

## CEPF Final Project Completion Report

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

Organization Legal Name	Ecological Solutions-Solomon Islands
Project Title	Mapping of Customary Lands in Mount Maetambe to Kolombangara River
CEPF GEM No.	65755
Date of Report	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2017

### CEPF Hotspot: East Melanesian Islands

#### CEPF Investment Strategy:

**Strategic Direction 2:** Integrate biodiversity conservation into local land-use and development planning

**Investment Priorities 2.1:** Conduct participatory ownership and tenure mapping of resources within customary lands at priority sites

**Grant Amount: \$153,000.00 USD**

**Project Dates: March 1, 2015- April 30, 2017**

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

- a). Choiseul Provincial Government – access to field sites, logistics support, and opportunity to partner with resource based management outcomes of the province.
- b). Lauru Land Conference of Tribal Communities (LLCTC) – access to field sites, logistics support, and opportunity to partner with a traditional indigenous organization that supports resource and cultural heritage site managements.
- c). 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.
- d). Ministry of Environment, Solomon Islands Government – research partnership, access to environmental legislation expertise, government support.

#### Conservation Impacts

#### 2. Describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF investment strategy set out in the ecosystem profile

The project was aimed at two CEPF investment strategies set out in the ecosystem profile, that is; **Strategic Direction 2:** Integrate biodiversity conservation into local land-use and

development planning and **Investment Priority 2.1**: Conduct participatory ownership and tenure mapping of resources within customary lands at priority sites.

Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara River Watershed was identified as a priority area in the CEPF Ecosystem Profile for the East Melanesian Islands Hotspot. In terms of biodiversity, Phase 1 of this project proves that there are high numbers of IUCN listed taxa in this priority area. Also important to note is the fact that there are some conservation efforts highlighted by the provincial government although nothing in reality has been done on the site to ensure this place is conserved and preserved. It is essential to highlight that the pressures from the mining and logging within the KBA are pressingly high. The project contributed to the CEPF investment strategy by mapping ten customary land boundaries in the Mt Maetambe- Kolobangara River Watershed, recording of genealogies of each tribe, development of land use plans and setting up of tribal associations that will help to manage their tribal protected areas. The project helped to achieve demarcated land boundaries and land ownership of each tribe. The establishment of tribal associations ensures that respective tribesmen take ownership of the conservation initiative to ensure its sustainability over time.

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

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

*List each long-term impact from Grant Writer proposal*

1. Customary ownership of land within Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River KBA formally registered with the Solomon Islands Government.
2. Land Use plan for the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River KBA for Forestry, Cultural and Biological Diversity Management Area determined by the customary land owners.
3. The Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River KBA formally to be registered as forestry and biological diversity management under Protected Area Act 2010 of the Solomon Islands Government.

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

One of the priority impacts of this work was to involve land owners to physically sight land boundaries belonging to their tribes who own the Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara River Watershed KBA, and to map those boundaries. Not only that, an essential partnership was formed with these customary land owners, that is ensured by trust and support. This is done through capacity building of local land owners by training them how to use a GPS and actually guiding them to conduct the mapping of their own customary land boundaries. This process ensures that the customary land owners take ownership.

Recording each tribe's genealogy was essential to identify who the real custodians of each tribal land are. The involvement of LLCTC in the recording of genealogy helps to make sure that this important cultural process is done in a worthy manner according to the Choiseul customs and tradition.

Forming tribal associations contribute to each tribe's ownership on the conservation initiative to take a leading role in the conservation of their own land. Now that tribal associations are formed, progress is underway to register each tribal association as a charitable community based organization who will manage their own proposed protected area.

The next phase of this project is aimed at registering each customary land boundary that was mapped, as a protected area under the Protected Areas Act of the Solomon Islands. More tribes have seen the impact of this project and are interested in protecting their own tribal lands as well.

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

*List each short-term impact from Grant Writer proposal*

1. The mapping of Land boundaries and demarcation between each tribe registered with Luru Land Conference of the Tribal Community.
2. The recording of each tribe genealogy reflects the correct and true record of the customary land ownership.
3. A comprehensive Land Use Planning for the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River KBA.
4. Each customary landowner forms an association registered as a charitable organization and affiliated to the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River KBA governance body (AMENDMENT April 2016).
5. Develop a Resource Governance Guideline for Mouth Maetambe to Kolobangara River Watershed KBA.
6. Develop a resource benefit sharing guideline among and between each tribe.
7. Produce an audit report of the work and financial management for the project.

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

During the phase of this project, much progress was made in achieving the planned short-term impacts. We managed to work with 10 tribes to the end of the project. Through awareness and capacity trainings for using GPS, customary land owners have seen and were confident that their tribal land boundaries are on the road to be preserved and that the biodiversity of their lands will be conserved. Customary land owners now understand the importance of conserving their customary lands under the Protected Area Act as many of them have experienced the negative impacts that logging has brought to their communities and families.

Progress toward short-term impacts are as follows:

- Tribal lands were actually mapped. Customary land owners gained knowledge of the use of a GPS and were empowered to actually carry out the mapping of their own customary land boundaries, taking ownership in the process under guidance of ESSI field staff. This process enabled young youths who were selected to join the mapping team to

- physically view their land boundaries and see for themselves land marks that were passed only orally, something which was impossible previously.
- Progress was made in recording genealogies of the tribes who own the tribal lands in the Mt Maetambe-Kolobangara River Watershed KBA. This process of recording genealogies confirmed who is entitled to each customary land which will prevent others from wrongfully claiming ownership. The recording was done by LLCTC which is a body that deals with all land issues and land ownership in Choiseul Island. This partnership with LLCTC strengthens the confidence of respective tribesmen as LLCTC is the right body to deal with this issue, according to the traditions of Choiseul.
  - Awareness has been on the topic of Land Use Planning. Knowledge of the importance of planning which developments and activities to take place at the exact site on a piece of land was acquired by land owners. Few tribes have actually carried out this exercise, thereby enabling proper planning for the future of their customary lands to make good use of current resources and ways to get the greatest benefits out of their lands.
  - Each of the tribes that we have worked with have established tribal associations. Constitutions were finalized and executive committees were chosen for each association which will be registered in the near future as charitable organizations. The establishment of tribal associations aims to build a governance system that will take ownership of looking after their proposed protected area under the Protected Areas Act.
  - It is essential that not only do tribes offer their lands for formal protection, but that they receive alternative options to support their livelihoods out of this initiative. Thus, resource benefit sharing guidelines for each tribe ensures that benefit will be shared in an equitable and fair manner for the benefit of all respective tribal men/women.

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

### Successes:

- Successfully mapped 10 tribal land boundaries which will progress towards protected area status
- Built confidence and capacity training of respective tribes men on the basics of how to use a GPS, a necessary technical skill
- Some families and tribes were able to resolve their conflicts and cooperate to support conservation initiatives in Choiseul

### Challenges:

- There had been some conflicts over the leadership of some tribes, more of an internal matter within each tribe, but somehow, this affected the progress of the project.
- Conflicting work schedules of field staff and communities or tribes slowed the progress of the work
- Local people have no idea that the project has a timeframe, thus kept postponing schedule activities
- Since the project site is in the interior of Choiseul Island, it is prone to rainfall and other natural disturbances, thus, bad weather contributed to pushing the project behind time.
- Choiseul Island is a very big island and people from one tribe reside all over the island, thus, it is very expensive to bring everyone from just one tribe to just one place for meetings etc.

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

The positive unexpected impacts include:

- Tribal/family reconciliations
- Meeting Solomon Islands Government target for Achi Target 2020

Negative unexpected impacts included:

- Land disputes and family conflicts still remain
- Potential for creating high expectations amongst communities and not fulfilling them.

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

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

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

Component 1: Mapping of Customary lands in Mt Maetambe to Kolobangara River Watershed.

1.1 Mapping of the following customary land boundaries for Matakali tribe, Voba Tribe, Kona tribe, Koloma tribe, Batongo tribe, Paleka tribe, Zodi tribe and Padezaka tribe.

1.2 Conduct GPS training for members of each tribe that were chosen to participate in the customary land boundary mapping exercise.

1.3 Final Reports on the Land Acquisition and Land Registration with the Solomon Islands Government Lands Office by December 2016. However, this process will also depend on the new customary land registration law that will be discussed in the parliament for approval sometimes this year.

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

1.1-A total of 9 tribal customary land boundaries were mapped in this project. The tribes are Vuri, Sirebe, Siporae, Batongo, Koloma, Garasa, Kona, Voba, Matakale. One tribe (Jito)'s total land boundary was acquired. The total area mapped accumulated including Jito was 18,832 hectares. Final maps were digitized and finalized.

1.2-A total of approximately 200 men were trained to use a GPS and with guidance of ESSI field staff, were able to map their respective tribal customary land boundaries.

1.3-Relevant documents such as final tribal maps, genealogies and constitutions are being compiled. However, the challenge now to this component is the question of when this legislation will be passed in the parliament. Once the respective law is passed in parliament, ESSI will submit each tribe's documents to register each customary land boundary under this law.

### **Component 2 (as stated in the approved proposal)**

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

Component 2: Intergration of biodiversity conservation in management practice in Mt Maetambe to Kolobangara River Watershed

2.1 First priority is to map all customary land boundaries and the current land use on each customary land. This will later follow up with a comprehensive land use plan for each customary land.

2.2 Develop a Resource Management Plan for Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River Watershed. 2.3 Produce educational materials for community awareness based on the results of the biological expedition report.

2.3 Produce educational materials for community awareness based on the results of the biological expedition report.

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

2.1- A complete map set for each customary land boundary that were mapped were finalized. Land Use Plan awareness was conducted for Garasa, Vuri, Sirebe, Siporae, Batongo, Koloma and Matakale. Each tribe now has increased knowledge about what is Land Use Planning and its importance. Two tribes Sirebe and Vuri already have their own tribal land use plans.

2.2- An example of a Resource Management Plan was drafted as a guide and the specific guideline and template for writing of Management Plans in Solomon Islands were collated. These resources will be used for the tribal protected areas to be established under the Protected Areas Act in Phase three of this project. Awareness for this component was conducted to Vuri, Garasa, Sirebe, Siporae, Batongo, Koloma and Matakale tribes. The documents mentioned above will be passed to the Management Committees of each tribal protected area which will be selected in Phase three. Each tribe's management committee will use the example, guideline and template to write their own as each tribe would value different things in their tribal land compared to other tribes.

2.3- Posters portraying the unique flora and fauna of Choiseul Island based on results of the biological expedition report were displayed for community high schools and the public during subsequent Choiseul Province Second Appointed Day in February 2016 and 2017. The posters were also displayed at partner workshops and LLCTC conferences.

## **9. Repeat point 8 above for each Component in your approved proposal**

### **Component 3 (as stated in the approved proposal)**

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

Component 3: Resource Governance of Mt Maetambe to Kolobangara River Watershed

3.1 Develop a resource governance guideline for Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River Watershed. The resource governance guideline will be guided by the biological expedition results

3.2 Develop policies on resource benefit sharing among and between each tribe. A guiding principle on how benefits will be equally distributed within and between each tribe.

3.3 Develop constitution for each tribe within the Mount Maetambe to Kolobangara River KBA. Once the constitution is approved in a tribal consultation meeting then we will support each tribe to register their own tribal association under the Charitable Organisation within the Solomon Islands

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

3.1- A Resource Governance Guideline was drafted and awareness was done about this document with the following tribes: Vuri, Sirebe, Garasa, Siporae, Batongo, Matakale, and Koloma. The data for this document was taken from the Biological Inventory done in 2014 and will be used to guide the Management Plan for the proposed protected areas.

3.2- A Benefit Sharing Guideline was drafted and awareness was done to the seven tribes mentioned in 3.1. This document provides details on how the endowment funds will be shared to benefit every tribal member. The purpose of this fund is for the management and administration of the soon to be established protected areas. However, to compensate tribes for allowing their lands to be conserved, 40% will go towards community developments that will benefit all, for example, schools, and health centers or cultural centers etc.

3.3- A constitution has been finalized for the 10 tribes towards registration of each tribal CBO. Currently, due to sparse geographic locations and the fact that a lot of tribal members are living in different communities, we are still in the process of getting all the executive members to sign the constitution.

**Component 4 (as stated in the approved proposal)**

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

Component 4: Compliance with CEPF Social Safeguard Policy

AMENDMENT April 2016 4.1 We will ensure that this project will comply with CEPF Social Safeguard Policies. Our project team will monitor and report to CEPF if there is a threat that might prevent our team from doing their work in accordance to the CEPF Social Safeguard policies.

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

4.1- A Social Safeguard Policy was submitted biannually during the whole project.

**Component 5 (as stated in the approved proposal)**

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

Component 5: Conduct a Financial Audit to assess ESSI financial management for this project

5.1. Our team will engage an independent auditor to carry out the audit the project and the financial management of the project.

**Describe the results from Component 5 and each product/deliverable**

5.1- An independent auditor was engaged to perform financial audit for the project In 2015 and 2016 and to assess the financial management of this project.

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

We aimed to work with all the tribes that own Mt Maetambe- Kolobangara River KBA. However, we ended up with 10 tribes out of almost 15. We completed most of the components or deliverables, however, with some components, we managed to reach only some of the 3-6 tribes. We aim to continue to achieve the components of this project in Phase 3 as we continue to work with the tribes towards establishing tribal protected areas.

This will not affect the overall impact of the project as we will be working closely with these tribes towards establishing protected areas which is really the overall impact, legally protecting their tribal lands from destructive developments.

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

We have developed GPS Training materials to train the customary land owners on how to use a GPS.



## Benefits to Communities

### 12. Please describe the communities that have benefited from CEPF support

Please report on the size and characteristics of communities and the benefits that they have received, as a result of CEPF investment. Please provide information for all communities that have benefited **from project start to project completion**.

Community Name	Community Characteristics							Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit												
	Subsistence economy	Small landowners	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists / nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Other*	Size of Community				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 forums/structures	Improved access to ecosystem services
								50-250 people	251-500 people	501-1,000 people	Over 1,001 people									
Vuri	X		x						x							x		x	x	
Sirebe	X		X						x							x		x	x	
Siporae	X		X							x								x	x	
Batongo	X		X							x								x	x	
Garasa	X		X							x								x	x	
Koloma	X		X							x								x	x	
Kona	X		X							x								x	x	
Voba	X		X							x								x	x	
Matakale	X		X							x								x	x	
Jito	X		X							x								x	x	
Paleka	x		x						x									x	x	

\*If you marked "Other" to describe the community characteristic, please explain:

## Lessons Learned

### **13. Describe any lessons learned related to organizational development and capacity building.**

The lessons learned during the project were:

- It was essential to use existing community governance setup in place to address any issues or conflicts
- Maintain and treat all with trust, confidence and respect
- Connect and have rapport with elders or chiefs because they know their people well whom you will be working with to earn their trust.
- Be transparent, open, honest and accountable at all times with all stakeholders and partners.
- Open communication with partners and stakeholders was essential to prevent any misunderstandings or conflicts with in the project.
- When conducting capacity building, use simple language which can be best understood by the local people, avoid hard words or jargon.
- Because the project was implemented by majority of Choiseul natives, customary land owners trusted us well and cooperated because this project will also affect us.

### **14. Describe any lessons learned related to project Design Process (*aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings*)**

The project was designed to build lasting partnerships. Knowing and having the right partners and stakeholders during the project design stage helped to the overall success of the project. Moreover, an advantage was all these partners (LLCTC, customary land owners and Choiseul Province) were already in place at Phase 1, thus making it easier for this current project (Phase 2). The project was designed in a way that both young and elders may benefit from the GPS training and that women and youth can be involved as well (e.g. involvement of women in executive committees).

### **15. Describe any lesson learned related to project Implementation (*aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings*)**

We learnt that others who have different interests (such as in logging) will always find ways to contradict the process or progress of the project. Positively, working closely with customary land owners and taking time to understand them contributed to the positive outcome of the project. Also, be flexible in conduct but adhere firmly for example, affirm to tribes that internal conflicts must be dealt with by themselves and if any finances are to be incurred, the project will not cater for them as those are not project activities. Once this understanding is established, it did not lead to any hard feelings.

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

The conservation community works together towards a common goal although there may be dissimilarities within the tribes. Because the conservation community has a common goal, most differences are put aside because the goal is important to achieve for the common good. The conservation community appreciates updates on what is going on, quality time spent with them (customary land owners) even if only informal communications. The conservation community

appreciates that they now have the capacity to map sub-clans land boundaries within each tribal land because they have acquired necessary skills of using a GPS.

### **Sustainability / Replication**

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

- The success of this project was a corporate effort from all team members and partners (i.e. customary land owners, ESSI Staffs, LLCTC and Choiseul Province Government).
- The challenges include, we have mapped only 9 customary land boundaries out 15 customary land boundaries and have acquired data for two tribes (Jito & Paleka) from logging data.
- Another challenge was that although we mapped 9 and acquired 2 tribal land data, there are continuous land disputes over land boundaries of Koloma & Jito, Koloma & Paleka.

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

We only planned to do mapping activities within the Mt Maetambe- Kolobangara River Watershed KBA in this project. The Solomon Islands Government through the Ministry of Lands have request ESSI to replicate this project in other parts of Choiseul and may eventually lead to other provinces as well.

Secondly, Global Green Grant (Funding) have provided ESSI funds for purchasing 12 GPS and provide training to support any other interested tribes in Choiseul.

### **Safeguards**

#### **19. If not listed as a separate Project Component and described above, summarize the implementation of any required action related to social and environmental safeguards that your project may have triggered**

Most of the social safeguards issues were mentioned in detail in all the social safeguard assessment reports submitted to CEPF during the project. Some internal tribal conflicts arose and were dealt with individuals involved, if not solved, was referred to be solved according to the Choiseul worthy custom through Chief's hearing with the Senga Council of Chiefs.

## **Additional Funding**

**20. 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**

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Type of Funding*</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
N/A			

\* 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)*

## **Additional Comments/Recommendations**

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

- We originally anticipated that it was going to be an easy project. However, because it deals with the land, we faced a lot of challenges due to land disputes and differences, weather and sparse geographical overlay of villages of tribes in which we have worked with.
- Another challenge we faced was the financial demands by the tribal land owners that we have worked with.

## **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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