

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa: Western Cape Region

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): SKEEP – Succulent Karoo Environmental Education Project

Implementation Partners for this Project: WESSA Western Cape; Western Cape Education Department; Department of Agriculture; Gouritz Initiative Forum; Puppet Theatre Company; Local Farmers in Oudtshoorn.

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): February 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007

Date of Report (month/year): 5 December 2007

II. OPENING REMARKS

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

The project was granted an extension for the period from 1 May 2007 to 30 June 2007. The late submission of this final reports is due to delays with the completion and printing of the handbook contained 20 curriculum-based , environmental education lesson plans.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose: Educators, learners and project partners have a confident understanding of the biology and ecology of the Little Karoo and are actively involved in conservation projects in the area.

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	
By the end of the project, Grade 6 educators from at least 10 local schools are utilising Succulent Karoo lesson plans.	By the end of the project, this purpose output level target had not been fully met. The lesson plans are, however, currently being delivered to 50 schools in the Succulent Karoo area and will be used by these schools in the 2008 school year.
By the end of the project, 10 local schools are actively involved in conservation projects at 10 different Succulent Karoo sites.	All these projects have been set up and the schools have become part of the Eco-Schools programme. The on-going implementation of the projects has met with mixed levels of success at the schools.
By the end of the project, educators and learners are sharing lessons learnt and information gathered with educators and learners from other schools within the Little Karoo.	Some cross-pollination of knowledge, ideas and experience has occurred, but it has not been as vigorous as anticipated.

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

The project was successful in terms of achieving all of its performance indicators, although not necessarily within the anticipated time frame. In terms of purpose-level targets, two out of the three targets were met. The third would require a second phase in order to be met fully. As is explained later in this document, in hindsight, it is considered necessary to implement a pilot phase of a project of this nature prior to the ambitious and extensive implementation envisaged in the project proposal.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The employee from the Western Cape Education Department who project implementers were working with was booked off for an extended sick leave period of 18 months and was not replaced during this period. This represented the loss of a valuable contact in the Education Department. During the implementation of the project, the Gouritz Initiative Forum collapsed and the Gouritz Initiative Co-ordinators resigned. This definitely hindered the implementation of the project. It represented a loss of a major project partner in the area and exacerbated difficulties associated with WESSA Western Cape implementing the project from a distance. Creative solutions were found to these unexpected events.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

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

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: The puppet theatre effectively raises awareness, secures educators to attend field camps and capacitates them in developing lesson plans and learning support materials.	
1.1. By the end of the first week in February 2006, support of the Western Cape Education Department has been secured.	The support of the Western Cape Education Department was secured in January 2006. The Department gave guidance with respect to procedures to follow when approaching schools. It was hoped that more active support would be forthcoming from the Western Cape Education Department.
1.2. By the end of the 3rd quarter 2006, 50 schools have been visited and the puppet theatre script 1 has been presented.	This target was met during September 2006 (i.e. during the third quarter of 2006). The puppet theatre was very well received at the 50 schools visited.
1.3. By the of the third quarter 2006, commitment secured from 50 educators to participate in the development of lesson plans and learning support material.	This target was theoretically met by the end of the third quarter 2006, as commitment from the educators was secured simultaneously with the puppet theatre visits to the schools. Educators expressed reservations about giving their commitment, as they were required to find substitute teachers to cover their absence from school. This proved problematical.
Output 2: Educators' field outings and workshops are held, with lesson plans and learning support materials developed.	

<p>2.1. By mid February 2006, a workshop has been held to identify and prioritise 20 lesson plans, based primarily upon the CEPF funded booklets "Vetplante en Skraal Plante" and "People, Patterns and Processes" and other relevant sources.</p>	<p>The workshop was held on 16 February 2007 and the 20 priority focus areas were identified at the workshop. Five themes were selected, with four lesson plans per theme.</p>
<p>2.2. By the end of the 4th quarter 2006, five field outings and workshops for educators planned and held.</p>	<p>This performance level output target was met according to schedule in the sense that the workshops and field outings were held and planned. Less progress with the development of lesson plans was made at these workshops than anticipated.</p>
<p>2.3. By the end of the 4th quarter 2006, learning support materials have been developed around the 20 lesson plans identified as priorities.</p>	<p>Twelve lesson plans had been developed in draft format, but had not been tested, by the end of the fourth quarter 2006 and the remaining eight were in the process of being developed. An extension was obtained to meet this target at the end of the second quarter 2007. Despite this, the performance target was met only in November 2007, well after the completion date of the project.</p> <p>Two Learning Support material kits were tested at the learner camps, modified and then distributed to ten schools during the third quarter. This enable educators to use learning support material with draft lesson plans, or to use it for other lesson plans that they developed individually.</p> <p>Educators generally had a low level of capacity and one of the problems that beset the project was that there was not continuity of educators, i.e. the same educators did not attend camps and workshops and thus there was not sufficient follow-through. Substantial input from WESSA Western Cape to ensure that lesson plans were produced in a format that was acceptable for distribution to schools. In addition, the translation of the lesson plans into Afrikaans required more time than anticipated.</p>
<p>Output 3: Learners' field camps are organised and presented, with lesson plans and learning support materials being tested in the field.</p>	
<p>3.1. By the end of the 3rd quarter 2006, six field camps for learners have been planned.</p>	<p>This performance target was met according to schedule.</p>
<p>3.2. By the end of the 4th quarter 2006, 480 learners have been participating in 20 lesson plans during 6 field camps.</p>	<p>In terms of the attendance of learners and educators at the camps, the performance target was met by the end of the first week in November. An additional field camp was held in May 2007. As indicated above, the development of the lesson plans lagged behind. The most serious obstacle to the achievement of this performance target was the lack of commitment from educators and the lack of continuity in educators attending educator workshops and educators at the learner field camps.</p>
<p>3.3.</p>	<p>A total of 19 teachers or teacher assistants attended the learner camps and tested lesson</p>

By the end of the 4th quarter 2006, at least 30 teachers have attended learner camps and tested the lesson plans and learning support material.	plans and learning support material that had been developed in respect of twelve lesson plans. During the extended phase of the project, schools were visited and educators and learners gave input with regard to the remaining draft lesson plans and additional learning support material. These visits to schools ensured exposure of a greater number of educators to the lesson plans.
3.4. By the end of the 4th quarter 2006, the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson plans and learning support material have been identified and the information collated for the refining the lesson plans and learning support material.	Structured feedback from learners and educators in respect of three lesson plans was obtained during the last two learner camps. Further feedback was obtained in the extension phase of the project. Refinement of the lesson plans and the collation of learning support material was completed by the end of November 2007.
Output 4: Biodiversity monitoring and environmental conservation projects for 10 schools are identified, planned and taking place at 10 different field sites.	
4.1. By the end of the project, educators from ten participating schools have developed a formalised commitment to ten identified geographical sites for biodiversity monitoring and environmental conservation projects.	This target was met by the end of the project. The formalized commitment was secured through the schools registering with the Eco-Schools Programme, the cost of which was financed from project funds where schools could not, themselves, cover these costs.
4.2. By the end of the project, each of the ten schools has registered with the Eco-Schools programme.	This target was met simultaneously with and as part of the above target.
4.3. By the end of the project, a group of learners at each of the ten schools demonstrates competency in the learning outcomes achieved through the lesson plans.	The GI Forum was tasked with monitoring this target. The collapse of the Forum had a serious impact on this target. In the last quarter of the project, WESSA staff and contracted personnel put a lot of effort into attempting to establish contact with schools in order to monitor this target. Her efforts met with some success and the target was partially achieved.
4.4. The Gouritz Initiative Community Conservation Manager is periodically monitoring school site-specific projects.	Problems within the Gouritz Initiative and the effective collapse of the Gouritz Initiative seriously compromised the meeting of this performance level target. Once again, WESSA staff and Eco-Schools staff stepped into the gap in order to ensure that this target was met.
Output 5: Learning support material is used by Grade 6 educators and learners in the classroom and in the field.	
5.1. By the end of January 2007, the refined lesson plans and learning support material has been finalised and distributed to 10 participating schools.	The development of lesson plans lagged behind the rest of the project. The learning support material was delivered
5.2. By January 2007, the lesson plans have	This performance level target has not be met. The ENVIROLEARN webportal is not functional and an alternative hosting website is currently being

been posted on the ENVIROLEARN website. (The ENVIROLEARN portal focuses on creating a gateway for educators and learners to educational and support resources.)	sought.
5.3. By the end of the project, all Grade 6 educators and learners, at a minimum of 10 of the participating schools, are using the lesson plans and learning support material both in the classroom and in the field.	By the end of the project, this target had been partially achieved. Twelve of the twenty lesson plans were complete. Ten schools all commenced using the lesson plans with the accompanying learning support material. The level of commitment from the schools was variable.
Output 6: A Project Management Structure is effectively undertaking, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating aspects of the project.	
6.1. By the end of the 1st quarter 2006 a Project Management Team, which includes representation from all project partners, has been established. Partnership parameters have been established. Roles and responsibilities have been clarified.	This target was achieved according to schedule.
6.2. Throughout the duration of the project, the Project Management Team meets at least quarterly.	This performance level target was met, with Project Management Team meetings occurring quarterly. The minutes of these meetings are included in the full project printed report that has been couriered to CEPF.
6.3. Continual project co-ordination and management takes place, with project activities and outputs revised and amended, and remedial action taken as and when necessary.	The complex nature of this project required continual revision of project outputs and targets, as well as the taking of remedial action, in order to ensure that ultimately, the purpose level targets of the project were met. This included an extension phase of the project, where visit to schools took place in order to ensure increased direct contact with educators.
6.4. By the end of the project, requirements for the expansion of the project, replicability of successful aspects, and those aspects which should be reconsidered, are identified.	These are contained in the full printed report that has been submitted to CEPF. This target relied heavily on the Gouritz Initiative. The collapse of the Gouritz Initiative and the resignation of its staff has seriously affected the non-SEPF funded roll-out of lesson plans to a wider group of schools. The Eco-Schools co-ordinator will continue to work with the schools that are registered with Eco-Schools and attempt to keep them on board in terms of their project and the use of lesson plans.

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

There were multiple intended outputs in this project. The presentation of the puppet theatre shows and the learner field camps took place according to schedule and were an unqualified success. The holding of teacher workshops and the development of the lesson plans was much more difficult than originally anticipated. Given the lack of capacity in educators and very inconsistent commitment, the envisaged schedule of lesson plan development and testing was unrealistic. Ultimately, the project has delivered this output and the lesson plans will be delivered to schools during January 2008, for use in schools during 2008 and will be used together with the

resource kit that forms the learning support material. The ten geographical sites have been identified, as well as the ten schools, for involvement in biodiversity monitoring and environmental conservation projects. The ten schools have registered with the EcoSchools programme and the cost of the registration of some of these schools has been covered by project funding. It will require further follow-up and monitoring to determine whether this output has been met in the long term. Follow-up will occur with some schools via the Eco-Schools co-ordinator and the Gouritz Initiative should be in a position to participate more actively in the project once it has re-established itself more firmly.

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

There were no outputs that were unrealized.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

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.

The project has two distinct aspects, namely an awareness campaign about the Succulent Karoo and a formal, curriculum-related, educational programme. The awareness campaign, in the form of the puppet theatre presentations and learner camps, was very successful. These aspects of the project did not require any sustained input from schools and educators. It is difficult to judge the effectiveness of such awareness campaigns over the long term.

The learner camps were run by LandCare, Department of Agriculture, who have a programme of fun field outings for school children. There was a philosophical difference between the approach of Landcare and the approach of WESSA to the learner camps. LandCare believed in making the camps as much fun as possible for the children, without concentrating on curriculum

The curriculum-related, educational programme, which should be the sustainable aspect of the project, was much more complex and its implementation was less successful. From an educational and developmental perspective, educators should participate in the development of lesson plans and learning support material and this is how the project proposal was structured. In reality, there are many complex, practical challenges facing South Africa's educators, ranging from lack of capacity, lack of resources, administrative and teaching loads to the demands of teachers own families. Given the realities of schools in South Africa, and especially schools in the rural areas, the project was too ambitious in scope, its implementation period too short and post-project monitoring from the Gouritz Initiative Forum staff is not guaranteed.

A project of this nature, if it is intended to reach as large a catchment as the proposal envisaged, should, ideally be implemented through a pilot phase, where a small group of committed educators participates in the development of draft lesson plans prior to the holding of the learner camps where the lesson plans were meant to be tested and refined. It would have been more sensible to develop fewer lesson plans more thoroughly.

The sustained commitment of schools to biodiversity monitoring and environmental conservation projects is, to a large extent, dependent on the passionate commitment of a single educator at the school. In most cases, if the educator leaves the school, the project collapses within-based, educational activities. WESSA regarded the purpose of these field camps as the testing of lesson plans that had been developed. Although, this did create tension, ultimately both partners learned from the experience.

n a short period thereafter. If the project commences without the passionate commitment of an individual teacher, it is likely to collapse within six months to one year. A pilot phase of a project such as this one would assist in determining, with greater accuracy, which schools are likely to sustain their commitment to the project.

An important lesson learned was that it was much more effective to go to schools directly and work with schools on a one-on-one basis. This was the reason for the requested modification of the project output level targets in the last quarter of the project and the extension of the project completion date. Although more expensive, visits to schools. This avoided the problems associated with educators not being at school while attending camps and also the very real transport problems. This sort of approach is more expensive and time-consuming, but probably of greater lasting value.

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

The project was too ambitious in its scope – fewer schools should have been targeted for workshops and camps. More time should have been allowed between workshops and camps for the development of lesson plans and the provision of substitute teachers should have been included in the design of the project.

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

The project was particularly difficult to execute in that project partners were distributed over a wide geographical area, as were the schools that were participating in the project. Project partners also had differing philosophical points of departure, which presented several challenges. Transport for rural schools was problematical and had to be covered, unexpectedly, from the project budget. Schools principals did not support the project as anticipated and teacher commitment was variable. WESSA Western Cape’s experience in project implementation played a big role in holding the project together in the end. The administrative and financial aspects of project implementation were handled smoothly and exceptionally competently.

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.

Additional donor support came through donations in kind and support, rather than direct cash donations.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
Checkers	(A)Food at camps		
LandCare	(A)Camp personnel		
CapeNature	(A)Personnel		
WESSA (Eco-Schools)	(A)Personnel		

****Secretariat: Grantee was unable to quantify cash value for the in-kind funding. – 03/17/08 MP***

***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.

The project will continue into the future in that at least some schools will use the lesson plans with the learning support material. Some of the Eco-Schools will persist with their conservation projects and will be monitored by the Eco-Schools co-ordinator in the area. It is hoped that the Gouritz Initiative Forum, once more securely re-established, will resume ownership of the project. All the groundwork has been done and the materials and structures are in place for the project to be sustained by them.

The ten participating schools were assisted with making application to the SKEPPIES Fund (Small Grants Fund of the Development Bank of South Africa) in respect of community projects and projects related to the conservation sites.

VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Working in the education sector is particularly challenging and project proposals that involve this sector should be formulated with caution and not be too ambitious. A pre-condition of projects implemented in this sector should be the securing of formal support from education authorities and school principals, so that teacher commitment is more formalized and enforceable. It is important for funders to understand this context and not put project implementers under pressure to increase the scope and size of projects within a given budget. This project became a major project and should possibly have been split into three smaller projects than ran consecutively. The level of time and commitment that the project required was not congruent with the amount of funding supplied.

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.

Please include your full contact details below:

Name: Andy Gubb
Organization name: WESSA Western Cape
Mailing address: P.O. Box 30145, Tokai, Cape Town, South Africa, 7966
Tel: +27 21 7011397
Fax: +27 21 7011399
E-mail: andy@wessa.wcape.school.za