

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Wildlife Trust of India
Project Title:	Conservation Plan for Securing Selected Elephant Corridors in Southern Western Ghats
Date of Report:	31 st October 2011
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CEPF Region: Western Ghats

Strategic Direction: 1. Enable action by diverse communities and partnerships to ensure conservation of key biodiversity areas and enhance connectivity in the corridor.

Grant Amount:\$45,000.00

Project Dates: December 1, 2009 – May 31, 2011

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner): State forest department, Asian Nature Conservation Foundation (ANCF, Project Elephant Directorate, Local communities, Other organisation like WWF, NCF and ATREE

Conservation Impacts

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

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.

Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal): A viable elephant population survives in the western ghats through contiguity of habitats.

Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:

The study and groundtruthing of each corridor has helped in preparing conservation plan for individual corridors which will be shared with state forest department. WTI will also undertake conservation initiatives in few of the prioritized corridors to protect and secure the corridor to strengthen elephant (and other wildlife) movement thereby facilitating exchange of genetic material and larger habitat for long-term conservation of elephants.

Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal): Conservation of critical elephant corridors in the Nilgiri-Mysore landscape facilitated through mapping and awareness activities.

Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:

All the corridors have been mapped demarcating the corridors and showing the bottleneck and elephant movement. The usage of the corridor by elephants was also assessed by direct survey and from census records of the respective forest divisions. Identification of the bottleneck will help the managers in prioritizing the area and undertake conservation actions for the protection and securement of the corridor in partnership with the local community.

In each area, where WTI has undertaken the groundtruthing, the team also interacted with the villagers to collect socio-economic data of the villages as well as to learn from the traditional knowledge and utilize it for wildlife conservation and securing the corridors. Their perception towards wildlife conservation and problem (if any) faced due to wildlife was also discussed and assessed. We believe that the long-term conservation of an area is only possible if the local people are sensitized on the issue and made to participate in the entire conservation effort to make it sustainable.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: NA

Species Conserved: Elephant as flagship

Corridors Created: Corridors are not created but the existing passage is strengthened by various conservation initiatives. The present project aimed at identifying the current status of seven corridors and suggest conservation plan which we have been able to come up with. This will be shared with the state forest department and will be utilized for securing the corridor in partnership with the local community and other stakeholders.

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

Having identified the bottleneck and prepared the securement plan for each corridor, the challenge will now be to implement the conservation plan to secure these corridors and facilitate/strengthen animal movement.

Human-elephant conflict (HEC) was one important issue in all the seven corridors. As most of the corridors are constricted or blocked, the human-elephant conflict is on the rise in fringe villages. Hence, it was not easy to interact with the local community and discuss elephant conservation on first instance. It took us quite some time to make them understand the cause of HEC and how

could this be minimized. One of the ways to address the issue was to facilitate their movement between the habitat through the corridors that has been obstructed at many places or have been narrowed down to such an extent that the interface between human and animal has increased. This was explained to them with lots of example and illustration from our ongoing work for securing elephant corridor in Wayanad, Kerala and other areas.

Most of the corridors are so severely constricted that there is hardly any place for movement of elephants and other wild animals. Hence, to come up with a conservation plan to secure the corridor was not easy. A series of discuss and consultation meetings were organsied with locals to work on plan to secure the corridor.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

None

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: Assessment of the current status of identified elephant corridors and preparation of a plan for securement.

Component 1 Actual at Completion:

All the seven elephant corridors proposed for groundtruthing and survey was completed during the period and conservation plan for securing the corridors has been prepared for each corridor. While groundtruthing corridors, socio-economic survey was also conducted of the corridor villages and consultation held to understand their mindset/perception on the corridor and HEC issues as well as to learn from their traditional knowledge.

All the corridors have been demarcated and mapped and the bottle neck identified. Data on variable like habitat quality, landuse, usage of the corridor by elephants, threats, human-elephant conflict, level of dependence of the people on corridor forest were collected based on which conservation plan has been prepared.

Component 2 Planned: Fixation of signages in the identified corridors for creation of awareness

Component 2 Actual at Completion:

Signages has been fixed in all the seven corridors as per the following details

Name of corridor	No of signages fixed
Karadikkal- Madeshwara	4 Nos
Tali	4 Nos
Chamrajnagar-Talamalai at Punjur	4 Nos
Chamrajnagar-Talamalai at Mudahalli	4 Nos
Tirunelli-Kudrakote	4 Nos
Periya at pakranthalam	2 Nos
Kottiyur- Periya	4 Nos
Nilambur Kovilakam- New Amarambalam	2 Nos

Total 28 signages fixed in seven corridors. The number depends on the size and width of the corridors. All the signages are of uniform design. Approval was obtained from Project Elephant, State forest departments, National and state highway authorities before fixing the signages. It took quite some time to get the permissions and clearances for all the authorities. Design of the signage is annexed at the end of the report.

Component 3 Planned: Consultative meeting with other conservation institutions active in the area

Component 3 Actual at Completion:

1. Executive Director's of WTI and ANCF along with the team had few meetings to discuss the proposed activities and how best could we complement each other in successful completion of the work. Sharing of expertise from both the Institute was also discussed. We were in regular consultation with ANCF on various aspects of the study.

WTI was also in touch with various researchers working in the region on the corridor issues while undertaking the work. Few of them will also be utilized while undertaking the individual conservation plans.

2. WTI organized two major workshops in Tamil Nadu and Kerala to discuss the issues of elephant conservation in the region, especially elephant corridor involving various stakeholders, conservation organizations, researchers and state forest department.

2a. The first workshop entitled "**Securing of elephant corridors and human-elephant conflict mitigation in Tamil Nadu**" was organized on 9th and 10th April, 2010 at Coimbatore. This workshop was organized jointly with Project Elephant (MoEF) and Tamil Nadu Forest Department to bring together all likeminded people (Government, public, NGO's and others) working in the state for wildlife and elephant conservation and people affected by conflict so as to share and

learn from each other's experience. The main aim of this workshop was to bring together forest officials from Tamil Nadu who could share their experiences with conservationists and scientists. It was also taken as an opportunity to assess the current scenario of the corridor habitat, to plan forward their protection and discuss appropriate mitigation measures to reduce human-elephant conflict.

The workshop was attended by Director Project Elephant, PCCF Tamil Nadu, PCCF (WL) & CWLW Tamil Nadu, Divisional forest officer of elephant areas, Director SACON, representatives from NGO's- ANCF, NCF, WWF-India, OSAI, NWEA, BNHS, WWEA, ERC, Nilgiri Wildlife Net Association, officials from Indian Railway's, University professor, researchers and local villagers from HEC area. The workshop finally came up with broad recommendations for the protection of corridors and minimizing Human-elephant conflict.

2b. The second workshop was organized in **Kerala** on the same subject on **22nd April, 2010** and was attended by the PCCF (WL), CCF(WL), Divisional forests officer from elephant area, veterinarians, local NGO's, villagers from Wayanad corridor.

Both the workshops helped us in discussing the various issues concerning the securing and protection of elephants in the corridor area as well as discuss other issues concerning elephant conservation in Mysore-Nilgiri landscape, especially on human-elephant conflict.

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

The project has been able to achieve all the proposed objectives outlined in the proposal.

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

The project has come up with a report documenting the current status of selected elephant corridors and conservation plan along with maps.

Lessons Learned

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.

Increased biotic pressure and developmental activities has constricted the corridor in most places and very little area is available for animal movement. This has increased the interface between human and animals. Human-elephant conflict (HEC) was one major issue in all the seven

corridors. Hence, it was not easy to interact with the local community and discuss elephant conservation. It took us quite some time and experience to make them understand the cause of HEC and how could this be minimized. One of the ways to address the issue was to facilitate the movement of animals between the habitats through the corridors. This was explained to them with lots of example and illustration from our ongoing work for securing elephant corridor in Wayanad, Kerala and in Meghalaya where on one hand the people have been able to minimize human elephant conflict and on the other hand the facilitate animal movement.

The present project has also helped our team grow in terms of how to handle the local public sentiment towards HEC. The key is consultation and showing them means of how to minimize conflict and how could they contribute to it.

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

The project was well designed with set methodologies to groundtruth the corridor and assess the socio-economic status of the people and consultation based on which the conservation plan was prepared for each corridor. The same was also facilitated by consultative meetings with various conservation organizations and forest department working for the conservation of elephants.

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

It was quite a challenging task to groundtruth seven corridors in the allotted time span and we did face some problem. In Kerala the work was bit delayed due to monsoon that delayed the project by few months. But at the end the team was able to collect all details required. In some cases, we have not been able to get land records from the Revenue department as this did not exist or were not traceable.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

The recent groundtruthing of the corridor indicates the threat to most of the corridors and constriction. This also highlights the plight of wildlife areas outside the PA network and the lack of priority/effort by the conservation community and managers to protect these landscapes. At many places the larger habitat has been totally fragmented and the corridors connecting them are either lost or on the verge of being totally blocked and in few corridors narrow passage was available. In the present scenario where wildlife habitats are shrunk, fragmented and degraded, it is high time that we protect/secure the identified corridors to consolidate wildlife habitat availability to animals

else will be isolated into smaller areas and pocketed herds. The securement of corridors will help avoid genetic isolation and minimize the increased human elephant conflict that is threatening the wildlife and elephant conservation in the country.

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.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
International Fund for Animal welfare (IFAW)	For signage fixing	USD 5500	Grant for fixing signages in four corridors of Karnataka-Tamil Nadu was obtained from IFAW
Elephant family	For signage fixing	USD 2500	CEPF grant was used to partly fund the signages in Kerala; part fund was obtained from Elephant Family, UK

****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.)*
- D** *In-Kind contributions can include staff and volunteer time, supplies, and other materials your organization provides to the project.*

Sustainability/Replicability

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

The project has identified the bottleneck and threats to each corridor and has come with the conservation plan to secure them. But the most challenging part is to implement the conservation plan.

The corridors are mostly outside the PA network and do not have a legal protection/status. WTI has been working with Project Elephant and are in consultation with State Forest departments so

that legal protection could be accorded to the corridors. The states have been requested to notify the corridors as state elephant corridor and declare them as ecologically sensitive areas.

The corridors should be legally protected under various laws appropriate for the state and respective corridor and the local context.

WTI will take up few of the corridors identified for securing through ground level interventions in consultation and partnership with the local community, state forest department and government.

WTI also intends to groundtruth other corridors in the landscape to prepare a holistic conservation plan for securing the corridors.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

None

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

The project basically looks at preparing conservation plan for securing corridors and does not have any negative impact on the environment or people.

Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) is committed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the local communities (which includes tribal and forest dwelling communities) which share the areas with wildlife. In fact, it is our endeavours that through our various programs, we not only ensure that the local communities are not adversely impacted but rather to ensure that they are beneficiaries and stakeholders in our conservation efforts.

We believe that the long-term conservation of an area is only possible if the local people are sensitized on the issue and made partner/stakeholders to the entire conservation effort to make it sustainable. The project in no way adversely affects the people; rather efforts were made that the local communities benefit out of the entire effort. The local community and other stakeholders will be involved while implementing the conservation plans along with the state forest department.

WTI had also produced a handout in local languages (Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam) about the objective of the project and the work being done in their area and distributed to people while working in each corridor with contact details of the local forest officials and WTI staff so that they can contact them in case need be. This has already been sent to CEPF.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

None

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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*****If your grant has an end date other than JUNE 30, please complete the tables on the following pages*****

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF GlobalTargets

(Enter Grant Term)

Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant.
Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved during the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.	Describe the principal results achieved from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	No			Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	No			Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	The outcome of the result and conservation plan will contribute to strengthening conservation in Mysore-Nilgiri landscape			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	No			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	No			

Remark: The main aim of the project was to understand the current status of the selected elephant corridors in the Southern Western Ghat in the Mysore-Nilgiri biosphere reserve landscape, prepare conservation plan and inform public about the importance of the corridor area. The implementation of the plan will strengthen the corridors and facilitate wildlife movement in the landscape.

Signages have been fixed to inform people about the importance of the area. The securement plan prepared for each corridor will now be utilized to protect and secure the corridors jointly with state forest department, Ministry of Environment & Forests and other stakeholders.

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table

Design of signages fixed in one of the identified corridors in Kerala

കൊട്ടിയൂർ - പേര്യ ആനത്താര
KOTTIYUR-PERIYA ELEPHANT CORRIDOR



**ആനകളുടെ സ്വതന്ത്ര വിഹാരത്തെ
തടസ്സപ്പെടുത്താതിരിക്കുക**
**Elephants Have Right of Way
Do Not Obstruct**

DRIVE SLOW

കേരള ചീഫ് വൈൽഡ്‌ലൈഫ് ഡവർണ്മെന്റ് നിർദ്ദേശ പ്രകാരം Issued by the Chief Wildlife Warden - Kerala

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