

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Keystone Foundation
Project Title:	Hill Biodiversity & Indigenous People: The God of Small Ecosystems
Date of Report:	10.02.2012
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CEPF Region: Western Ghats

Strategic Direction: Strategic direction – objective 1: “To enable action by diverse communities and partnerships to ensure conservation of key biodiversity areas and enhance connectivity in the corridors

Grant Amount: \$199,845.00

Project Dates: October 1, 2009 – September 30, 2011

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner): EBR Trust, Shola Trust, Mysore Amateur Naturalists' Society, Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore, MSSRF, Wynaad, Ferns, Mananthavadi, Tamil Nadu Forest Department, Karnataka Forest Department, Kerala Forest Department, People & Plants International.

The partners in the project played different roles, some as contributors and supporters and others got directly involved. Keystone also managed to establish long term collaboration with some partners. Details of each partner is elaborated below:

1. EBR Trust; Mysore Amateur Naturalists Society; and Ferns: Have been introduced to the Nilgiri Natural History Society and are regular visitors to the Bee Museum.
2. Nature Conservation Foundation: Established good collaboration over displays in the Bee Museum, an environment education centre in Mysore, and technical support for data analysis in the human-wildlife conflict project supported by IUCN.
3. Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka Forest Departments: Working together with the VFC, VSS and conservation of sacred groves.
4. People and Plants International: Overall advisory role.

Conservation Impacts

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

The project focused on conservation outreach and recognition of community based conservation practices. This covers several aspects of the ecosystem profile as the outreach material touches upon flora, wildlife and watersheds. The project was directly linked to Strategic Directions 1 (to enable action by diverse communities and partnerships to ensure conservation of key biodiversity areas and enhance connectivity in the corridors) and 2 (to improve the conservation of globally threatened species of the Western Ghats through systematic conservation and planning). Specific investment priorities addressed by the project were: 1.1 Mysore – Nilgiri corridor – test pilot models of community and private reserves; 1.2 promote partnerships; 2.1 Monitor and assess; 2.2. Support efforts to conserve critically endangered and endangered species; 2.3 – Evaluate the existing Protected Areas Network 2.4 – Support interdisciplinary efforts to analyze and disseminate biodiversity data.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.

The project has enabled Keystone to launch a forum which has the involvement of several stakeholders with outreach. It has enabled long term collaborations with other civil society groups and strengthened the concept of community conservation. This impact has been realized by a diverse set of people in the Nilgiris, including the indigenous communities.

Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal): The Nilgiris Natural History Society develops into a strong Conservation NGO with ground and local support yet embedded in good Science and application; Community led conservation practices and approaches to a great extent in place in the 3 PAs; An opportunity to demonstrate a civil society - government partnership for conservation based extension, outreach and education.

Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:

Amongst the long term impacts it is evaluated in the team that the Nilgiris Natural History Society has become a strong NGO and already attracted funding support and members. Though as many members as expected could not be achieved, this is probably a slow process and we expect this to expand. The structure is in place with many people volunteering to do activities. It has regular nature trails and talks in the Bee Museum and a quarterly newsletter.

Community led conservation approaches were recognized through awards and sacred groves protected in collaboration with the Forest Department and the people. However this was across the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and not specifically related to protected areas. This planned impact will take longer for fruition near PAs as the FD and wildlife lobby wants people out of protected areas.

The last long term impact is partially achieved as with the NBR module and the film, and interactions with the schools NNHS & Keystone is already in a strong position to implement this through the government education system.

Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal): 1) Formation of the Nilgiris Natural History Society; 2) Four activities started through this initiative which have direct conservation benefits; 3) Bee Museum becomes a hub for outreach, training and extension for local and outside stakeholders.

Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:

All the short term impacts of the project which were planned have been achieved and the facilities such as the Bee Museum, Village conservation centres and interpretation centres are functioning

with regular programmes. The NNHS has become an established organization with members from all walks of life.

Please provide the following information where relevant: NA

Hectares Protected: 96 hectares

Species Conserved: N/A

Corridors Created: N/A

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

The main challenges faced in the project were related to convincing the Forest Department of the importance of sacred groves and the importance of communities in conservation. Besides that the success of the launch of the NNHS seems to be a long term achievement, even though we could not get as many members as targeted.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

We built many contacts and networks through the project, especially those in the civil society. One of our staff members benefitted by learning film making. Keystone also joined a larger network of environment educationists in India.

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: Outreach activities through the Bee Museum on conservation with special focus on CEPF project sites.

Component 1 Actual at Completion: Apart from the specific programmes, 1471 visitors came to the Bee Museum this quarter and were made aware of the themes presented in the Museum. They also saw the film on the Honeyhunters of the Blue Mountains

Component 2 Planned: Extension activities to create the Nilgiris Natural History Society and initiate channels of communication.

Component 2 Actual at Completion: A total number 15 programs were held in the 2 years. This included mainly schools and visits by nature clubs. A multi stakeholder meeting with planters, farmers and forest department related to Human Wildlife conflict was organized. By the end of the project period, there were 94 members in NNHS.

Component 3 Planned: Conservation Benefits to Local Stakeholders

Component 3 Actual at Completion: Two conservation awards were given on the 9th of August 2010 and two on 9th of August 2011 during the World Indigenous people's day celebration. We received applications from more than 60 villages across the NBR. A pre-screening of the applications was done based on certain criteria and the villages that qualify will be called to present on the conservation activities undertaken by them.

The applicants were asked to present their application to a jury instituted by Keystone during the Ancestral Domain Habba. The 3 member jury invited the villages to come and speak about their village and also invited members of the audience to ask questions.

The jury spent a full day listening to the presentations and presented the award first prize to Chokanalli (2010) and VelleriCombei (2011) villages in Tamil Nadu. The jury decided to give the award not on the basis of the quality of the presentation alone but also with a view to support the cause of a needy village. As a result of which a special jury award of Rs. 50,000 was also announced and the prize went to Kumblapara (2010) in Nilambur of Kerala and Punanjanur (2011) village in Karnataka.

The award money was used by the villages to repair the solar powered electric fence, the pumpset to get water to the village for farming; to buy solar lights in Kumbalpara where no access to electricity is possible; repair water connections, build a sacred grove centre, monitor the restoration activity done by them; conduct a study of linkages between community and forests and support children for tuition

We reviewed the impacts of the conservation awards after the four awards are given. Based on the findings, efforts were taken to extend the awards to other parts of the NBR, to reconstitute the award selection criteria and committee with inputs from previous awardees and work out a mechanism to sustain these awards for the future.

Sacred groves are a regular feature of Kurumba community of the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve. Four such sacred groves were identified by the Culture and People's group in Keystone: Bhaviyur (42 ha); Chedikal (22 ha); Banagudi shola (21 ha); and Kotada (11 ha). These sacred groves are in Kotagiri and each required special attention in virtue of its cultural significance to the indigenous community and factors that threaten its existence. Restoration work was undertaken in the monsoon period in November, 2009 and some vulnerable and sacred trees were planted around the grove. A discussion was also held on the need to design a logo and board to demarcate the special area. An effort would be taken to involve stakeholders like the forest department and estates in this initiative.

Consultations were held with the relevant stakeholders to the Sacred Grove in Kotada Estate near Kotagiri. The stakeholders were the indigenous people, forest department, estate and the non-indigenous people. It was decided that a board be erected at the sacred grove stating the importance of these groves and the need for it being protected. A declaration was made and it was read out at the 'Ancestral Domain Habba' held at Keystone during the month of June 2010. The restoration work undertaken by us earlier in this sacred grove would continue.

Four sites have been established and boards have been erected mentioning the significance of these sacred groves. The declarations were made in consultations with the relevant stakeholders like estates, forest department and other communities.

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

Not Applicable

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

Reports and NBR Module already submitted. Film is under preparation.

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.

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

The Project was well designed and a lot of the different components fed into each other. There was overestimation in target setting for membership into the NNHS and planning related to finishing the module and the film, which caused delays in the outputs

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

Activities related to community based conservation became clear and detailed through this programme. The Village elder program is both new and successful as it builds pride into the knowledge of indigenous people, which gets transferred to the younger generation. This generation is usually away from the village, studying outside.

Due to its indigenous nature, the conservation program could include and build up local issues and knowledge, making it relevant for the community. The conservation centres and schools have become hubs of activities in the village. Eg in the village of Appankapu, the harvesters formed an SHG to work on NTFP issues, especially related to sustainable harvest and nursery raising.

Other learning was in the formation of a wide membership based Natural Society. This was a new activity for all the members and entailed learning about organisational management and building membership of local people.

The process of film making was a new learning for the staff at Keystone. During the learning process some short films were made eg. wetlands, *Apis cerana*, gaur film with Rita Banerji, chasing a river. These have been effectively used in different forums and meetings.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

There is a space to have a negotiation discussion about eco-development initiatives and conservation strategies around PAs

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
IUCN	B	INR 6,00,000 (US\$ 11,646)	This programme which supported the work of the human-wildlife conflict action-research made networking more concrete and filed work for community conservation & education strengthened
Keystone	D	INR 200,000 (estimated) (US\$3,882)	Office supplies and infrastructure; volunteer time from directors and some staff for work related to NNHS and Bee Museum

**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.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Sustainability in the Project will be achieved through 2 means – one is the formation of a formalized institution – NNHS and second, is related to the regular school programmes that have continued even after the project period.

Replicability and success in conservation implementation was seen in the sacred grove work – which is already being replicated in the Coonoor area with the help of a CEPF small grant.

1. Forest Rights Act has been addressed by negotiation and meetings held in the District of Nilgiris. This has involved engaging with the revenue and forest department officials at all levels. The process is still ongoing. A NGO forum was also formed for this purpose.
2. The NNHS has been getting members from all walks of life. To build a multi dimensional membership honorary membership was given to adivasi people and some select conservationists in the Nilgiris. Though this process is happening slowly, effort is being made to involve all members of the public like tea estate planters, teachers, students, government officials, NGOs, media people, politician, organic farmers and adivasis.
3. Communities have shown interest and engagement in the conservation outreach program.

To build sustainability and long term benefits of conservation education, Keystone will continue the programs in the villages and maintain the conservation centres. This will be done through additional fund raising. A private grant was received towards this and will be used to support activities at NNHS for one more year. Payment for programs, membership, subscription and bee museum entry fees are some other ways to build resources for long term sustainability of this outreach program.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

The Indigenous People Plan was implemented through the project period. This meant that in all our interventions indigenous people were involved in the decision making and implementation. There were also the Tribal Advisory Meetings (TAC) which were conducted and which gave a larger set of advice to Keystone in its work for the future.

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.	No			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	Yes	96	96	4 sacred groves covering an area of 96 ha. Were protected through this programme
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			

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

