

# CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

## I. BASIC DATA

**Organization Legal Name:** Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa Eastern Province Region

**Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement):** Identifying, Mapping and Valuing Socio-economically Significant Biodiversity at Municipal Level: A Pilot Study in Oudtshoorn

**Implementation Partners for this Project:** Gouritz Initiative

**Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement):** August 1, 2005 - October 31, 2006

**Date of Report (month/year):** March 15, 2007 **Report prepared by Adam Welz**

## II. OPENING REMARKS

*Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.*

This project was conceptualized as a pilot study to test the usefulness of the concept of 'natural capital' in motivating for the conservation of natural ecosystems and biodiversity. Most landuse decision-making in South Africa takes place at the local municipality level, and the existence value of biodiversity is not often taken seriously within local decision-making structures. Much valuable natural habitat is thus lost to unwisely-situated development. The project's conceptualisers surmised that if biodiversity was re-framed as 'natural capital', and clear links between the local economy and natural ecosystems were made, nature might be taken more seriously as having real value (pinning a believable economic value on components of nature might better protect them than arguing for the protection the survival of rare species on moral grounds.).

In South Africa, local municipalities are required to complete and Integrated Development Plan (IDP) roughly every five years. This plan is legally-binding and guides development. The spatial component of the IDP is known as the Spatial Development Framework (SDF). This project aimed not only to elucidate links between nature and the local economy, but to make the natural habitat that supports the local economy spatially explicit (map it) and include it in the SDF.

To ensure best use of the information and maps generated during the project, the main project staff member would work in close co-operation with the Gouritz Initiative (GI), a landscape-scale conservation initiative active in the Oudtshoorn area. In the long term, the GI would mainstream the project products.

The project proved far more challenging than anticipated. Its initial aim was to map a large suite of sources of 'ecosystem services' (= natural capital). We soon realized that not only could we not access or generate sufficient data on many services, but a map detailing too many services could be confusing to users and decision-makers. Certain services are more important than others, and some are more tightly and thus convincingly linked to the local economy. The inclusion of poorly-understood or low-value natural capital might weaken the impact of the map on many decision-makers, many of whom have an extraordinarily low or non-existent appreciation of the links between ecosystems and human survival.

Thus we decided to focus on two key services that underpin the two main economic activities – agriculture and tourism – in the Oudtshoorn local municipality. Water from irrigation projects

underpins the vast bulk of agriculture in the area, but data on what attracted tourists to the area was completely lacking. In association with Caroline Gelderblom of the CSIR (a parastatal scientific research agency), Adam Welz conceived and conducted a questionnaire survey of hundreds of tourists in the area. This proved to be very time-intensive, and set the project back by some months, but enormously useful insight was gained (see below).

Other, considerable, challenges experienced during the project were the resignation of all of the WESSA Eastern Cape Province’s Biodiversity Conservation Unit’s staff (financial managers for the project), and the considerable disruption in the activities of the Gouritz Initiative due to management turnover and later staff resignations. The Oudtshoorn Municipal Council has been in constant turmoil for most of the project’s duration – many key personnel have been suspended due to allegations of mismanagement and corruption, and elections have changed the balance of power. It was thus very difficult to obtain certain information from the municipal offices or maintain working relationships with municipal employees.

Despite these considerable difficulties, much of value has flowed from the project, and more will flow once certain outstanding project products have been finalized and disseminated. Very important lessons have been learned about strengths and limitations of the ecosystem services/natural capital approach to planning. These are touched on below and detailed in more depth in the Lessons Learned document currently being prepared for circulation to the conservation community. The project is already having effect on landuse decision-making in the area despite not all the products being complete.

**III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE**

**Project Purpose:** Natural capital map is used by targeted economic sectors in the Oudtshoorn community and incorporated into the municipal Integrated Development Plan and local Spatial Development Framework.

**Planned vs. Actual Performance**

Indicator	Actual at Completion
<b>Purpose-level:</b>	
Measures to protect natural capital are captured in Oudtshoorn's Integrated Development Plan.	<b>Not yet achieved (Integrated Development Plan (IDP) not yet completed by local municipality), but data from the project will very shortly be provided for inclusion into the Spatial Development Framework component of the IDP.</b>

**Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.**

The information collated and data generated during the project is already having effect in decision-making in the area (for example, on a major golf estate development, see below.) Information is currently being prepared for transfer to the SDF consultant for the Oudtshoorn municipality, even though certain project products have not yet been finalized. The municipality has not yet completed its IDP – this is something the project has no control over.

**Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?**

An unexpected positive spin-off of the project was the realization, backed by questionnaire data generated during the project, that natural scenery is extraordinarily important to tourism. By some measures, scenery is far more important to tourists, especially repeat tourists, than the traditionally-marketed attractions of the area.

An unexpected negative spin-off followed a public presentation by the project staff member in which the value of water to the Oudtshoorn economy was made clear. Although the intention of the presentation was to publicise the value of natural watersheds in economic terms and so promote their protection, a key player in the local ostrich farming industry wants to use the data to promote more groundwater extraction. His reasoning is that if water is worth a lot (which it certainly is in the semi-arid Oudtshoorn area), government should be helping local farmers extract as much of it as possible so as to expand the local economy (water use efficiency has not yet entered the local debate). This might have severe negative effects on biodiversity.

**IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS**

*Project Outputs: Enter the project outputs from the Logical Framework for the project*

**Planned vs. Actual Performance**

Indicator	Actual at Completion (reference to Means of Verification on logframe)
<b>Output 1:</b> Natural capital features within the Oudtshoorn municipality have been identified and mapped, and economic values derived for those features in a way that makes sense to stakeholders.	
<b>1.1.</b> Stakeholders provide information on natural capital.	<p><b>1.1.1.</b> List of stakeholders. <b>COMPLETED</b></p> <p><b>1.1.2.</b> Notes from number of meetings with stakeholders. <b>COMPLETED</b></p> <p><b>1.1.3.</b> Summary of preliminary information gathered. <b>COMPLETED</b></p>
<b>1.2.</b> The most appropriate format and procedure to ensure that natural capital is incorporated into the IDP and SDF has been determined.	<p><b>1.2.1.</b> Notes from number of meetings with stakeholders. <b>Part-completed. A few more meetings required once Gouritz initiative is re-invigorated, as they will be mainstreaming the product. New municipal employees will also need to be engaged.</b></p> <p><b>1.2.2.</b> Summary report on research into legislation and procedures governing IDP process. <b>Part-completed. IDP process has changed since onset of project. Many municipalitites, including Oudtshoorn, are not following prescribed process.</b></p> <p><b>1.2.3.</b> Recommendation on preliminary format of report and map. <b>Not yet completed. To be done with new staff of GI or its successor that will be mainstreaming the map in the long term.</b></p>
<b>1.3.</b> Natural capital data have been gathered and linked to specific geographic areas.	<b>1.3.1.</b> Draft report on natural capital and initial draft GIS map. <b>COMPLETED</b>

<p><b>1.4.</b> Collated data have been linked to final map of Oudtshoorn natural capital features.</p>	<p><b>1.4.1.</b> Final GIS map and explanatory report. <b>Not yet completed. To be done with input from new staff of GI or its successor that will be mainstreaming the map in the long term. GIS technician (Trevor Wolf) has been paid in advance for outstanding work.</b></p>
<p><b>1.5.</b> Staff member has been appointed Q1.</p>	<p><b>1.5.1.</b> Staff contract signed (end Q1). <b>DONE</b></p>
<p><b>Output 2.</b> Project results are presented to Oudtshoorn municipal officials and other stakeholders, and Gouritz Initiative staff are capacitated to ensure natural capital is incorporated into future Integrated Development Plans and Spatial Development Frameworks.</p>	
<p><b>2.1.</b> Identified municipal officials and stakeholders are aware of project results.</p>	<p><b>2.1.1.</b> Workshop minutes and attendance list. <b>Workshop not yet conducted. More valuable to do it with new staff of GI.</b></p>
<p><b>2.2.</b> GI staff understand and are able to use project results for incorporation into future IDPs and SDFs.</p>	<p><b>2.2.1.</b> GI endorses project map and accompanying report. <b>GI cannot endorse due to current uncertain status. Will be put forward for endorsement by new staff when they are appointed.</b></p>
<p><b>2.3.</b> GI represented on IDP planning committees.</p>	<p><b>2.3.1.</b> IDP committee membership list. <b>Susan Botha, currently the only GI staff member, is on one of the SDF planning committees and has attended a recent meeting, although given the dysfunctionality of the municipality, the relevant membership list is unavailable.</b></p>
<p><b>Output 3.</b> The lessons learned from the development of a natural capital approach made available to interested and affected parties.</p>	
<p><b>3.1.</b> 'Lessons learned' document (analysis of strengths and weaknesses) has been produced and disseminated to conservation planners through appropriate websites, email groups and academic institutions.</p>	<p><b>3.1.1.</b> 'Lessons learned' presented to GI staff. <b>Will be done once GI running smoothly again.</b></p>
<p><b>3.2.</b> 'Lessons learned' document made publicly available via website.</p>	<p><b>3.2.1.</b> 'Lessons learned' document available on GI website. <b>Will be done once document is finalized and approved by GI. Document currently being circulated for comment by non-GI planners.</b></p>
<p><b>3.3.</b> Conservation and regional planning community alerted to project results via appropriate websites, email groups etc.</p>	<p><b>3.3.1.</b> List of planners and organisations contacted. <b>Will be done after final document finalized and approved by GI. Document currently being circulated for comment by non-GI planners.</b></p>

***Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.***

The project has delivered very useful data, particularly with respect to the value of natural scenery to tourism, which has not been much studied in the South African context. This aspect of the project is already attracting much positive attention among the conservation planning community in South Africa, and recognition of the value of natural scenery may well prove a massive boost to biodiversity conservation countrywide. Water data gathered during the project has been used to raise the profile of water resources in the Oudtshoorn community, and also been used to object to a large golf course-related housing development that is likely to great severe negative biodiversity impacts (due to groundwater extraction) should it go ahead. A series of objections made by a project staff member, Adam Welz, whose arguments were endorsed by the WESSA branch in George, have persuaded the provincial Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning to order a full-scale Environmental Impact Assessment of the golf estate (the Department was about to approve the estate on the basis of a flawed and superficial Scoping Report, which Welz was able to call into question with the information he had gathered).

One of the key final products, a user-friendly map of sources of Oudtshoorn's key ecosystem services, has not yet been produced due to various well-known difficulties currently being experienced in the Gouritz Initiative, and delays in the project due to unbudgeted-for time being need to gather tourism data. However, the data gathered and basic spatial information is currently being passed on the municipality's Integrated Development Project manager and the consultant in charge of preparing the Spatial Development Framework, so the key Purpose Level Indicator is likely to be achieved within a matter of months. The final map will be completed once the GI is re-constituted and functional again.

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

As mentioned above, the final map product has not yet been made, but will be completed once the GI is up and running again. The long-term impact of this project is likely to be increased by completion of the map.

The 'lessons learned' document is still in draft form, but should be finalized before the map is. This should not badly affect the overall impact of the project, rather just delay it a few months.

<b>V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS</b>
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***Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.***

N/A

<b>VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT</b>
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***Describe any lessons learned during the various phases of the project. Consider lessons both for future projects, as well as for CEPF's future performance.***

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

It is hard to see how the project design process could have foreseen some of the problems encountered by this project. However, the time taken from the initial Letter of Inquiry stage to final greenlighting was considerable, and impacted the project negatively. It was also not clear to the project staffer how to proceed to communicate with the principal donor (CEPF) once certain

problems arose that necessitated a departure from the planned schedule. CEPF might be more explicit in developing communication channels or clarifying procedures that project staffers can use when they need to change an aspect of the project to deal with unforeseen circumstances.

**Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)**

Better communication between the organizations involved in the project could have made the process easier. However, considerable goodwill and tenacity displayed by certain people associated with the project allowed it to continue despite enormous challenges. CEPF representative Nina Marshall has been particularly understanding of the issues involved.

**NB: A separate and far more comprehensive Lessons Learned document, intended for dissemination into the conservation community, is currently being prepared.**

**VII. ADDITIONAL FUNDING**

**Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.**

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Type of Funding*</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Richard Cowling	A	ZAR 156 750.00	From, inter alia, research funds, and consulting time contributed. See LOI for details.
WESSA-EP	A	ZAR 6 000.00	Office space. See LOI.
CSIR	A	?Considerable	Staff time and expertise

**\*Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF funded project)*
- C** *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.)*
- D** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

**Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability.**

This project was not designed to continue. Its results will be mainstreamed by the GI or its successor organization in future.

**VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Some problems were experienced during the project with CEPF Grantwriter. .gwa files were regularly corrupted when sent to gmail or yahoo addresses, and CEPF tech support could not explain why or how to solve the problem. This contributed to reporting delays. Also, it was sometimes difficult to get properly 'activated' .gwa files so that reports could be entered. Other than that, the Grantwriter software was fairly easy to use.

## VIII. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF aims to increase sharing of experiences, lessons learned and results among our grant recipients and the wider conservation and donor communities. One way we do this is by making the text of final project completion reports available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and by marketing these reports in our newsletter and other communications. Please indicate whether you would agree to publicly sharing your final project report with others in this way.

Yes   **YES**  

No           

If yes, please also complete the following:

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