eradicate these alien (wild cat) species to avoid any further loss to the unique fauna that are recorded on Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

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

We would like to THANK CEPF for their understanding and support. Our team has incurred a major debt to local businesses and individuals. The support provided by these local businesses and individuals have contributed towards the success of the expedition.

We would also like to CEPF who has allowed us to use funds within our funding that was budgeted for other activities to pay for the debts.

We would also like to thank CEPF for their patience and understanding. This report was well over due and passed datelines. Our record with CEPF was dented by our continuous late submission of our reports. It is anticipated that once we engage an office manager, which was suggested to our team by the CEPF team in our meeting in June 2015 will help with on our reporting. We are hoping that one of the roles of the Office manager is to submit our reports on time to CEPF. We have also requested for a salary for an office manager in our request for the extension of our grant.

Therefore, Thank you, Thank you, Thank you CEPF for your support. It was through your support that we could take this project forward.

Additional Funding

35. 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

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
Society of Ichthyology, French	Community Consultation and Choiseul Expedition Trip	USD\$10,226.97	
James Cook University, Australia	Choiseul Expedition Trip	USD\$1774.84	
Kansas University, USA	Choiseul Expedition Trip	USD\$4457.09	
University of Queensland, Australia	Choiseul Expedition Trip	USD\$3035.68	
United States of Geological Services, USA	Choiseul Expedition Trip	USD\$3999.95	
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program, Solomon Islands Office	Chiefs Consultation meeting, Community Consultation and Choiseul Expedition Trip	USD\$19,285.00	

* 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, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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