

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Botanical Society of South Africa

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): *Developing a Strategic Plan for the Partnerships Section in the Department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation*

Implementation Partners for this Project: Department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): January 1, 2008 - December 31, 2008

Date of Report (month/year): 31 March 2009

II. OPENING REMARKS

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

This project is a joint-initiative between the provincial department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation (DTEC) and the Botanical Society of South Africa (BotSoc) and had its birth in the Bokkeveld Stewardship Project.

The Partnerships Section of the Department Tourism, Environment and Conservation is a relatively newly formed section and currently consists of 2 staff members based in Springbok, and Nieuwoudtville. This section currently has diverse roles, including the roll out of the CBNRM program within the province, support for community projects, limited support for the EWT Riverine Rabbit working group and the Bokkeveld Stewardship Project. Off-reserve conservation is currently limited to two sites where capacity exists (Goegap Nature Reserve and the Bokkeveld Plateau – all within the Succulent Karoo).

Currently the focus within the sub-directorate Protected Area Management (of which partnerships is a section) is the effective management and expansion strategy of Protected Areas within the province. The Section is currently under-resourced and ill-prepared to assume additional responsibilities such as taking on new private protected areas.

The Section's budget is a concern. Given the capacity constraints within the department, DTEC requested the Botanical Society's assistance to develop of the Partnerships section in order to achieve the biodiversity targets set for the province.

The following gaps were identified (at departmental workshops):

- expansion plans for the provincial nature reserves, especially to include SKEP priorities
- support to reserve staff for negotiating and concluding stewardship contracts adjacent to the provincial reserves
- evaluating and prioritising local municipal nature reserves within the current conservation context (approximately 15 in the province that need to be revised according to the Protected areas act and which need to be revitalised as many are in a state of limbo with little to no management being implemented)
- Meeting conservation targets set through the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

Four other provinces are currently developing or implementing stewardship programmes. All have significant internal capacity and have benefited from NGO support during set up. The N Cape has

been slower on the uptake due to the immense distances, absence of dedicated staff and resource constraints.

Municipal reserves and other land holdings are under significant land use pressure and suffer from unclear legal protection status. There is a large risk that the biodiversity and amenity value of some of these jewels could be lost. The Wilderness Foundation is pursuing a GEF project to investigate these issues nationally, but isn't currently focusing on the N Cape. Only the Partnerships Section is in a position to assess, promote and if necessary secure these sites.

DTEC is the smallest provincial conservation authority in SA, with the smallest budget. By building capacity slowly and sustainably they are avoiding over-reach and have requested assistance from BotSoc, who facilitated the development of a three year strategy for the implementation of stewardship in the province in partnership with 3 non-government organizations. This is a new model for stewardship in South Africa.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose: *The partnerships section of DTEC has a 5 year strategy and action plan that sets priorities for off reserve conservation and leads to the effective implementation of stewardship in the Succulent Karoo.*

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	
1. Final strategy produced and accepted by DTEC by Dec 08	The final strategy was completed only in Jan 09, however Botsoc continued to support the project to ensure the completion of the strategy. A very comprehensive and detailed strategy has been developed which will serve as a tool for development of a stewardship program in the Northern Cape both by DTEC and its partners. Although DTEC has accepted it, budget cuts have compromised uptake.

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

This project has been successful as a very comprehensive strategy has been developed. The responsibility now lies with the provincial department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation, to take up the baton and complete the race. This strategy is written taking cognizance of the limited staff in the partnerships section and thus raises the profile of the role of non-government organizations in supporting the roll out of off reserve conservation in the Northern Cape.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The consultant who was awarded the contract took up a full time position in the middle of the project contract term, this had a negative impact on the project and meant that the municipal reserve section of the project did not enjoy the attention it required and that time frames were not always met. Although a bit of momentum was lost through the slow delivery of products, I do not feel that the final product was negatively influenced by this. The consultant took time to understand the local context as well as the constraints of the department and all the NGO role players, the strategy that has been developed takes the nature of all participants in the roll out of the strategy into account.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs:

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: A 5-year strategy for partnerships section in DTEC is developed	This task completed by the end of Jan 2009, and serves as a tool for all role players in the Northern Cape in identification of the gaps as well as roles and responsibilities that need to be fulfilled to ensure that stewardship in the Northern Cape is a success in the future.
<i>1.1. Current workplans of 2 staff members reviewed by March 08</i>	The work plans were reviewed and a revised work plans have been suggested by the consultant in order for these staff members to give effect to the strategy.
<i>1.2. Strategy development sessions held with staff and management by March 08</i>	The Northern Cape Stewardship Forum and its members was the base used for development of the strategy. Due to the need for input from all the role players these strategy development sessions took place in February, May, July and August 2008
<i>1.3. Strategy draft developed and circulated for comment by end June 08</i>	This time frame was not met, the final draft strategy was sent for comment in January 2009.
<i>1.4. Final strategy which reflects the importance of stewardship produced and accepted by DTEC by Dec 08</i>	The comments from the role players on the strategy are currently being collected and the handover will be completed by 31 March 2009.
Output 2: Opportunities for effectively resourcing the partnerships section have been identified and proposals developed.	A budget for the strategy has been developed and is a good basis for development of a project proposal for external funding of the program as well as justification to provincial treasury for funding to meet conservation targets in the Northern Cape.
<i>2.1. Current budget of partnerships section is evaluated by March 08</i>	The budget of the partnerships section was reviewed and was used as a starting point for the development of the budget for the role out of the strategy
<i>2.2. New strategy and workplans have a linked budget by end March 08</i>	The work plans and budget are linked to the budget in the strategy, this did not take place by the end of March but by the end of December 08
<i>2.3. Budget submitted to DTEC for inclusion in next budget cycle June 08</i>	This activity did not take place as the strategy was only finalized in Jan 09. DTEC has committed to presenting the outcomes of the strategy to their financial committee for funding. There will be a need for assistance from the NGO sector in the role out of the strategy for at least the first three years. From discussions with management it seems that the co-ordinator post may be able to be funded but that assistance will be required for the operational costs.
<i>2.4. Alternative funding sources are investigated through out the project and included as alternative options for funding projects Dec 08</i>	This output was a little ambitious for the time frame of the project. The Ngo partners have committed to assisting DTEC ensure that the stewardship strategy is fulfilled and one of the areas of support will be through assistance in investigation of alternative funding sources.
Output 3: A strategy for securing municipal nature reserves developed	A strategy for securing the municipal nature reserves did not take place as planned in the initial project proposal but has been included in the strategy document. The distances in the Northern Cape and the time frame of the project as well as few external negative impacts resulted in this output not enjoying the focused attention it required. A good foundation has however been laid for the provincial department to take forward once their capacity allows it, or for them to approach an NGO for assistance in this aspect of their conservation responsibility in the province.

3.1. Consultant appointed with accurate terms of reference in place by January 08	The TOR for the consultant was approved by all necessary parties and the consultant was appointed and started work on this project 01/01/08
3.2. All current municipal reserves in the province mapped	A list of the municipal nature reserves has been sourced. A map has been created and is included in the final draft strategy document. This output has indicated to DTEC that the municipal reserves need attention; however the task was not completed due to the distances of the Northern Cape.
3.3. 2 key succulent karroo reserves identified as pilots by May 08	This task was not completed, but a useful portfolio of all key SK reserves has been compiled and is available for use in the National and Provincial Protected Area Expansion Strategies.
3.4. 2 municipalities engaged and problems identified by end June 08	This task did not take place, however some lessons have been learnt in the Calvinia area due to work that has been conducted with the Hantam Municipality and the Akkerendam nature reserve.
3.5. Process for declaration and secure conservation status understood by June 08	Engagement with the national municipalities program took place and the requirements as stipulated in the Protected Areas Act is understood. How this translates into action on the ground by DTEC with limited staff is still to be investigated.
3.6. Process for effective management of all Northern Cape Municipal reserves proposed and understood by DTEC staff by Dec 08	Task not completed, however a strategy for how this task should be tackled is included in the strategy document.
Output 4: Link partnerships section with local and national stewardship initiatives	Through the development of the strategy there has been a revival in the commitment of the staff on the ground both from the provincial department as well as the NGO partners to working together as well as being involved in and learning from other provincial and national initiatives.
4.1. Key meetings attended by DTEC staff throughout the duration of the project	Key meetings were attended by the DTEC stewardship facilitator(s). An important meeting in Pretoria in November was also attended by the DTEC stewardship facilitator as well as one of the staff from CI involved in stewardship action in the Northern Cape
4.2. Northern Cape Stewardship Forum is effectively handed over to DTEC by March 08	The stewardship forum chairmanship was handed over to a member of the DTEC staff - the additional meetings that were held regarding discussion for the strategy doc were organized by the stewardship facilitator. A meeting was held in February 09, where the implications of the strategy were discussed and a plan for meetings in 2009 was agreed upon and became the responsibility of DTEC and its partners in stewardship action in the Northern Cape

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

The key output of this project was the 3 year pilot phase strategy; this document will be completed by the end of March 2009 and will form the basis of development of a stewardship strategy in the Northern Cape. This strategy can also be used by other provinces that have similar staff capacity constraints and NGO partners that can fulfill important niches for increasing the conservation estate in a province.

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

The municipalities output was not met satisfactorily, however it has been included in the strategy document which ensures that DTEC and its partners can revisit the issue once the stewardship program is up and running and other priority biodiversity conservation areas have been secured.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

No Safeguards were triggered during this project. Project staff are, however, contributing to a process investigating land reform and biodiversity stewardship synergies, and in ensuring that while political tensions play themselves out on the Bokkeveld, the unique biodiversity assets will not suffer.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

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.

- **Communication** - with all role players is key to successful buy in of a new project. In a project of this nature more time and energy needs to be spent getting high level buy in. As there was no individual in head office spearheading this project a budget in finances and time should have been allocated to spending more time with management and the head of department.
- **Time frames** - Working with government department's procedures and protocols can take much longer than expected
- **Enforcing deadlines** - Working with consultants is time consuming and needs a contingency plan when deadlines are not met, in the future consider a penalty clause that has financial implications

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

- The failure of output three could have been avoided if we had taken the time to fully understand the immensity of this output and capacity constraints of the consultant.

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

- The success of this strategy is owed to the input of the "on the ground" role players in attending Northern Cape Stewardship meetings, giving meaningful input and reviewing and commenting on the strategy.

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.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Date Received	Notes
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		

		\$		
		\$		
		\$		
		\$		

***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 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 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 designed to continue into the future through the Department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation in partnership with NGOs working in the Northern Cape.

VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is not easy to quantify in real terms what this project has achieved. Prior to this project there was little consensus and team work amongst the provincial department and the Ngo partners in developing a stewardship program for the province. Through the development of the strategy these relationships have been strengthened and the sense of team has been established. At a meeting in February it was decided that implementation of the strategy is key to ensuring the conservation of important biodiversity in the Northern Cape. This has resulted in the Department committing to funding the salary the coordinator a pivotal position for success of this strategy, while NGO partners have committed to sourcing funding for the operational expenses of this post for the three year duration.

VIII. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. One way we do this is by making programmatic project documents available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these in our newsletter and other communications.

These documents are accessed frequently by other CEPF grantees, potential partners, and the wider conservation community.

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