

Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) & Social Assessment

Title of project: Involving local ethnic communities in monitoring key biodiversity information and important forest resources they depend on in the Dandeli and Anamalai part of Western Ghats, India.

Grantee: Muslim Educational Society (MES) *Asmabi College P.Vemballur, Kerala.*

Proponent: Western Ghats Hornbill Foundation (WGHF), Aranyak, Mathilakam, Thrissur Dt. Kerala, India). projects.wgh@gmail.com,

Principal Investigator: Amitha Bachan K.H , amithab@poetic.com, 09995372408

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Introduction

This programme envisages replicating methods used in the community based hornbill conservation for Involving local ethnic communities in monitoring key biodiversity information and important forest resources they depend. The Western Ghats Hornbill Foundation (WGHF) associated with P.G. Dept. of Botany, MES Asmabi College supposed to facilitate the program. The ethnic communities envisaged in this project are 1. Kadars (in and around Parambikulam Tiger reserve, Kerala & Tamil Nadu) and Kunbi (in and around Dandeli-Ansi Wildlife division, Karnataka). This has long-term and sustainable development value in a sense that reduces the tribes' pressure on depleting natural forest resource and provides a livelihood opportunity through participation in sustainable natural resource management, resource monitoring and conservation. The programme support their traditional instincts and skills in forest and forest resources management with proper empowerment. This would help the ethnic people in developing self-esteem while participating in a serious conservation and monitoring process rather than any other eco-tourism program. So the project has minor possibilities for a negative impact on these indigenous tribes (major two concerns of the CEPF). These include the loss of Social and Cultural Cohesion through induce of change in natural resource use practice and dependency on external support as in the case of other participatory forest management programs. This plan provides details of the Indigenous People concerned with this project, possible positive and adverse impacts, measures to mitigate adverse effects, complaints and conflict resolution and monitoring and evaluation system.

Address of people to whom the tribe can approach regarding any complaint, identification of any adverse effect and any adverse effect from the project implementing agency or investigator.

1. B. Bhaskar Acharya, Ph.D. Project Co-ordinator CEPF-Western Ghats Program ATREE, Bangalore Email: bhaskar.acharya@atree.org Landline: +91-80-23540639 Mobile: +91 9008322664
2. for the Kadars : Conservator of Forests, Central Circle, Kerala Forest Department, Thrissur – phone 9447057200. Or DFO & CEO of FDA, Vazhachal Forest Division, Chalakkudy P.O, Thrissur Dt. Kerala. 0487-2701713. DFO & CEO of FDA, Chalakkudy Forest Division, Chalakkudy P.O. Thrissur Dt. Phone- 0480-2701340, Wildlife Warden, Parambikulam Tiger Reserve, Division, P.O. Thunacadavu (Via) Pollachi, Dist. Palakkad-678 661, Phone- 04253-245005., Wildlife Warden, Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary & National Park, 176, Meenkarai Road, Pollachi, Coimbatore 642001, Tamil Nadu, phone: 04259 – 25356.
3. For the Kunbi : Deputy Conservator of Forests, Wildlife Division, Dandeli – 581325, Uttara Kannada Dist. Karnataka, Phone: 08284 – 231858.
4. President, Athirapilly Grama Panchayath, Vettilappara P.O., Vettilappara, Chalakkudy, Thrissur Dt., President Nellyampathy Grama Panchayath, Nellyampathy P.O., Nenmara – Palakkad, President, Muthalamada Grama Panchayth, Muthalamada, Kollengode – Palakkad.
2. Jack Tordoff, Grant Director, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Conservation International, 2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22202, USA Tel: (1) 703 341-2400, Fax: (1) 703 553-0721, E-mail: cepf@conservation.org

a) A summary of the legal and institutional framework applicable to Indigenous Peoples in the area and a brief description of the demographic, social, cultural, and political characteristics of the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities, the land and territories that they have traditionally owned or customarily used or occupied, and the natural resources on which they depend. (Social Assessment)

i. The Kadars – People of the Anamalais

Kadars are primitive tribe endemic to the Anamalais of Western Ghats. They are ancient dwellers of the rainforest habitats of Vazhachal-Sholayar, Malakkapparai-Valparai, Parambikulam-Topslip, and Nelliampathy valleys of Anamalais or the Elephant mountains. They are short, dark skinned curly haired primitive tribe with thick hairs and platyrhine noses. Hence considered belong to Negretoid tribes. They are one of the primitive tribe of Kerala. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs of central Government has included Kadar among the 75 primitive tribes of the country, besides listing them as a Schedule Tribe.

History & Culture

Morphological characters like curly hairs, platyrhine noses similar to Negretoid tribes indicate their ancient origin. Probably they had been completely hidden in the deep evergreen forests and had been invisible from the outer world up to the middle of the 19th century. According to Thurston (1909) Kadars' are essentially nomad in habit, living in small communities, and shifting from place to place in the jungle. When the planters came to the hills (1840-50's) the Kadars were found practically without cloths of any description, with very few ornaments and looking very lean and emaciated. In the early 1990's some of them especially in the Parambikulam and Valparai region became employees of British (Thurston, 1909). They were used for forest trackers and also for many forestry practices including felling of trees, rising of plantations etc.

They were nomadic hunter-gatherers of the highly rainfed regions or the rainforest terrains of these mountains and resettled recently in 24 settlements of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. According to the tribe, their ancestors used to hide away from outsiders, still today many elder members especially woman are extremely shy and don't talk to the outsiders. Inter-caste, inter-tribe marriages were not allowed till recently. But today the settlements outside the forest areas are closely related with mainstream people and society.

They were very independent people, according to O.H. Bensley, with using a simple bill-hook they will built houses of etah (reeds), so neat and comfortable as to be positively luxurious, they will bridge a stream with canes and branches, make raft out of bamboo, carving knife out of etah, a comb out of a bamboo, fishing line out of fibre, and fire from dry wood. Nowadays also they prefer to live in their small traditional houses made by ‘etah’ and Bamboo.

Livelihood

All the resources they used for their livelihood were from the river and forest. They depend more on rainforest produces like, Thelli (Black Dammar), Pathripoo (Wild Nutmeg), Elam (Wild Cardomom), Shikakai, White Dammar and Honey for their income generation and also depend greatly on fishes especially Mahsheer. They usually do not practice massive agriculture and depend on wild tubers, flesh of wild kills, occasional small game and fish. They usually collect and eat different types of tubers ‘Chandanakizhangu, Vettilakizhangu, Nulankizhangu etc mostly wild species and varieties of Dioscorea. Formerly they used to hunt on small mammals like mouse deer, hare, monitor lizard, wild boar (pig) and they do not eat beef. Now most of them depend on Participatory Forest Management (PFM) and ecotourism activities.

Geography & Distribution

They are ancient inhabitants of the Anamalai hills of the Western Ghats (Thurston 1909). They have been continuously forced to move from their ancestral lands due to timber and forestry operations starting from early 1820 and then due to dams till recently. According to the earlier estimates of the tribal department and the government, the Kadar tribes were distributed in the 15 settlements of Kerala state almost within the Chalakudy River Basin. An investigation (Bachan 2004) stretches their distribution to the other nearby river basins also. According to the current estimate there are 24 Kadar tribal settlements, 15 are within the Kerala state and nine belongs to Tamil Nadu. The majority of their population lives in Vazhachal Forest Division (8 settlements), Valparai region (7 settlements), Parambikulam Tiger Reserve (5 settlements) and Anamalai Tiger Reserve. Until the last century, they inhabited the high rainfed forest areas of the Sholayar – Parambikulam-Valparai valleys and were almost unfamiliar to the external world. Thurston (1907) describes them as the kings of Anamalais.

Information gathered from different tribal settlements indicate that the Kadar people were the tribes of the Anamalai part of Western Ghats, and had been living in the Parambikulam, Sholayar forests up to the 19th century. Their displacement, either forced or with the external influence, was started with the extraction of rich evergreen forests of the Parambikulam and

Sholayar valley by the British during the last quarter of 19th century. The British and the local Governments had utilized their skills and knowledge with the forest for the extraction of timber. Those who brought under the control of authorities were utilized for this purpose and they were shifted from one place to other along with their family based on various requirements. Most of the other Kadar people remained in the forests unexposed to the external world. At that period the forests of the Nelliampathies, Parambikulam and Anamalai were converted into tea and coffee plantations. Teak plantations began to develop in the Parambikulam Valley later on. However almost 50% forests were felled, at least selectively during that time and a few portions of Anamlai, Sholayar and Chalakudy (Vazhachal) remained. There are 12 dams in and around their inhabitation and 60-70 % of the forests were converted into plantations or submerged due to dams. The remaining forests were prone to various forestry practices till recently. Now they face a cultural extinction due to depletion of the forest and river they depend, exposure to outsiders, exploitation, increased alcoholism, tourism etc and most of them live in 2-5 cents (0.049 ha.) of land.

ii. The Kunbi – agrarian tribe of the Northern Karnataka

The Kunbi ethnic group is one of the important agrarian tribe of the Northern Karnataka. They are distributed mainly in the Uttara Kannada district of northern Karnataka, in the Western Ghats. They are seen more within the Dndeli –Anshi Tiger Reserve and adjacent territorial forest Division. They come under the Scheduled Tribes of India.

Distribution & Culture

They are traditional inhabitants of this part of Western Ghats region adjacent to Goa. They are traditional cultivators of the region and they also depend on NTFPs for their livelihood. There are about more than 100 settlements of Kunbi tribe all over the region.

The important once are Deriye, Terali, Shirola, Sittegali, Bapeli, Panjeli, Nagoda, Dhupewadi, Titagali, Chapoli, Birampali, Ilawa, Ganeshagudi, Aveda, Mavalinge, Kondappa, Konada, Virnoli, Panasoli, Karambal, Potoli etc.

The settlements considered under this study are Deriye, Terali, Bhamana, Titegali and Dupewadi. Among these first three comes under the buffer zones of the Dandeli-Anshi Tiger Reserve and the last two settlements are within the Karwar Territorial Forest Division.

Sl. No.	Settlement	Taluk	Forest	House Holds	Population

1	Deriye	Joida	DATR	24	120
2	Terali	Joida	DATR	22	110
3	Bhamana	Joida	DATR	30	140
4	Titegali	Joida	Karwar Territorial Division	18	80
5	Dupewadi	Joida	Karwar Territorial Division	24	120

They traditionally practice shifting cultivation and depend on the immediate forest resources for their livelihood. These include NTFP species such as Soapnut (*Sapindus trifoliatus*), Dal Cheeni, Wild nutmeg, Pepper and honey. Major income comes from Agriculture, Wages labour and NTFP collection. For the PFM activities they work integrate with forest department through EDC and VFCs of Deriye, Potoli, Birampali, Nagoda and Bapeli.

b) A summary of the social assessment

As a latest estimate the 'Kadar' of Kerala comprises 1681 people, in 15 settlements, 522 households in Kerala (Ramesh *et al* , 2007). In the Vazhachal Forest Division alone has a population of about 800 (50%) people in 290 houses in the 8 settlements.

Ethno-botanical studies (Sabeena & Bachan 2010) on the 'Kadars' of the Vazhachal forest division revealed used of 88 species of plants for various purposes. These include 43 plants for their indigenous medicinal purpose (non commercial), 27 plants as NTFP (non timber forest produce) for the commercial purpose and others for timber, food and fuel purpose. Only 5-10 plants or plant products are used as important commercial (NTFP) purpose. About 60-80 % of the used plants were of evergreen forests and 50% are endemic to southern Western Ghats. This indicates their intricate relationship with the climax evergreen forests of the Anamalais (Sabeena & Bachan 2010).

A study on resources dependence of Kadar's (Bachan 2007) revealed the tribe's dependence on VSS (PFM) jobs (46%), NTFP (20%) collection and fishing (21%) for the livelihood compared to other external jobs(7%). Honey, Shikakai and Kasthurimanjal and fish contribute a major amount of income (78%) of the NTFPs. The highly endangered forest resource like Black dammar and wild nutmeg contribute only 7% and 10% respectively.

Since 2004-05 the hornbill conservation and nest monitoring program also conceived along with other forest management works of VSS like fire protection, planting, nursery etc. The collection, management and sale of NTFP's were brought under the control of VSS for the last 5 years. Fish collection also brought under VSS in two locations. The hornbill monitoring team of the Kadar took a lead role in all these strengthening activities of the VSS.

The Kunbi tribe in the Dandeli area of Karnataka also depend more on NTFP resources like large trees with honeycombs, *Myristica* etc. Traditional poaching of hornbill squabs also are reported from the region (pers. Comm.). The studies on hornbills also identified as one of the stronghold of all the four species of south Indian hornbills.

The depletion of resources is mainly due to two important reasons 1. Depletion of primary forest habitat for various forestry and developmental projects including dams. 2. Subsequent increased pressure on remaining resources. Unavailability of source plants *Canarium strictum* and *Myristica spp.* And large trees suitable for honey and hornbill to establish are the threat for these important resources. So reduction of pressure on these resources would be a wise step in the sustainable management of forest resource. Development of new income generating activities through participatory eco-tourism and forest resource management would be a better choice for the Indigenous People.

c) A summary of results of the free, prior, and informed consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities that was carried out during project preparation and that led to broad community support for the project.

The hunting of hornbill squabs by the endemic 'Kadar' tribe was reported as the major threat to the hornbill population (Kannan 1993, Bachan 2003 & 2006, Kaimal *et al.* 2007). A survey conducted in the Vazhachal forest division during 2004-05 with the support of the forest department and endemic Kadar tribal people identified 23 nests of Great Hornbills and 2 nests of Malabar Pied hornbills. This was the only known available nesting location of the near threatened Malabar Pied Hornbill in Kerala state. This was continued as a participatory conservation programme to monitor and protect hornbills and their habitat with the involvement of the community groups (VSS—Vana Samrakshana Samithy) of the forest dwelling Kadar tribe. The tribal guards were selected based on their previous experience with hornbills or their knowledge of the forest. They were trained in the field to monitor hornbills during the nesting season. A monitoring sheet was prepared in local language to empower the tribesmen in monitoring of nest activities. Separate sheets were maintained for each nest for every year. Total

30 tribal people were participated from 7 tribal settlements under 5 Kadar tribal VSS during the last four years. It turned out to be a successful attempt and the tribes killing hornbills turned into protectors (Bachan 2006, Bachan *et al.* 2011). The programme was executed along with other regular Joint Forest Management (JFM) activities of the forest department and it is now conceived as a regular programme of the tribal VSSs of the division. This also supported the tribe's traditional forest dwelling instinct and reduced their pressure on hornbills and other forest resources. This was spread to adjacent forest areas of the landscape and strengthened proper empowerment and scientific validation with the support of CEPF-ATREE Small Grants during 2009-10.

The Kunbi tribal group, and an organization Foundation for Culture and Bio-diversity Conservation, Research & Development, Joida (in which many founder members are Kunbi tribe) addressed their interest in empowering their people in conservation and monitoring of resources they depend. This also forms one of the objectives of the programme to empower the group and some volunteers in the selected five villages and replicate the conservation.

d) A framework for ensuring free, prior, and informed consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities during project implementation.

The methodology adopted for the study involves free and prior consultation the participating tribesmen. The following steps are envisaged in the process in order to ensure free, prior and informed consultation with the people.

1. Ensure sustainability of the hornbill monitoring and conservation programme in the Kerala part of Anamalais (Malayattur, Nenmara, Chalakkudy and Parambikulam forest divisions)

- Identify, empower and prepare a plan and protocol for the ethnic community members and their groups under each administrative divisions of the Central Circle of the forest department and try to render the programme as a programme of the Central Circle of the Kerala Forest Department.
- Meetings, awareness programmes and planning regional level and division level.
- Seminar, training and release and distribution of 'Handbook for the community based conservation and monitoring of Hornbill and their habitats in the Western Ghats' in local language and in English (Only if it is published with the support of CEPF-Small Grants 2011 or by other means).
- Execution of the programme in all the divisions of central circle in partnership with forest department and local community groups

- Form and register a trust / society (facilitate the process of formation and registration of a trust, not as seed money) for ethnic people (mainly Kadar) involved in the conservation and monitoring of hornbills in the area and develop fund raising links (royalty from selling of books, documentary and other resource materials) for ensuring minimum fund availability for the nest tree monitoring and conservation.
- Support the trust / society to establish agreement with Forest Development Authority (FDA) to route collected funds through FDA to distribute it to the identified VSS (Vana Samrakshana Samithy) or EDC (Eco Development Committee) each year to functioning of the Hornbill Monitoring and Conservation programme

2. Community-based conservation and monitoring of key biodiversity information / resources including nest trees of Great Hornbill and Malabar Pied Hornbill, NTFPs and RET sps

- a) To conduct preliminary meetings with tribal VSS/EDC or tribesmen prior to the conservation program and survey.
- b) Share experience with visual aids: screen film on conservation of hornbills prepared from Vazhachal Forest Division (Bachan 2008), expose them to pictures on hornbills, their various habitats, trees, and preferred fruits to introduce the concept, identify their skills and experience with hornbills.
- c) Share experience with the ‘hornbill guards’ of the Vazhachal forest division and elders in the community
- d) Discuss on the importance of monitoring of major NTFPs that they depend on including hornbill nest trees based on experience in the Vazhachal Forest Department
- e) Empowerment of local ethnic community groups in monitoring and protection of important resources such as NTFP species, Hornbills nesting trees, and other endangered trees in collaboration with forest department
- f) Data on distribution of hornbill nesting locations, nest trees, NTFP trees and RET sps from all parts of the Anamalai (Supplementary to the data generated during previous year from Vazhachal and Parambikulam)
- g) A long term community based conservation plan for hornbills and their nesting habitat with detailed plan, guideline and Schedule for monitoring

Preparation of plan for each area with consultation with community members of the Kadars and Kunbi tribe and EDC/VSS/VFC members of the Parambikulam Tiger Reserve and adjacent

regions of Kerala, Top slip area of the Tamil Nadu and the Anshi-Tiger Reserve of Karataka can support the process

e) An action plan of measures to ensure that the Indigenous Peoples receive social and economic benefits that are culturally appropriate, including, if necessary, measures to enhance the capacity of the project implementing agencies.

The methodology takes great care to encourage the traditional instinct and skills in forest dwelling and make use of this for conservation and sustainable use rather than exploitation. Hence the current project would have no impact on their cultural and social setup and would be far better in comparison with any other jobs including eco-tourism programs. The encouragement of their traditional skills would help them to keep and develop their self esteem and betterment of their cultural as well as social background. The only adverse impact is the dependence on external funds for the continuity of the program. But all the VSS/PFM activities in which they depend are based on fund support. Nowadays they are free to plan their own activities each year under the VSS and have good control over their livelihood management and dependence.

The dependence of the Kadars on depleting resources of the evergreen forests and that of the Kunbi tribes on Moist Deciduous forests can be reduced and while engaging them for monitoring and conservation. The information on the fragile nature of resource can make the ethnic community vigilant about the depletion of their own resources. In the background of Forest Right Act and community based conservation and management.

Partnership with forest department, community groups EDC/VSS/VFC and other conservation organizations can ensure monetary benefit during these periods.

f) When potential adverse effects on Indigenous Peoples are identified, an appropriate action plan of measures to avoid, minimize, mitigate, or compensate for these adverse effects.

The only possible adverse direct impact of this project is the dependence on external fund support and question on the sustainability of the process. This is similar to all other ongoing important livelihood means like PFM and eco-tourism activities. As a sustainable measure, the Forest Department of Kerala has agreed to involve the hornbill monitoring activity as one of the regular PFM activity of the central Kerala. Similar methods can be opted for other areas also.

As an indirect adverse impact, this may influence people to change their traditional natural resource dependant livelihood. But all the present day livelihood activities except the NTFP collection and fishing depend on ecotourism and project that have adverse impact on the forest and biodiversity. As a sustainable measure it is important to decrease pressure on depleting

natural resources without compromising the Indigenous peoples' right over their own resources and provide sustainable livelihood means to the people.

The project visualization and methodology itself has taken great care to minimize adverse impact. But it ensures new livelihood opportunities while participating in their own resource conservation and monitoring process. The hornbills and other important resources like dammar, fish etc are protected by law against over exploitation. So this program can care the conservation priorities of the state as well as sustainability of the resource dependent livelihood of the Indigenous people. They can discuss it in their community organizations and would have freedom to take decisions accordingly in case of any adverse effect.

g) The cost estimates and financing plan for the IPP.

Out of the \$8000 of the total budget of the project 50 % amount (\$4000) is directly available to the participating indigenous people apart from overall benefit of the project cost.

Cost Category	Amount in \$
Professional Services (salary for field helper & participating tribesmen) <i>This is total 38% of the overall salary including the project staff</i>	1972
Field Expenses (for the project staff & participating people)	1491
Workshops, Meetings etc (meant for participating people)	950
Total	4413

Other project costs include items for the general functioning of the project such as office expense, communication, report preparation and publication. Excluding the salary of the PI and few necessary funds to ensure the scientific and proper functioning of the program all other funds (>50%) have direct benefit to the participating Indigenous people.

The program also envisages developing regional funds and programs for the VSS/VFC/EDC to ensure continuous livelihood support through this program.

h) Accessible procedures appropriate to the project to address grievances by the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities arising from project implementation. When designing the grievance procedures, the Applicant takes into account the availability of judicial recourse and customary dispute settlement mechanisms among the Indigenous Peoples.

The targeted Indigenous People of this project is 'Kadars' they live in small settlements of 20-50 two-four-member families. Each settlement has a head or chief 'Oorumooan' and a tribal 'promoter' recognized by the State Tribal Department. Also there would be executive members of the VSS/EDC, leaders of political parties and elected representatives of the local, block and district Panchayath. After constituting VSS/EDC there is a great improvement in their community organization and dispute settlement mechanism.

The Kunbi tribe selected here also have village chief in the settlements, they are also associated with EDC and VFC of the Dandeli – Anshi Tiger Reserve and adjacent regions.

Each tribe has an opportunity to present their concerns & problems in the VSS meetings or executives have power to present it in the monthly or emergency executive meetings. They can forward it to the Divisional Forest Officer, the CEO or to any higher officials of the forest department. The forest department is the valid and legal agency of law and order in the forest areas. They have keep all the rights of the Indigenous People and other agencies such as local bodies, tribal department and district collectors have special power to ensure rights of the Indigenous People.

Any tribal people can approach court judiciary from Magistrate (lower) level to high court of the state for any legal need. The support of many NGO's including environmental and human rights organizations and media has a serious role in bringing out various issues related with Indigenous People Rights.

i) Mechanisms and benchmarks appropriate to the project for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the implementation of the IPP. The monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should include arrangements for the free, prior, and informed consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities.

There would be initial meetings and interactions with members of the targeted tribal settlements. The aim, objectives, field level activities and possible impacts (both positive and negative) would be explained in detail with the aid of visual and other means prepared in local language. The official structure of the VSS/EDC would be used for the meetings to ensure participation of maximum members and to keep the seriousness of the program.

A summary and details of the IPP would be disseminated in local language during the initial meetings and inputs would be gathered. Sharing of experience of the tribesmen from Vazhachal Forest Division would be helpful to initiate programs in other forest areas. The experience and achievements can be taken as a benchmark for evaluating the progress of the

program. There would be continuous interactions and interim meeting with the members of the participating group for better understanding of the process and monitoring of the IPP.

Since the first two objectives and their methodology solely involves steps for the implementation of the important concerns IPP, the progress of the IPP would be evaluated along with quarterly evaluation of the progress of the project. Proper Participatory Research Appraisal (PRA) methods would be used to incorporate the ideas and concerns of the Indigenous People and proper evaluation of the implementation of IPP. Each quarterly reports and final reports would be incorporated with a separate report on the progress and evaluation of IPP. The use of local language, proper sampling and application of PRA methods would ensure the free, prior and informed consultation with the affected indigenous people communities.

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