

Social Assessment

April 04, 2019

CEPF Grant 109232

Treweek Environmental Consultants

Implementing the Species Action Plan for the Beck's Petrel in Papua New Guinea – Identifying and Conserving Vital Breeding Grounds with Local Communities
New Ireland, Papua New Guinea

Grant Summary

1. Treweek Environmental Consultants
2. Implementing the Species Action Plan for the Beck's Petrel in Papua New Guinea – Identifying and Conserving Vital Breeding Grounds with Local Communities
3. CEPF-109232
4. \$80,539.20
5. Start date: 6/1/2019. End date: 7/31/2020
6. Papua New Guinea
7. Date of preparation of this document: 4/04/2019

8. Identify Indigenous Peoples affected

This project will be taking place within the Konoagil rural Local Level Government (LLG) area, a part of Namatani District, New Ireland Province, Papua New Guinea. Fieldwork will take place around Silur Bay on the East coast, and will involve community consultations focussed at Silur Mission, Kampurum, Taron, Lamoran, Lenai, Mimias and Kamiang villages. There are 6 language groups in the Konoagil LLG which Siar-Lak, Kandas, Konomala, Warwar Feni, Label and Sursurunga. There are two main tribes in the Cape Saint George KBA, Mabaum & Marmar through which marriages are being exchanged. The main source of cash is copra, the dried meat of coconuts. As the price of copra has fallen in recent years, other crops have been introduced, including coffee, vanilla and cacao. Other sources of income include gathering sea cucumbers and selling trochus shells. The interior of the area is montane and uninhabited but is community owned by the coastal villages.

9. Summary of the proposed project:

This project falls under CEPF's investment priority 3 for the East Melanesian Islands – to safeguard priority globally threatened species by addressing major threats and information gaps. The proposal outlines key research for a Critically Endangered species, focussing primarily on ground searches for the unknown breeding grounds of Beck's Petrels in the uninhabited forested interior of southern New Ireland. In parallel coastal marine research will assess local population size of Beck's Petrel and attempt to capture individuals for satellite tag deployment. The project will perform outreach in local communities to highlight high conservation values in the local area and discuss the importance of the local area for threatened species including Beck's Petrel. This work will present the rationale for conservation of threatened species locally.

During a preliminary scoping visit the project will visit government and national, provincial and local levels to ensure support for fieldwork activities. Then a visit will be made to several local villages to seek free, prior and informed consent for fieldwork to take place on community-owned lands in southern New Ireland. These villages will be engaged during fieldwork in 2020 to discuss the aims and operation of the project, and present findings retrospectively.

10. Potential impacts:

The project builds on previous visits to the area in 2012, 2016 and 2017. The project is not, at this stage, engaging in any kind of land or resource management. Engagement is focussing on information sharing around high conservation values in the local area, so the positive benefits likely to be delivered are limited to short term benefits to those individuals employed by the project as local guides during fieldwork.

No previous visits encountered any significant issues within local communities, but the project falls within the area of an Integrated Conservation and Development funded by the Global Environment Facility in the Lak Region in the 1990s. In direct competition with industrial logging the project failed after two years. Among lessons learned was the issue caused by raising expectations within local communities of a certain level of investment that could not be met by the project. It is therefore that our project does not raise expectations at this stage around engagement and conservation investment while the breeding site of Beck's Petrels remains unknown and no long-term funding mechanism exists.

The scope for grievances within local communities largely stems from the large and diverse stakeholder group and the need to ensure that consultation and discussion is adequate to minimize social issues – for example guides benefiting while others do not. The consultation process will seek to clarify expectations and minimize conflict, and it will take skill and patience from the facilitating team to ensure that the process is transparent, just and equitable. The project is engaging with FORCERT because they have a proven track record of preparing FPIC from local communities in southern New Ireland. It is particularly important during community engagement that the project's intentions are not misunderstood.

Whenever international researchers are engaging with local communities there is scope for inadvertent insensitivity to local customs and cultural norms.

11. Participatory preparation:

A dedicated field visit will be undertaken in 2019, several months ahead of proposed fieldwork, to discuss the project with local communities and obtain FPIC for project activities. The work builds upon visits in 2012, 2016 and 2017, but several communities not previously visited are included in the current project. A small gender balanced team will visit each community in turn to discuss the aims and schedule for the project and to request FPIC. Preliminary village meetings will be held in October 2019 with representation from the communities of Silur Mission, Kampurum, Taron, Lamoran, Lenai, Mimias and Kamiang. Meetings will involve representatives from the sectoral community committee, the Village planning committee and the Ward development committee. Specific project activities will be outlined during meetings with implementation dates and personnel covered.

An agreed FPIC template will be prepared with FORCERT during August. FPIC will be sought from all communities for a consultation process about high biodiversity values locally to take place in March/April 2020. FPIC will be sought from those communities who own the land identified for ground-searches of the petrels to carry out fieldwork on that land.

Following the initial community meetings a cooling off period of 48 hrs will be left for any community concerns to be raised and addressed before signing of the FPIC letters from each community.

In the event that any communities do not provide FPIC project activities would be reviewed. The marine and community components of the project can easily be scaled to work within areas according to those communities happy to work with the project. A lack of consent to travel into the interior would seriously compromise efforts to complete ground-searches for Beck's Petrel. The FPIC discussion will therefore concentrate first on the communities needed to consent to this activity and securing their support for project activities. The outcomes of the initial site visit to secure FPIC will be discussed with CEPF – approval will be sought for any proposed modifications to the project, including discussion of cancellation if ground-searches cannot be supported.

12. Mitigation strategies:

The preliminary project visit is intended to slowly socialise the idea of subsequent fieldwork and to allow ample time for any challenges or concerns identified by local communities to be addressed by the project team. The structure of community meetings will be developed with reference to CEPF's gender tracking toolkit to ensure views of the whole community encompassing both genders are accommodated.

Concern about prematurely raising expectations locally is shaping the community engagement the project is undertaking to focus purely on high conservation values at this stage and the interest in conservation from external stakeholders – national and provincial government and NGOs. The aims and motives of the project must be conveyed very clearly to local communities and clarity provided that the project holds no links to any extractive or agricultural industries.

External project staff and consultants will work alongside local partners who will provide informal training about local customs and expectations to ensure all project activities are carried out in a sensitive and culturally appropriate way.

The project team is also working closely with national, provincial and local level government through appropriate introductions from project partners to ensure community consultation follows appropriate steps.

The project is promoting gender balanced participation in project activities both in terms of national and international conservation scientists working on the project, and within community meetings.

13. Monitoring and evaluation:

Formal letters of consent and endorsement of the project and grievance mechanism will be submitted to CEPF following the scoping visit where communities will be briefed about the project. Project updates will be provided on social impacts every six months during the project. Any issues, including formal grievances, raised during the project will be reported to the CEPF RIT including those resolved in the field. Prior to project close during follow-up meetings with communities input will be sought on the positive social impacts they have seen via the project.

Gender participation during preliminary community meetings will be recorded and reviewed and adjustments made to follow-up community engagement if a bias is detected.

14. Grievance mechanism:

Stakeholders will be able to raise grievances at all times. The consenting process is designed to identify and mitigate grievances around proposed field activities well in advance of any activities commencing. The grievance mechanism will be developed in collaboration with and agreed upon by Konoagil Local Level Government. The agreed mechanism will be presented to communities during

the initial project visit and consent will be conditional upon communities accepting the agreed mechanism. Provincial and Local Level Governments, communities and participating individuals will be given a printed brief with the project objectives and a description of the grievance mechanism,

Grievances can be raised at all times with the relevant sectoral community committee, then to the Village planning committee, then Ward development committee, with the Ward member as its chairman.

[Relevant contact names and numbers for each village will be obtained during the FPIC meetings and included in the complaints system as follows:

For inhabitants of village complaints can be raised with (sectoral community committee) directly or on (mobile number), then to (Village planning committee) on (mobile number), then to (Chair of the Ward development committee) on (mobile number).]

If your concern is not fully addressed it can be raised with TEC field staff Jeremy Bird directly or on +61466967623 [project contacts will buy local SIM cards so this will be edited] or July Kuri +675 73921553. Alternatively it can be raised with Janet Lahe at FORCERT contacted at (mobile) or jtlahe.forcert@gmail.com or Peter Dam at FORCERT contacted on +675 71063196 pdam.forcert@gmail.com or Kokopo Office, PO Box 1689, Kokopo, ENBP, Papua New Guinea. We will share all grievances and a proposed response with Zola Sangga from the Regional Implementation Team on mobile number: +675 79037000 or email: zola.sangga@ext.iucn.org and the CEPF Grant Director Michele Zador on email: mzador@cepf.net within 10 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at cepfexecutive@conservation.org or by surface mail. If the claimant is 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 Deloitte Tower, Level 13, Port Moresby NCD, +675 3217111.