

# CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

<b>Organization Legal Name:</b>	Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Inc.
<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Community Enforcement Initiative to Stop Poaching and Illegal Forest Destruction in Palawan</b>
<b>Date of Report:</b>	February 27, 2007
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**CEPF Region:** The Philippines (Palawan Corridor)

**Strategic Direction:** 3. Build capacity for better protection of PAs

**Grant Amount:** \$311,564

**Project Dates:** July 1, 2003-Dec 31, 2006

**Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):**

## Conservation Impacts

*Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.*

The project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile for Palawan through the organizing and strengthening of community-based enforcement mechanisms and the promotion of resource management best practices in the contiguous forest blocs of Dumaran-Taytay in northern Palawan, and the Victoria Range and portions of the Mantalingahan Range in southern Palawan. These mountain ranges have been identified by CEPF as important areas for biodiversity conservation and form part of the biodiversity corridor.

*Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.*

In the two pilot or model communities - one in northern Palawan and the other in the south – an effective community enforcement mechanism has been established centered mainly on the protection of their respective watersheds. These watershed areas have been surveyed, mapped and covered by resource management plans. Feedback received by the project team from interacting with the communities in the pilot sites indicated a significant impact on illegal activities in these areas. In the last two years, no major incident of illegal logging was reported in these two pilot sites.

Overall, the high profile media attention generated by ELAC's community-based enforcement program has significantly contributed to deterring forestry and fishery related crimes within the Palawan corridor. A random questionnaire-based survey conducted by the ELAC enforcement team among various institutional partners (DENR, local government units and law enforcement agencies) in 2005 to gather perception data on various enforcement issues supported this observation. It indicated, for instance, a strong public awareness of enforcement issues in the corridor owing mainly to the media exposure generated by ELAC's activities.

In Barangays Estrella, El Vita and Taritien, all in the municipality of Narra, Southern Palawan, there are about twenty (20) paralegals (farmers and non-indigenous peoples) who conduct foot patrols monthly within the watershed area. On certain occasions, rangers of the municipal environment and natural resources office (MENRO) join these paralegals in conducting patrols. These paralegals are part of the forty (40) community members who underwent paralegal training. Other members who do not join the foot patrols give reports on any unlawful activities or threats in their watershed area.

In Barangay Pancol, municipality of Taytay, Northern Palawan, some eight (8) Tagbanua indigenous community members conduct regular foot patrol. Other members trained give reports on threats and unlawful activities inside forest areas and fishing grounds in the Malampaya Sound. The indigenous community coordinates with the Philippine National Police (PNP) in doing patrols.

Four other communities, namely, (i) Barangay Sta. Maria, Municipality of Dumaran, (ii) Barangay Maasin, Municipality of Brooke's Point, (iii) Barangay Suangan, Municipality of Quezon and (iv) Barangay Punta Baja, Municipality of Rizal, have paralegals who conduct patrolling and monitoring activities. There are eight (8) in Sta. Maria, Dumaran; eleven (11) in Suangan, Quezon; five (5) in Maasin, Brooke's Point; and five (5) in Maasin, Brooke's Point. Sixteen (16) of these twenty nine (29) community paralegals have been deputized by the provincial government and can be mobilized for environmental patrolling and monitoring and link up with the multisectoral enforcement group, the *Kilusang Sagip Kalikasan* (KSK) in addressing forestry and fishery crimes.

#### **Long-term Impacts Planned - 3+ years (no more than 150 words):**

To stop the rapid depletion of forests and other habitat important to biodiversity conservation in Palawan by developing strong community-based enforcement mechanisms and good resource management practices.

#### **Progress Towards Long-term Impacts at Completion – (no more than 150 words)**

Barangay (village-based) enforcement teams consisting of deputized paralegals in the two model communities of Barangays Estrella in the Municipality of Narra and in Barangay Pancol, Municipality of Taytay are actively engaged in the monitoring of their forests and watershed areas. Resource management plans for the watersheds in these model or pilot communities have been prepared following the surveys conducted. The lessons gathered by the project in these areas has contributed to the larger objective of replicating this approach to resource management throughout the corridor

#### **Short-term Impacts Planned - 1 to 3 years:**

Communities around important forest blocs in the corridor are pro-actively engaged in enforcement and integrated resource management.

#### **Progress Towards Short-term Impacts at Completion**

**Hectares Protected:** Almost five thousand (5,000) hectares of watershed areas have been surveyed, mapped, covered by resource management plans as well as patrolling and monitoring activities by communities.

**Species Conserved:** Endemic premium species of Ipil (*Instia bijuga*) and Kamagong (*Diosporos discolor*) in Narra; Antipolo, Aripa and Ipil in Rizal; and Ipil in Dumaran.

Almost three hundred (300) wildlife species have been seized in various enforcement operations. Almost all of the seized wildlife have been turned over to the Wildlife Refuge and Rescue Center. However, some of those rescued were released to the wild, such as three (3) Green Parrots in Estrella Narra, one (1) Flying fox-faced squirrel in Rizal, two (2) Kite birds and three (3) Horn bills in Pancol, Taytay.

### **Corridors Created:**

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

The project has filled in the gap on the government's enforcement and monitoring efforts through the mobilization of community paralegals. These paralegals are not only involved in enforcement but are also managing their watersheds and livelihood projects granted under this project. These livelihood projects have been recognized as supplementary sources of earnings for communities doing enforcement work.

Significant to note is the active participation of the barangay council members in the three barangays of Narra, namely Estrella, Taritien and El Vita; as well as the active participation of the Old Pancol, Taytay village (purok) members and the Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) project members in Dumarán in forest protection and management activities.

The local government unit of Punta Baja, Rizal has actively supported the initiatives of the partner communities by expanding the area of the watershed reserve, providing manpower support and executing a barangay resolution for the establishment of a watershed area. In Dumarán, the municipal government issued a municipal ordinance establishing the Malaking Patag watershed reserve.

Challenges were the lack of political will of some barangay, municipal and provincial officials, particularly, in preventing the entry of large-scale and small-scale mining activities in forest areas. This development perspective has put on hold the passage of an ordinance establishing a watershed area owing to the entry of commercial mining. Likewise, the extended families of some barangay council members and partner communities who were directly and indirectly engaged in illegal activities impede some of the activities, particularly the fieldwork and apprehensions.

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

The death of Roger Majim of Punta Baja, Rizal, who was active in patrolling, monitoring and apprehension of violators of forestry and fishery laws posed a challenge to the communities concerned. Roger Majim was murdered by those who were involved in the cutting of wood for their fishing vessels.

ELAC linked up with key enforcement agencies and undertook the needed investigative work and evidence build-up to ensure that those responsible for these crimes would be arrested and sued in court. Except for the mastermind in the murder of Roger Majim, all accused in the have been arrested and imprisoned, and they cannot be released on bail (their cases are non-bailable). The criminal case is currently undergoing trial.

To allay the apprehensions of community members, ELAC paralegals conducted threat management and strategy sessions with community paralegals and members not only in the affected community but in all other community sites. The morale of the community members in the affected area was sustained despite these incidents. Even the death of Roger Majim in Punta Baja became a rallying point and a source of strength for indigenous leaders and paralegals in the community. The paralegals are part of the volunteers of the Provincial Environmental

Watchdog (*Kilusan Sagip Kalikasan* or KSK) and the indigenous leaders have actively participated in community enforcement activities.

Moreover, the project period saw the harassment efforts made by Perry Franken, a foreign national, against ELAC staff. Mr. Franken's chainsaw was confiscated by a composite team of PNP personnel and ELAC for being used in cutting trees without any permit from the DENR. Apparently in response, cases of robbery, illegal trespassing and grave coercion were filed against ELAC and PNP personnel. ELAC responded to these charges adequately, including the submission of pertinent evidence to refute Mr. Franken's allegations.

These cases were dismissed by the Ombudsman, upheld by the Court of Appeals and finally upheld by the Supreme Court. Mr. Franken also lodged complaints against ELAC before various government offices --- local government unit, DENR, National Bureau of Investigation, Office of the President and Commission on Human Rights, and raised, among others, the issue concerning ELAC's custody of chainsaws. These complaints were not seriously acted upon by government offices.

While this case was proceeding, ELAC made several representations (through written communications and meetings) with the DENR in order to secure an agreement or institutional arrangement as regards the custody of more than 120 chainsaws covered by administrative cases pending before the DENR. Meetings were made with the DENR undersecretary, regional director, regional technical director and forest management bureau.

One inspiring though unexpected development was the recognition/award bestowed upon ELAC by the PNP Region IV Unit and the *Kilusan Sagip Kalikasan* (KSK), environmental enforcement arm of the Provincial Government, for its environmental enforcement work. Another unexpected impact was the issuance of an order by DENR Secretary Angelo Reyes allowing ELAC to take temporary custody of the confiscated chainsaws pending the resolution of administrative cases and to choose in what level of the DENR it can turn over the seized chainsaws.

## Project Components

**Project Components:** *Please report on results by project component. Reporting should reference specific products/deliverables from the approved project design and other relevant information.*

### **Component 1 Planned:**

A broad community-based enforcement network around the two initially targeted sites, one in the north and another in the South, is operationalized.

(Note: The tentative candidate sites are the forest bloc of Dumarán-Taytay and Mt. Mantalingahan in Rizal municipality).

### **Component 1 Actual at Completion:**

Barangay enforcement teams were established in two model communities – one in Pancol, Taytay and another in Estrella, Narra. In addition to the team in Estrella, Narra, enforcement teams in Barangays El Vita and Tarietien also form part of the enforcement group protecting the watershed.

Outside of these two model communities, other enforcement teams have been formed in four other areas; namely, Sta. Maria, Dumarán; Suangan, Quezon; Punta Baja, Rizal and Maasin, Brooke's Point. Each team consists of a core group of at least five (5) paralegals who undertake patrolling and monitoring activities. Other community paralegals who have undergone training but who do not participate in patrolling activities, report threats and forestry-related violations.

**Component 2 Planned:**

Integrated resource management programs are in place in the two pilot sites.

**Component 2 Actual at Completion:**

Separate five-year resource management plans were developed for the Taytay and Narra pilot sites. However, funding still needs to be secured to ensure complete implementation of these plans. (Copies of these management plans are separately submitted.)

Three hundred endemic trees were planted in the abandoned *kaingin* area adjacent to the Estrella Waterfalls. The area falls under the catchment area of the watershed reserve.

The objective for the livelihood component has achieved encouraging results in most project sites, especially the two pilot areas. With limited capital inputs for identified enterprise activities, the community partners managed to generate income for the community. This include planting and trading of agricultural crops, livestock raising and micro-lending.

Community partners in Estrella, Narra have earned collective income from the sale of rice, agricultural crops and livestock. Community partners in Barangay Pancol, Taytay have set up a water system where community residents pay due. Water now is accessible to most barangay residents.

One of the seven communities where livelihood assistance was extended (specifically, the Community-Based Forest Management Agreement holder in Barangay Iraan, Aborlan), have yet to fully account for the funding assistance amounting to P10,000 (approximately \$200). Another community (the Pala'wan indigenous community in Punta Baja, Rizal) has yet to open its bank account to ensure proper management and custody of funds.

**Component 3 Planned:**

Cases of environmental abuses that occur within the duration of the project are pursued in the appropriate courts/agencies or are resolved through extra-judicial settlements as may be legally provided for. Support to local government units in terms of formulating administrative policies and procedures to support community-based enforcement are extended by the 2nd year of project implementation.

**Component 3 Actual at Completion:**

Administrative cases involving forestry and chainsaw law violations are being pursued and litigated before administrative bodies. Memorandum of agreements (MOAs) with government agencies and local government units have been entered into to formalize the partnership on enforcement and ensure the implementation of the enforcement plans. Some thirty (30) community paralegals have been deputized by the provincial governor and have formed part of the network of volunteers of KSK. DENR has issued a favorable order allowing ELAC to take temporary custody of seized chainsaws until the cases are terminated. Some of the chainsaws forfeited were destroyed during a ceremony held last August 2006 in the presence of the DENR secretary and two ELAC lawyers on the occasion of the National Environmental Law Enforcement Summit.

**Component 4 Planned:**

An information dissemination program to increase community awareness on the importance of biodiversity conservation is conducted.

**Component 4 Actual at Completion:**

Seminars, trainings and cross visits have been undertaken in community sites for purposes of generating awareness and mobilizing participation in biodiversity conservation.

**Component 5 Planned:**

Indicators of project success measured in terms of biodiversity impacts are determined within three months of project implementation and a project M&E component is designed and operational within six months of project start.

**Component 5 Actual at Completion:**

The planned activities under this component were accomplished. Baseline surveys in the two model communities of Estrella, Narra and Pancol, Taytay were conducted in order to identify biodiversity baseline indicators. These baseline surveys were used in the preparation of the resource management plans.

A year-end stakeholders' meeting was conducted in December 2005 among community partners from all seven project sites to discuss possible sustainability mechanisms to sustain community enforcement efforts. Community partners underscored the need for viable livelihood projects to enable them to continue their enforcement activities.

Moreover, ELAC conducted a study on the impact of the enforcement and livelihood activities in the seven project sites. Questionnaires were sent to the DENR, Philippine National Police, local government units (both municipal and barangay), Western Command, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) and community partners.

***Were any components unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?***

None so far.

***Please describe and submit (electronically if possible) any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.***

Localization of Forestry Resource Management Survey Method for the monitoring and evaluation of the watershed reserves. The revision was made to ensure that the monitoring and management of the watershed or protected area will be carried out by the partner communities when the project ends.

Baseline Survey of watershed areas in the two pilot communities were undertaken.

A law enforcement manual for community paralegals has been prepared besides the vernacular (Tagalog) paralegal training kit.

**Lessons Learned**

***Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project. 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.***

a) Enforcement has generally been the weakest link in most conservation projects. Thus, this project focused substantially on enforcement. The project primarily intended to mobilize communities around important forest corridors. Mobilization also entailed the provision of livelihood projects for communities involved in enforcement activities.

However, in the project implementation, more focus was given to enforcement in terms of community organizing and education work. Small livelihood grants were given but the trainings required to enable community members to determine appropriate livelihood options, deal with problem areas and effectively manage their funds were inadequate. Thus, some livelihood projects, particularly, involving livestock suffered from losses caused by the deaths of the livestock. The viability of livelihood projects thus became an issue.

Integral to the sustainability of community enforcement work is the viability and success of community livelihood projects. Livelihood projects form part of resource management strategies and serve as sustaining mechanisms.

b) The project sought to establish a network of communities engaged in integrated resource management projects in two corridors. However, ELAC targeted seven (7) communities which also form part of identified biodiversity corridors. The seven communities varied in terms of organizational development, level of awareness and capacity for resource management.

Thus, the strategy pursued was the establishment of at least two (2) pilot or model communities among the seven identified communities. The two communities were chosen based on the initiatives made as well as active participation of their leaders and members.

The establishment of pilot or model communities serve as valuable sources of lessons and insights to other communities.

c) The project saw the need to identify mechanisms for disseminating experiences and enabling various communities to learn from these experiences. Initially, stakeholders' meetings among community leaders during paralegal trainings were done. Communities had a convenient venue for sharing ideas and strategies, but they expressed interest to conduct actual visits and more detailed information sharing. Thus, cross community visits and exchanges involving seven community partners were undertaken.

Cross-visits and exchanges between communities or people's organizations where there is a face-to-face interaction are valuable and dynamic means of disseminating lessons and information.

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

The conduct of community consultations, cross-visits and research with the involvement of professionals and community members are critical.

Linkages with local government units and key government agencies are equally important.

While the livelihood component was implemented, some livelihood activities did not fully develop as anticipated on account of the following: (i) the people's organizations needed more trainings on organizational development and financial management; (ii) community organizing work relating to livelihood, monitoring and evaluation needed refinement.

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



Constant monitoring and evaluation by ELAC staff and with the community partners contributed to regular review and refinement of project outputs.

Teamwork and esprit de corps among implementing staff contributed to the efficient implementation of the project.

**Additional Funding**

*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 the CEPF investment in this project.*

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Type of Funding*</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
BothEnds	Grant	P340,000	This is focused on education and advocacy work relating to mining.

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

- 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.)*

**Sustainability/Replicability**

*Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.*

Sustainability is a continuing challenge and a work in progress. The partner communities need assistance in securing funding for the implementation of their resource management plans. While enforcement and resource management mechanisms are in place, communities need support to expand their livelihood projects. ELAC plans to assist them in preparing small project proposals and link them up with potential donors.

MOAs and partnership agreements with enforcement agencies need to be reviewed periodically or whenever necessary in order to enhance its impact vis-à-vis changing political personalities after local elections.

*Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.*



## Safeguard Policy Assessment

*Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.*

## Additional Comments/Recommendations

## Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

*CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. One way we do this is by making programmatic project documents available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and by marketing these in our newsletter and other communications.*

*These documents are accessed frequently by other CEPF grantees, potential partners, and the wider conservation community.*

**Please include your full contact details below:**

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