

Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions

24th May 2018

CEPF Grant 104007

BirdLife International

Management Planning and Assessment for
Three Key Biodiversity Areas in Vanuatu

Grant Summary

1. Grantee organization. BirdLife International.
2. Grant title. Management Planning and Assessment for Three Key Biodiversity Areas in Vanuatu
3. Grant number 104007
4. Grant amount (US dollars).97,610.50
5. Proposed dates of grant.1st July 2018 to 31st December 2019
6. Countries or territories where project will be undertaken. Vanuatu
7. Date of preparation of this document. 24th May 2018

The Process Framework will describe the project and how restrictions of access to natural resources and measures to assist affected communities. Affected communities should have the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the Process Framework. Typically, the Applicant will prepare a draft Framework that will then be shared and discussed with local communities and other relevant stakeholders. Based on the consultations, a final Framework will be prepared. CEPF may provide guidance on development of the Framework and will review and approve the final Framework prior to approving the final project proposal application. The Process Framework should include the following elements:

A. Project background

BirdLife International and Vanuatu Environment Advocacy Network have established connections with communities who currently harvest bird species of conservation interest. We will have established a sustainable harvesting regime for the eggs of the Vanuatu Megapode in Tongoa KBA, and are collecting information on the size of population and the scale of harvesting of megapode eggs in West Ambrym KBA, and for Collared Petrel chicks on Mt Tulusmera, Tanna. We are interested in developing a mechanism that incorporates the sustainable harvesting of the above species into the development of an actively-managed protected area to both conserve the biodiversity and provide improved opportunities for local communities.

The Vanuatu Government recognises that increasing the extent of Protected Areas and/or 'Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures' is a priority. The government has developed legislation (The Environment Management and Conservation Act No 12 of 2002) that identifies and gazettes community conservation areas (CCAs), an essential process as much of the land in Vanuatu is owned at the community level. To our knowledge this Act has not, to date, had substantial uptake, our limited discussions indicate that communities have reservations about committing to a government-led Protected Area system.

This project will identify the Effective Conservation Measures required to maintain sites as Key Biodiversity Areas. it will work with the communities, first to identify the size of the key populations and establish the levels of threats to these populations, second it will, where appropriate, establish a sustainable harvesting plan for target species, third it will develop a site management plan that includes enhanced opportunities for communities and finally it will recommend mechanisms to increase the likelihood that these options will be maintained in the long term, such as through developing supplementary livelihoods in the form of ecotourism.

The approach will empower representatives of the local communities so that they understand the processes involved and the steps required. It will collect information on the extent to which the sites qualify as 'Protected Area', 'Community Conservation Area', or even under the title of 'Other Effectively-managed area-based Conservation Measures' and attempt to understand reasons that these systems might be rejected. It will train representatives at VEAN to continue to co-ordinate the management planning process into the future.

B. Participatory implementation

The local engagement and empowerment programme is central to BirdLife International's Strategy for conservation. The programme's vision is that 'local organisations at critical sites for biodiversity are empowered to effectively conserve, manage and defend their sites so that biodiversity values and benefits are provided local, nationally and globally in the long term'. BirdLife International is a member of the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights. CIHR members have come together because of a common interest in promoting positive links between conservation and the rights of people to secure their livelihoods, enjoy healthy and productive environments and live with dignity.

For two sites, West Ambrym and Tongoa, we have provided all necessary information and facts about the project, together with the expected long and short term impacts to the local communities and their representatives. We have provided various options for the next steps. The information that we have provided is, to the best of our knowledge, accurate transparent and complete, and provided in a manner and language that is understood by everybody in the community. Representatives of the community have formed a conservation committee, who undertake their own internal and collective decision-making process which is then referred back to the whole community. The process includes documentation of any contrary opinions and challenges, including challenges between the community and BirdLife priorities. Final decisions and agreements on cooperation are reached by consensus, as is standard in Pacific Island communities, and signed and documented. Agreements are followed for a set period of time, as noted in the agreement, in order to allow for time to monitor decisions. On-going communication and consultation between parties will allow for continuous improvement. All parties evaluate the process and plan on how to monitor future implementation in a participatory manner. BirdLife and VEAN will work with key stakeholders within the community to plan activities to be implemented as part of the project for the benefit and inclusion of the local indigenous communities. This includes the collection of further data and local knowledge on biodiversity and management practices.

For the third site, Mt Tukumera, on Tanna, we are still at the planning stage and will undertake a similar assessment as above. Here we will identify the types of stakeholders – identifying the level of participation in harvesting of Collared Petrel chicks, the proportion of these who obtain income through this harvesting, and the extent of the harvesting. We will establish a conservation committee, comprising of representatives from the key stakeholders, and will propose, and discuss a range of options that might help to improve the sustainability of the harvest. We are still short of basic information on numbers and distribution of the Collared Petrel, the harvesters are the best-placed and most knowledgeable people to help with that information so it is essential that we work with the harvesters rather than in opposition.

C. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons

Most individuals who are active in the community and venture into the forest areas will, if they come across megapode or collared petrel burrows, opportunistically take items for sustenance. However there are individuals within the community (in the case of the Collared Petrel) or individual communities within the study area (in the case of Megapodes in West Ambrym) who systematically harvest considerable numbers of birds for the purpose of generating income. We will need to take these into account in the actions within the proposal – and, with the support of the community determine whether the level of harvesting can be controlled within the areas that these individuals

harvest, and if not, whether there is a sufficient area outwith the systematic harvesting that can have increased levels of protection to provide a source population of birds.

D. Measures to assist the affected persons

The individuals who systematically harvest collared petrel chicks or megapode eggs are experienced at locating, often highly cryptic nesting burrows in natural forest habitats. We will prioritise funds for trackers and guides toward these individuals in order to provide some financial compensation for any funds that they may lose during the implementation of this project. We emphasise that the decisions on restrictions to access will be made by the community representatives. It is possible, for instance, that no restrictions will be imposed at this stage – rather further information collected on the basic statistics of the bird population (in particular in the Mt Tukumera site for Collared Petrel. We will acknowledge this system – even obtaining basic information on the numbers present will provide information to help with future conservation plans.

E. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism.

All projects that trigger a safeguard must provide local communities and other relevant stakeholders with a means to raise a grievance with the grantee, the relevant Regional Implementation Team, the CEPF Secretariat or the World Bank.

Traditionally, any grievance held by an individual within a community is raised at a community meetings. If that meeting is not thought to have satisfactorily resolved the grievance then the complainant can escalate to the next tier of local government. If the local chief at the community meeting is at all concerned about the grievance then they will raise it with the conservation committee who will, in turn, determine a way around the grievance, either by modifying a Tabu or provide an alternative approach. If the committee is at all concerned about an aspect of a tabu then they are unlikely to enforce that tabu. This is how community conservation agreements are reached. It is only as a last resort that a complainant would take a grievance out of this community process and to an outside body, or individual.

In order to identify any potential areas of grievance we will continue with our previously successful approach of providing VEAN with the task of being the initial access point should an individual wish to take their grievance to an outside body. Whenever on site VEAN will be available for discussion with any community member, over a cup of coffee, or a bowl of Kava, to listen to and acknowledge any grievances that the member might have. When VEAN is away from the study area then a phone number is available, or the VEAN office in Port Vila is available for anyone to drop-in and have a discussion. Note that the grievance is likely to be voiced in either the local language or Bislama– it is unlikely to be voiced in French or English. Any grievances raised by individuals from the communities will be reported by VEAN to the Grantee project manager – and a response proposed. Any incident of grievance that we become aware of are forwarded to the national RIT coordinator and reported through the 6monthly technical reports by the project manager.

Compliance with this plan will be achieved by:

- Consulting with the community, provincial and central government about the project and accommodating their concerns and needs in the project design and its implementation. This may include updating this safeguard plan, if necessary.

- Employing those people most likely to be affected by any tabus in the implementation of this project.
- Making known contacts for the project and how they can be reached
- Sharing the results from the survey with the communities, provincial and central government and including this feedback in the final recommendations to each community.
- Making the final documents available to all stakeholders.

These activities are recognized in the project workplan and will be reported accordingly to CEPF.

8. **Grievance mechanism:** The grievance mechanism must include, at a minimum, the following elements.

- Email and telephone contact information for the sub-grantee organization, VEAN. Lai Sakita, tel no to be confirmed, laisakita@gmail.com,
- Email and telephone contact information for the Grantee organization, BirdLife International, Mark O'Brien, +679 879 4419, mark.obrien@birdlife.org,
- Email and telephone contact information for the CEPF Regional Implementation Team, Vatumaraga Molisa, tel no. to be confirmed, vatumaraga.molisa@ext.iucn.org, Helen Pippard, +679 331 9084, helen.pippard@iucn.org
- Email and telephone contact information for the local World Bank office, ADB Liaison Office Level 5, Reserve Bank Building Rue Emile Mercet, PO Box 3221, Tel +678 25581.
- The email of the CEPF Executive Director: cepfexecutive@conservation.org
- Information about the project purpose, activities, timeline and key contacts (including for grievances) will be shared with communities in West Ambrym, Kurumambe Tongoa and Mt Tukumera, Tanna, central and provincial government through project consultations led by VEAN. These will be face to face meetings and project reference documents will also be shared with government partners and conservation committees. VEAN will be the initial recipient of grievances and we will share all grievances – and a proposed response – with the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days.
- If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, then we will provide them with the opportunity to submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at cepfexecutive@conservation.org or by surface mail. If the claimant is still not satisfied with the response from the CEPF Executive Director, they may submit the grievance to the World Bank at the local World Bank office.

Following the guidance above, describe the grievance mechanism that you will use.