

## **Stakeholder Engagement Plan**

### **Date**

July/1/2021 – December/31/2023

**CEPF Grant 111890**

### **Grantee**

**Centre for Environment and Community Assets Development (CECAD)**

### *Project Title*

**Conservation of Critically Endangered and Endemic Bent-toed Geckos in Vietnam**

### **Project Location**

**Vietnam (Binh Thuan, Gia Lai, and Tay Ninh provinces)**

## **Grant Summary**

1. Grantee organization: **Centre for Environment and Community Assets Development (CECAD)**
2. Grant title: **Conservation of Critically Endangered and Endemic Bent-toed Geckos**
3. Grant number: **CEPF-111890**
4. Grant amount (US dollars): **\$59,900**
5. Proposed dates of grant: **July/1/2021 – December/31/2023**
6. Countries or territories where project will be undertaken: **Vietnam**
7. Date of preparation of this document: **April/12/2021**

## **8. Introduction:**

To date, the threatened bent-toed geckos in Vietnam have not been well protected. No funding has been allocated to conservation of the three critically endangered and range-restricted species, the Gia Lai Bent-toed Gecko (*Cyrtodactylus gialaiensis*), the Black-eyed Benttoed Gecko (*C. nigriocularis*), and the Ta Kou Bent-toed Gecko (*C. takouensis*). They have not been listed under any protected law by the government. Among the three species, only *C. takouensis* is distributed in a nature reserve, Ta Kou Nature Reserve, Binh Thuan Province. The species is known only from a single location of Takou Mountain and only found living in a very specific microhabitat of granite boulders where they occur in relatively small numbers.

*Cyrtodactylus nigriocularis* inhabits Tay Ninh Province's Ba Den Mountain Cultural and Historical Complex, which receives a lower level of protection compared to a nature reserve. *C. nigriocularis* is a highly specialized granite cave-dwelling species known only from one or just a few small caves in Ma Thien Lanh Valley. It occurs in very low numbers and is extremely susceptible to habitat degradation by tourism activities and road construction and illegal collecting. *C. gialaiensis* was only discovered in 2017 and is known from a single locality with a distribution of less than 10km<sup>2</sup>. The current range, covered by coffee plantation, does not fall in any protected area. Land use change, i.e., conversion from coffee to pepper plantation, is likely a major threat to the species survival because pepper plantation is not a suitable habitat. Free-range chickens and feral dogs and cats can wipe out the narrowly distributed and small population of the species if they are allowed to freely roam the area.

This project aims to secure core populations of the three critically endangered and endemic bent-toed geckos, which occur in Binh Thuan, Gia Lai, and Tay Ninh provinces (Fig.1). Main proposed activities include:

1. Conduct field and interview surveys and assess direct threats within the range of three targeted species
2. Develop conservation strategy with stakeholders, partners, and experts, namely government agencies, research institutions, protected area personnel, non-government organizations, and landowners
3. Implement priority conservation measures, such as reducing impacts from tourism and infrastructure development, training protected area staff in using the Spatial Monitoring and Report Tool (SMART) for patrolling, raising awareness of tourists and local people on biodiversity conservation, and piloting a payment-for-ecosystem-service scheme for the Gia Lai Bent-toed Gecko
4. Advocate to include the three species in the national species protection list to better protect them in the future.



**Figure 1.** Proposed study sites of the project

**9. Summary of Previous Stakeholder Engagement Activities:**

Several meetings with external stakeholders took place in Hanoi between January and April of 2021. Other consultations were conducted through emails and virtual meetings. Consulted organizations and individuals during the preparation of the proposal comprised the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency of Vietnam Environment Administration, Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources, Institute of Tropical Biology, Cologne Zoo, Central Institute for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies, and two landowners in Chu Se District, Dak Lak Province.

- Key issues discussed and key concerns raised: No key concerns related to social and environmental issues have been raised. Key issues discussed consist of application process to include the targeted species in the national species protection list (with the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency), main direct threats to the species (with the Institute of Tropical Biology, Central Institute for

Natural Resources and Environmental Studies, and the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources), and payment-for-ecosystem-service scheme (with two landowners in Chu Se District).

- Grantee response to issues raised, including any commitments or follow-up actions: No response or follow-up actions have been taken during the preparation.
- Process undertaken for documenting these activities and reporting back to stakeholders: No process has been established during the preparation.

#### 10. **Project Stakeholders:**

Stakeholders involving in activities of the project include the Central Institute for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (CRES), Cologne Zoo (CZ), Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR), Institute of Tropical Biology (ITB), landowners and local authorities of Chu Se District, Gia Lai Province, Ba Den Mountain Cultural and Historical Complex (BDMCHC), Ta Kou Nature Reserve (TKNR), and Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency (NBCA)

#### 11. **Stakeholder Engagement Program:**

Although there is no planned Stakeholder Engagement Program planned for the project, we will disseminate information of the project, such as the results of interview and field surveys, threat assessments, and outcomes of conservation strategy development workshop, to government agencies and research institutions through email, written report, virtual tools (Zoom, Skype), telephone, in-person meeting, and workshop.

We will communicate the above information of the project with protected area management authorities through telephone, written report, leaflets, posters, in-person meeting, and workshop.

We will disclose the above information to local landowners and authorities through telephone, in-person meeting, and written agreement.

The main goals of the stakeholder engagement activities are to keep all stakeholders informed about the project progress and to make sure that they are consulted during the project life. In addition, stakeholders will participate as much as possible in project activities, whenever and wherever relevant.

#### 12. **Consultation methods:**

Consultation methods with the external stakeholders include:

- In-person and virtual meetings with the NBCA
- In-person and virtual meetings, telephone, and email with IEBR, ITB, CRES
- In-person meeting, telephone, and email with BDMCHC and TKNR
- Virtual meeting and email with CZ
- Workshop with all stakeholders to develop a conservation strategy

#### 13. **Other Engagement Activities:**

Other engagement activities consist of the followings:

- Training staffers of BDMCHC and TKNR on applying SMART to strengthen law enforcement at the two sites.
- Signing an agreement with landowners and local authorities to implement a payment-for-ecosystem-service to protect the Gia Lai Bent-toed Gecko from land use change.

#### 14. **Timetable:**

Various meetings and engagement activities take place from January 2021 until December 2023. The timeline of planned activities follows the overall logical frame of the project. Below are some key events:

- Initial consultations with NBCA, IEBR, IBT, CRES, CZ, and two landowners in Chu Se District undertaken between January and April of 2021

- Consultations with BDMCHC and TKNR will be conducted during the first quarter of the project
- Conservation strategy development workshop will be organized in the beginning of the second year
- Training SMART to two protected area staff will occur in the first half of the second year
- Signing payment-for-ecosystem-service contracts with landowners in Chu Se District will take place in the third quarter of the second year

15. **Resources and Responsibilities:**

Minh D. Le, Hanh T. Ngo, and Anh L. Tran will be responsible to undertake the planned activities. No budget is specifically allocated to implement the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

16. **Grievance mechanism:**

The project will provide local communities and other interested stakeholders with the means by which they may raise a grievance with the CEPF Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Secretariat. Affected local stakeholders will be informed of the objectives of the project and the existence of a grievance mechanism. The email address, telephone number, and physical address the CEPF Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Secretariat will be made available through different means such as handouts at meetings and announcements on community bulletin boards. All materials will be available in Vietnamese. 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, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at [epfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:epfexecutive@conservation.org) or by surface mail.

17. **Monitoring and Reporting:**

The project's stakeholders will be updated regularly on the project progress through email, progress report, telephone, and virtual meetings.