

Meeting Notes: Lao NGOs Saola & CEPF Strategy Meeting

IUCN-Lao office, 2 Feb 2009, 13:30 - 15:40

Invited Participants: IUCN, VFI, WCS, WWF, Nicholas Wilkinson

Attending:

Latsamay Sylavong, IUCN
Xiong Tsechalicha, IUCN
Robert Mather, IUCN
Rick Reece, Village Focus International
Kimberly Suiseeya PA Mgmt advisor, Lao Environment and Social Project, EPF
Roland Eve, WWF
Martin Hollands WWF
Khamkhoun ???? WWF
Mike Hedemark, WCS

Facilitator: Bill Robichaud

Meeting Purposes:

- 1) Strategize coordinated action on saola conservation in Laos, and decide on a coordinated approach for application of a CEPF Lao saola grant;
- 2) Insure no overlap among NGOs in application for other CEPF project grants.

Outputs:

1. CEPF overview (CEPF priorities, etc.)

Bill introduced CEPF and priorities including 28 priority sites and 67 priority species in the Indo-Burma Hotspot. In Laos all priority sites are Mekong-River corridor related. Any forest/PA proposals would then have to focus on conservation of priority species.

2. Saola: towards cooperative, coordinated action

- Review of results of the AWCSG Regional Strategy Workshop (June 2008)
- Review of priorities in the Lao PDR Saola Action Plan (1999)
- Review of each organization's currently active and 'in pipeline' saola projects
- Gap analysis: current work vs, identified priorities.
- Discussion on filling the gaps: is a CEPF project the best way forward? If so, how should a CEPF project be structured? Issues: project management; GoL support & participation.
- Next steps.

WR introduced the Goal for Saola from AWCSG Regional Strategy Workshop (Tam Dao NP Vietnam, June 2008) and the priorities from the Lao PDR SAP, and showed a distribution map.

These include:

- not losing Sao La from any site, and population recovery to at least 800

individuals.

- 4 Priority areas identified, and highest immediate priority is increased patrolling against snaring and other types of hunting

Map of distribution shown.

RR VFI is working in Northern (Salavan) part of Xe Sap, not the southern (Xekong part) Working in 70 villages including on a new project Rights-Link – focusing on land and natural resource management rights, communication linkages between local people and policy-makers, specifically regarding land-use issues and land conflict issues, having young lawyers staying in the village, making the connection between local people and policy makers, etc. A Rights Guidebook that VFI has been working on for three years has finally been approved by DoF.

KS. We are not implementors, but rather provide funding for others in Khammouane, Bolikhamsay and Savanakheth Provinces, including some of the priority Sao La areas.

RE Saola not a global priority species for WWF, but a regional/local priority. We are not yet actively working in Xe Sap, but it is part of our Southern Lao landscape and we are planning to work there, and we are fundraising for it WWF is already working on the Vietnamese side. WWF Vietnam has sent in a CEPF LOI for around \$220k for Sao La in VN, as well as a Darwin Initiative proposal

XT – LENS project grant for Hin Nam No – major activity is co-management arrangements, but not targeting specific species. Some focus on survey and patrolling, after enhanced capacity through training. Not really a key area for Sao La

MH – WCS Approaching Sao La in two locations, providing technical assistance to the Province, including community outreach activities, and patrol teams providing training for check-point on highway 8. In Nam Kading two sub-stations with 6 staff in each collecting snares etc. May add another sub-station this year. Looking into a variety of funding sources. These include MacArthur, Theun Hinboun Extension Project, etc. Any funding for Bolikhamsay PAFO helps all of the Nam Kading Pas. Right now all camera traps in Nam Kading.

Second Area in Savanakheth in headwaters of Xe Bang Fai, in conjunction with Xepon Mine. We have a crocodile project with them at the moment. If they survive the current financial crisis, this new work will start perhaps in May. Community crocodile management plans have been developed in 8 villages including wetland restoration, fish ponds etc

WR - NT2 Watershed Protection Authority – put out 20 camera traps but still no confirmation that Sao La still exist in the NNT

WR Sao La is a Flagship species for IB Hotspot – so it should be fairly easy to get money from CEPF. However it would be useful to have one combined proposal from the different NGOS. All organisations here today are involved in Sao La

To enhance the collaborative nature of the proposal - make the proposal from IUCN AWCSP – which has a Sao La working group – enhances credibility/collaborative nature (Bil, Roland, Latsamay and Mark already members). In this case IUCN Laos would be the focal point for the contract management with CEPF

It is also important that we need to get the National Action Plan endorsed

NBSAP is approved but not really being implemented. Khampadit is trying to get more clear actions identified and implemented at the provincial level
PoWPA now endorsed but only none ongoing aspect – sustainable financing work (IUCN activity)

3. CEPF: towards absence of overlap in applications.

- Review of each organization's CEPF wish-list.
- Further action needed?

IUCN ideas:

Four particular ideas:

- a) Upper Lao Mekong – Luang Prabang-Pak Lay-Sannakham
- b) Lao Langurs in limestone areas – there could be restricted range/endemic forms in the limestone all the way up to Houaphan Province (nobody knows because they haven't looked). First priority overall survey to find what forms are found where in Laos. Plus strengthening management in HNN and PHB. HNN probably higher priority because of potential WHS status
- c) Sao La (see above)
- d) Strengthening PA Management through strengthening of the new provincial PA offices, (first one already set up in Champasak). Help them to write simple appropriate management plans

(LENS may contract WCS to conduct training for those new offices in the three central provinces)

This could be used as matching funds for CEPF proposal which could also be a joint proposal

WB interested in a national road map for PAs – to enable them to understand where they should start spending their money

WWF Ideas

- a) Eld's Deer
- b) Xe Pian Lao gibbons
- c) Xe Kong Aquatic Biodiversity linked with future dams
- d) Also considering Lao Langur and limestone but not sure exactly what,
- e) Sao La in southern part of the distribution (Xe Sap, across from where WWF also has money for work on the Vietnamese side)

Also going ahead for support on PA Management in Southern Laos, using Xe Pian as a development and learning site that other S Laos PAs could focus on. May also include some support for the national level to take the learnings from this.

WCS Ideas

- a) Continue in Bolikhamsay landscape, drilling down to the DAFO level and work more on provincial PAs. Several CEPF
- b) Nam Et Pou Loei landscape focusing on all the cat species – constituency building, enforcement and NRM at the village level

c) Multi-organisational initiative on Sao La focused on enforcement and picking up snares would be awesome.

d) Crocodiles

VFI Ideas

Could be a potential partner for the Sao la proposal in Xe Sap, but will nto be doing any CEPF proposal

General Discussion

What to hang proposals on?

NBSAP – Department of Environment is responsible for implementation so DoF doesn't really pay much attention to this. On the other hand FS2020 doesn't really focus on Protected Areas. So although there are lots of policies, there is nothing necessarily linking them directly to Pas, and there is a gap in PA Policy, and a lack of sustainable funding mechanisms. This is one reason why WB wants to work on a PA Roadmap.

CEPF Focal point is Khampadit at DOE (WREA) – based on DOF endorsement/approval, he should then follow up and request MoFA to approve?

DOF PoWPA is already approved, so management planning ideas should be easy to move ahead with

Next Steps:

- 1) Mike will talk to Bouaphan about the level of commitment to implement the Sao La Action Plan sometime this week
- 2) Bill will contact AWCSG to gauge their interest in our approach
- 3) Bill will contact CEPF informally to try and get some feedback about what proportion of funds they may be setting aside for Laos, which of our ideas might be most likely to fly, and when applications may be open. Will frame the enquiry in the context of sharing the results of today's meeting with them, Sharing our long-list of project will demonstrate that we are already being open and collaborative in sharing ideas, (and that they should set aside significant funds for Laos!)

End: