

WCS PNG 64357 – Social Assessment

The proposed WCS project “*Conservation of Key Biodiversity Areas and at Risk Species for the Northern Bismarck Sea Through Participatory Ecosystem Based Management and Threat Mitigation: Part 1: Participatory Rural Appraisal and Rapid Biodiversity Assessments of Manus and Mussau*” is planning to undertake work under the submitted CEPF proposal on Manus Province and on the Mussau Islands belonging to New Ireland Province.

(i) Identification of Indigenous People in the project areas

Manus, the largest island Manus Province, is home to around 54,000 people and WCS project sites will be located with two tribes: Tulu on the north coast and Pelipatu on the south coast. The Tulu tribe operate a chief system called the “Tulu Council of Chiefs” as well as a “hausboi” system, whereas the Powai tribe just have a “hausboi” system that follows a traditional clan structure present in many areas of Papua New Guinea (PNG). The villages of both tribes are on the coast and while they get most of their protein from the sea they are reliant upon terrestrial sources for additional protein (such as cuscus and bandicoot) as well as carbohydrates (sago). The Tulu field site will be focused on the village of Tulu 1 which has a total population of 466 (PNG 2011 census), and the Powai field site will be centered on the village of Pelipatu which has a population of 121 people (PNG 2011 census). Five major clans are found within Tulu 1 (Petepuak, Wii, Kale, Chachau, Nachi and Ko’o) and three major clans occur at Pelipatu (Puwian, Sopumu, Maiyah). Both communities have gone through FPIC procedures with WCS in the last two years and WCS will consult and works with representatives from all clans at both sites.

The Mussau Islands (also known as the St Matthias group) are politically part of New Ireland Province and are a small and geographically distinct part of the Bismark Archipelago. There are ten main islands; the largest and most northerly is Mussau, with further smaller islands including Eloaua, Emananus, Boliu, Emussau, Ebanalu, Ekaleu, Emriau and Tench. The population of the Mussau Islands is around 6700. Based on the location of remaining tracts of primary forest our proposed study sites are likely to be sited adjacent to two of the following villages; Palakau, Sinakasai, Maroi and Lomakunauru, which are located on the southern tip of Mussau. Proposed marine study sites will include the southern small islands of Loaua and Emananusa. Due to its isolation and general absence of conservation or other development work on the islands information on Mussau is very restricted and our knowledge of the social structure and systems on the island is currently limited. There are likely to be close cultural similarities with Manus Province given their shared Lapita histories, and Mussau is likely to follow a similar tribal and clan structure to Manus. Christianity is the predominant religion (99%) with most islanders belonging to the Seventh Day Adventist (90%) or Catholic (10%) churches. Following an initial scoping visit and FPIC processes (see below) work on Mussau will follow a similar approach to that already undertaken by WCS on Manus, with WCS identifying communities that are interested in working with the project and then ensuring that all major clans are involved in the ensuing project.

As well as working with clans, WCS also attempts to ensure that a representative cross section of the communities are engaged in the project and aims particularly to make sure that women (who are often isolated from the traditional decision making processes) are involved in community meetings and discussions.

(ii) *Expected project impacts*

Potential positive impacts of the proposed project include the following:

- 1) Providing information about the existence of a community and its biodiversity. Currently, so little is known about Mussau, in any perspective, the documentation of the work undertaken by WCS is of great importance in creating a profile for this island and recognition of its environmental issues at the provincial level.
- 2) The use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools, particularly for Mussau, will be the first time such community engagement has been undertaken for these communities. Based on our experience of PRA on Manus and in other WCS PNG project sites this process will create opportunities for the community to come together, discuss future plans and recognize their communal environmental the values and have these documented.
- 3) The PRA, resource mapping and biodiversity surveys help facilitate effective management by providing a spatial reference for future participatory monitoring in the assessment of resources which are critical for the food security of wild resources.
- 4) The repatriation of survey information to communities is a core element of WCS PNG's work program and this element has been built in to the proposal. Most communities in PNG are intensely interested in their local environment and many are visited by research teams but never receive outputs or updates on the results. Repatriation of our data (both from the PRA process and the biodiversity surveys) through reports in Tok Pisin and by trained community facilitators will help raise understanding among local communities of issues affecting their own environment. This repatriation process is also vital for answering questions and issues that have arisen from the community on the PRA or biodiversity surveys.
- 5) The biodiversity survey also represents a short-term income generating opportunity for local communities via the hire and use of local experts, field assistants, boat drivers, porters, and cooks. Catering costs will be paid directly to women involved ensuring some distribution of benefits. Accommodation and food will be purchased locally and thereby be of benefit to the local economy.

Potential negative impacts of the proposed project include the following:

- 1) The selection of guides, porters, field assistants and houses for accommodation has the potential to raise jealousies and complaints amongst individuals or households who feel they are not equally benefitting from the project. WCS will work closely with representatives from all major clans in open meetings to try and minimize the risk of such grievances, and to ensure an

equitable split of income opportunities. Payment for services will also occur in a public space directly with the people involved to ensure transparency.

- 2) While WCS's experience to date of working with clans and resource mapping has been positive, it also has the potential to uncover or re-energize clan disputes that have been dormant for a number of years. Work by the community engagement teams will highlight this risk and make it clear that it is the communities own responsibility to resolve such issues. If such disputes cause major issues then the project will temporarily or fully withdraw from the site until these are resolved.

(iii) Procurement of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC)

WCS PNG has adopted the FPIC process as one of its key community engagement principles and we are well practiced in undertaking this approach at all of our project sites. On Manus Island the FPIC process has already been successfully followed at both study sites and the communities are experienced in this procedure. While FPIC work has already been undertaken in Tulu 1 and Pelipatau further FPIC processes will be undertaken for the new elements included within this project.

Mussau is a new site and WCS will conduct a FPIC during the initial stages of the project. Project component 1, includes plans for an initial stakeholder meeting with Mussau Islanders based in the New Ireland Provincial Capital of Kavieng, where people from Mussau are located (activities 1.1 and 1.2). This will be followed up by a visit of WCS's community engagement team to proposed project sites on Mussau to work with local communities and undertake a full FPIC process on the proposed work. The WCS New Ireland team includes one team member who is a Mussau Islander and he will be involved with the community engagement team during the initial and subsequent visits to the islands.

(iv) Measures to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits

WCS understands that for anyone to be able to have any interaction with the forests or seas in PNG they will have to work with local people. WCS has designed strategies to improve on community relationships through the engagement of Community Facilitators and develop a process for entry and exit for its programs in Papua New Guinea. Community Facilitators are typically local people from within or from neighbouring communities to project areas, who are trained by WCS to work with communities and explain the project work in local languages. This process empowers communities to recognize and take action after conducting community consultations amongst themselves on how to address their issues and requesting outside assistance where needed through community facilitators.

Manus - WCS works with communities who have already chosen that they have an issue with their terrestrial and marine resources and need help to develop resource management plans. Using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) communities are led through a thinking process that helps them to understand some basic but vital back ground information on natural resource management, biodiversity

conservation, what the different laws says, and what their rights are with regard to natural resource management and biodiversity conservation without feeling belittled in their knowledge about managing their own resources. Understanding these issues will help them to make better decisions on and at the same time help the organization to learn about the community and offer better guidance on natural resource management. The end result should then be a fully engaged community with a resource management plan that is developed through a fully informed process. The Manus communities have been through this process already but follow up work by this project will help to further reduce the likelihood of negative impacts and provide benefits that the community is looking for.

Mussau – since this is a new site most of the community engagement work will be focused there. Following the initial scoping and FPIC visit a full PRA will be conducted by WCS community engagement team with the communities who have expressed an interest in working with WCS and who have also recognized that they need assistance in managing their natural resources. If this PRA process follows other WCS projects then it will help to set realistic expectations about what the project can deliver and help avoid potential negative impacts from the work.

(v) Monitoring impacts

The WCS community engagement protocol requires the visiting field to conduct a full community meeting to introduce the project and what will happen. This provides an open opportunity for the community members to ask questions for clarifications. During this process WCS will know if the community fully understands the purpose of the project. Follow up meetings will be held with communities at all project sites on a six monthly basis. These meetings are an opportunity for WCS to repatriate initial findings while listening to community comments and concerns. This is the first step toward understand the community's understanding of the purpose of the project. Furthermore, this project will provide WCS with opportunities for long term monitoring and as such base line data through a PRA will be collected and later analyzed for long term monitoring of the project. Community meetings (at the start end of the project) and baseline data will be undertaken with all communities on Manus and Mussau where the proposed CEPF project will be taking place.

(vi) Grievance mechanism

WCS has extensive experience working with the people in Manus and any grievance will be brought up by the community leaders and brought to WCS's attention. Members of the community engagement team and project leaders will be in dialogue with the community to resolve this in an as amicable manner as possible. WCS does not get involved in disputes/grievances that are outside the project area and do not involved the organization, and such grievances will be dealt with by local authorities through accepted process and norms. The same process will be followed with communities on Mussau as on Manus, and should grievances arise these will be resolved through dialogue with community leaders and WCS community engagement team and project leaders. WCS's experience of working in PNG indicates

that the best way to avoid grievance is to carefully manage expectations of what WCS and the project can deliver, and this should be adequately covered by the FPIC and PRA processes described above.