Independent Terminal Evaluation of the 'UNDP-GEF CAPE Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (ABI)'

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Acronyms

(these have been kept to a minimum for ease of reading)			
ABI	Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative		
ABIOC	Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative Coordination Committee		
BMU	German Federal Ministry for the environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety		
C.A.P.E.	Cape Action for People and Environment		
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism		
CFR	Cape Floristic Region		
FFI	Flora & Fauna International		
FVCT	Flower Valley Conservation Trust		
GEF	Global Environment facility		
MTE	Mid term Evaluation		
MOV	Means of Verification		
PA	Protected Area		
PIR	Project Implementation Review (PIR),		
PIU	Project Implementation Unit		
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute		
SANParks	South African National Parks		
SMA	Special Management Area		
TE	Terminal Evaluation		

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Cape Floristic Region (CFR) Biodiversity Hotspot is a globally significant repository of biodiversity, recognized for its high vulnerability. The Hotspot is threatened by a number of humaninduced pressures, which are gradually undermining key conservation values. The Government of South Africa has initiated an ambitious and comprehensive long-term program to arrest these pressures and protect a representative sample of biodiversity. The Program, known as Cape Action for People and the Environment (C.A.P.E.) will implement the Cape Action Plan for the Environment (CAPE Strategy), which was endorsed by the Government of South Africa in 2000.

The CAPE Strategy provides a long-term vision for biodiversity conservation in the CFR, and articulates an action plan to strategically address recognized conservation priorities. Activities are being scheduled over 20 years, divided into three distinct phases. The Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (ABI) comprises one of three complementary GEF initiatives in support of C.A.P.E. aimed at strengthening systemic, institutional and individual capacities and establishing the know-how needed for conservation in different ecological and socio-economic conditions as needed to attain and sustain positive conservation outcomes. The initiative has been designed to distil lessons and best practices in Phase 1 of C.A.P.E., through demonstration activities geared to addressing gaps in the management framework, to inform implementation of subsequent phases of the CAPE Programme.

The Agulhas Plain covers 270,000 ha of semi-arid, lowland fynbos and Renosterveld. Located in the Cape Floristic Region Biodiversity Hotspot, the area is a globally significant repository of biodiversity, recognized for its high irreplaceability and vulnerability. The Agulhas Plain constitutes one of the largest extant storehouses of lowland fynbos and Renosterveld habitats in the world. The diversity of habitat types, wetland ecosystems, Red data plant species and local endemics is unmatched in the CFR. The area is currently being threatened by a range of anthropogenic pressures, but nevertheless constitutes one of the best remaining opportunities at an *in situ* site level for conserving the CFR's lowland habitats. ABI would pilot new management measures and institutional arrangements for conservation at a sub-regional level, tied closely to the activities of the productive sectors and rooted in decentralized governance frameworks.

ABI was implemented through four outputs. These are described in some detail as outlined in the Project Document

Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of ABI Outputs and Key Activities

Output 1. A landscape –level conservation management and planning system is established by publicprivate partnerships negotiated by a well-capacitated extension service. 1.1 Institutional strengthening, cooperation, capacity-building

- Agulhas National Park was strengthened through staffing, provision of infrastructure and equipment
- A Joint SANParks Cape Nature extension service was established by providing staff, equipment and some training
- 1.2 Securing land under conservation management. Achieved through:
- 1.3 Land aquisition for Agulhas National Park
 - Creating or strengtheing key contractual parks (Hagelkraal, Elim) and Conservancies
 - Developing partnerships to consolidate key endamic wildlife habitat and De Mond Ramsar site
- 1.4 Conservation management planning (comprised developing systems for rapid ecological survey, stakeholder consultation, management plan for Agulhas National Park, developing protocols for farm planning, and integrating cultural heritage into management)
- 1.5 Controlling alien spread (strategies and active clearing)
- 1.6 Fire management (establishing rapid response units, fire mapping and planning)
- 1.7 Wetland rehabilitation (pilot restoration)
- 1.8 Participatory monitoring and evaluation (annual stakeholder workshops for Park and Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy)
- 1.9 Management/ABI Oversight Committee

Output 2. Ecologically, socially and ethically sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land use on the Agulhas Plain

- 2.1 Review/update legal framework for flower industry
- 2.2 Secure supply network for Flower Valley
- 2.3 Develop certification scheme
- 2.4 Marketing of sustainably harvested wild fynbos
- 2.5 Pilot recording system for harvesting species
- 2.6 Implement COP within supply network
- 2.7 Monitoring of sustainable harvesting
- 2.8 Replicationofs sustainable harvesting practices
- Output 3. Development and implementation of nature-based tourism activities
- 3.1 Strengthen coordination of tourism activities
- 3.1 Establish and market Agulhas Plain tourism route
- 3.3 Support community-based tourism initiatives
- 3.4 Monitor tourism activities

Output 4. Build local support for biodiversity conservation through a public awareness program

- 4.1 Awareness and outreach
- 4.1 Environmental education and Early Learning Centers
- 4.3 Monitoring strategy

An analysis of the Project Budget (

Table 2) shows that 49% was invested in Output 1. Of the 35% in Output 3, the majority was for tourism infrastructure in Agulhas National Park, Elim Heritage Center and the Walker Bay trail, with only 6% for monitoring, research and stakeholder activities. Only 4% was invested directly in stakeholder activities.

Table 2: Summary and Analysis of Project Budget

	GEF	Co-	Total	Percen
		financing		t
1. A landscape -level conservation management and planning	2,021,640	2,424,200	4,445,840	49%
system is established by public-private partnerships negotiated				
by a well-capacitated extension service.				
2. Ecologically, socially and ethically sustainable harvesting	415,235	720,150	1,135,385	13%
of wild fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land use on the				
Agulhas Plain				
3. Development and implementation of nature-based tourism	521,900	2,662,250	3,184,150	35%
activities				(6%)
4. Build local support for biodiversity conservation through a	237,500	70,000	307,500	3%
public awareness program				
Total Budget	3,196,275	5,876,600	9,072,875	100%
Percent	35%	65%		

1.2 CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the Terminal Evaluation was:

- To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose levels of project accomplishments;
- To synthesize lessons that may help improve the selection, design and implementation of future GEF activities;
- To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues;

The evaluation was conducted by analyzing documentation, interviewing participants and stakeholders, visiting field sites and attending ABIOC meetings. Using an "Action Research" type approach, the findings were presented to ABIOC in a workshop and largely validated. Many stakeholders have committed substantial effort, time and resources to ABI, and see this not as the end but "as the end of the beginning". Indeed, one comment at the workshop was that "lots of things are now in place, and we are ready to design a much greater project". The TE is in strong agreement with this. It is also clear that the intellectual understanding underpinning ABI has advanced greatly since the Project was designed, especially in the fields of economics and governance. Some of these emerging ideas were presented to ABIOC by the Evaluator, especially issues of cross-scale governance and of the upside-down economic triangle and public goods issues that reflect bio-experience economies. He was specifically requested to include these issues in the Terminal Evaluation, which pushed it beyond the scope of most TE requirements. Therefore the TE:

- Recognises that ABI is a process that goes way beyond the Project and is deserving of productive criticism. To people reading this document, the fact that it is willingly criticised must be appreciated as an indication of considerable strength and personal maturity on the part of stakeholders, and part of a positive learning process,
- Focuses far more on intellectual progress and opportunities than a TE would normally be expected to do, and goes way beyond the dryly ticking off log-frame achievements.

1.3 MAIN CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED;

1.1.1 Origins of the Project

ABI was conceived by the "Kirstenbosch Botanists" to address threats to a globally significant repository of biodiversity, recognized for its high vulnerability posed by agricultural transformation, native flower cultivation, alien plant species, inappropriate fire regimes, and livestock especially in wetlands, indiscriminate coastal development and urbanization. An early map of ABI, which envisages land consolidated through Agulhas National Park and two corridors on private land, reflects these goals. At this time, SANParks (led by Johan van der Merwe) was embarking on an ambitious park expansion programme, while Flora and Fauna International has assisted with the purchase of Flower Valley to develop and demonstrate the principles and practice of sustainable flower harvesting. With strong assistance and encouragement from UNDP, these partners developed a high quality project document that aimed primarily to consolidate Agulhas National Park and the corridors mentioned above by establishing a joint extension service and the capacity of landholders and communities to manage contractual reserves (Output 1), and to demonstrate sustainable flower harvesting (Output 2). The importance of tourism development (Output 3) and public awareness (Output 4) was also recognized, but these outputs were designed with less intellectual rigour and financing that the former (9% of budget between them if tourism infrastructure is excluded). SANParks became the primary implementing agency, establishing the ABI Project Management Unit and strengthening the Park, with Flower Valley an important NGO sub-contractor.

1.1.2 Project Formulation

The Project Document was well written, setting an objective of conserving land through the establishment of a Park and, more innovatively, at consolidating land for conservation on private land. However, while exceptionally strong at defining the important biodiversity and the threats to it, it was much weaker at understanding the means of getting there. These are largely economic and social processes. The Log-Frame process was also weak. It didn't build a comprehensive intellectual model for the Project (i.e. a development hypothesis), nor did it use a participatory process to build stakeholder commitment to the model. Indeed, the initial means envisaged by the project for achieving conservation on private land (i.e., contractual reserves) was rejected by landholders. The Log-Frame itself was also intellectually inconsistent, and the indicators were particularly weak. The disjunction between the log-frame and project implementation plan has caused difficulties to both implementation and to the process of evaluation.

1.1.3 Project Results

The project has made very good progress, no small measure because of the Project Manager's skillful on-the-ground social mobilization and networking efforts. Managerially and financially the project has received exemplary support from the executing agency, SANParks, including from the regional manager. Flower Valley has provided invaluable support, particularly to Output 2, and CapeNature has provided invaluable moral support to the project in the face of its own capacity constraints. The project has displayed considerable flexibility and innovation in its approach to biodiversity conservation on the Agulhas Plain.

Most of the objective indicators will be largely met, completely met, or exceeded. The project has been granted a rating of Highly Satisfactory (indicating that all of the Outcomes have been exceeded). It has clearly gone way beyond the aspirations of the original project in "conserving, restoring and delivering significant benefits" and in ensuring that "biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on the Agulhas Plain are significantly enhance through effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement".

1.1.4 Project Importance

The Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative is very important for protecting biodiversity within one of the world's premier biodiversity hotspots, and to developing a creative approach to managing sustainable development and biodiversity protection within a high value production landscape with private land owners and local communities. It is demonstrating that biodiversity protection, income generation and job creation can be complimentary aims.

1.1.5 Overall Assessment of Project Performance

Assessing this Project is complicated by the fact that evaluation normally follows the log-frame but in this case the log-frame is inconsistent with goals as stated in three other contexts, namely:

- The narrative project document, its workplan and budget
- The log-frame
- The goals implicit in the statement of people leading the proejct at various levels, for example in the PIR
- Best practice

Further, the Project has used the strong narrative in the project document to guides its direction (rather than the log-frame). It has also switched to a highly participatory stakeholder approach not envisaged in project formulation. While technically strong in terms of biodiversity and its threats (output 1), project conceptualization only partly addressed the economic challenges of flipping towards a bio-experience economy (i.e. through output 2), but never really got to grips with the potential of tourism and environmental services (only marginally addressed by output 3) or the mainstreaming of biodiversity (output 4). The weak conceptualization of economic processes and mainstreaming biodiversity (i.e. outputs 3 and 4) is reflected in low budgets and low prioritization in implementation.

Because of these inconsistencies, the consultant sought guidance on UNDP (Pretoria) in rating the project. The criticisms of the logframe and indicators, and of the tourism component, militate against a HS rating. The consultant was informed that he cannot rate the Project HS unless all elements are met or exceeded, even if some are FAR exceeded. Because of these technicalities (Table 3), therefore the Project is rated **Satisfactory**.

However, by working beyond its conceptualization, and emphasizing stakeholder processes and informal institutional rationalization at the local level, the Project has exceeded expectations. Large amounts of land are protected, threats to biodiversity are generally low even on properties that are not formally protected because of increased awareness of its intrinsic and tangible value, and biodiversity is being mainstreamed in the area through what we might describe as a local social awareness or even a social movement.

Great strides were made in initiating a flip towards a biodiversity economy through the BMU financing of collective action and wildlife reintroductions in the Nuwejaars SMA (although suggestions to develop an economy based on the economic management of public goods and environmental services like water, scenery, carbon, etc. are still in their infancy). At the local level, considerable progress was made rationalizing the institutional roles of landholders, municipalities, conservation agencies, agriculture, etc., but the Project was never designed to link effectively to provincial or national administrative and policy processes, so these gains were neither formalized nor fed into the improvement of such processes at a higher leel.

Objective Statement	Budget (%)	Rating
Purpose: Biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on		Satisfactory
the Agulhas Plain are significantly enhanced through effective		
management and coordinated stakeholder involvement		
Outcome 1: A Landscape Level conservation management and planning	49%	Highly
system is established by public private partnerships negotiated by a well		Satisfactory
capacitated extension service		
Outcome 2: Ecologically, socially and economically sustainable	13%	Highly
harvesting of wild fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land-use on Agulhas		Satisfactory
Plain.		
Outcome 3: A participatory and responsible tourism strategy is	6%	Marginally
implemented in the Agulhas Plain and contributes to sustainable	29%	Satisfactory
livelihoods.	Infrastructure	
Outcome 4. Increased local support for biodiversity conservation in the	3%	Marginally
Agulhas Plain is generated through a broad-based conservation awareness		Unsatisfactory
program.		

Table 3: Summary: Ratings of Project Outcomes and Achievements¹

1.1.6 Participatory Implementation Critical to Project Success

While the ends of the Project were well defined (in the document and narrative, if not in the logframe), the same cannot be said of the means. It is quite possible that this Project would have failed if it were not for the participatory approach taken by the Project Coordinator (Tertius Carinus) and the strong, flexible, technical and intellectual support provided by the UNDP Technical Advisor (Nik Sekhran) and others like the Chief Technical Advisor (Martin Hollands) and the Department of Agriculture (Hennis Geldenhuis). The latter in particular told the ABI Coordinator to "put the book away" (i.e. the project document) and talk to the stakeholders who had similar goals to the project but would resent these being imposed on them.

The ABI Coordinator invested considerable efforts in talking to and bringing numerous stakeholders together (to which task his managerial approach is particularly suited). He made a strategic decision, not envisaged in the Project Document, to emphasize a partnership approach, and wherever possible to get the partner to implement and drive the process rather than the ABI PIU. While the Project Document invested 4% of the budget in stakeholder processes like workshops, the real progress was made through a process of building social processes through tangible activities like alien-clearing, fire management, planning, and developing the Nuwejaars Special Management Area. Stakeholders noted that an important achievement was "flipping the bureaucratic mentality" from prescribed to facilitatory conservation.

The success of ABI owes more to the approach to implementing the Project, and flexibility in achieving bigger goals, rather than the design itself. Perhaps the only output that was implemented closely followed the original plan was Output 2, undoubtedly because the implementers (i.e. Flower Valley) had been integrally involved in Project development. Agulhas National Park was consolidated following the plan, but caused considerable resentment amongst stakeholders. It may have undermined the larger objectives of the Project (e.g. the initial park plan was rejected with

¹ In the Final Draft TE, two outcomes were added to this summary rating of project outcomes and achievements. The project succeeded largely because of its (unplanned) emphasis on stakeholder processes. It is also usual for a Log-Frame to include Project Management as an outcome. At the request of UNDP these have been removed to provide a rating consistent with the usual practice of a TE and the Log-Frame that informs it. However, both are critical to the success of the project, and the original comments can be found in Annex 7.

considerable animosity) had not a conflict resolution process been used to initiate a stakeholders process. The Agulhas Park Forum, chaired by the Department of Agriculture, is now a strength of the Project, and the Park Warden (Ettienne Fourie) a strong supporter of the Vision of landscape conservation.

1.1.7 Rejection of Off-Reserve Approach and Emergence of Landholder Collective Action

Similarly, landholders rejected the initial off-reserve approach, which was highly prescriptive. Instead they created a new approach based on collective action in the form of seven conservancies, the 23 landholders in the Nuwejaars SMA, and three potential SMAs in the Standveld (13,472ha), Hard Dunes (28,682) and De Mond (18,435ha) areas.

Collective landholder conservation provides enormous advantages including the management of landscapes over much larger areas, economies of scale, the control of unsustainable activities through peer pressure (i.e. self regulation) rather than prohibitively expensive and unwanted top-down regulation, and greater efficacy of service delivery. However, South Africa's regulatory framework is not geared to this innovation, and is a considerable barrier to the replication of these models. That it cost over R1.3m to undertake the planning and legal work required to establish the Nuwejaars SMA is a serious disincentive to future collective action. We note the considerable help provided by the Project in negotiating these bureaucratic requirements, and that these efforts will significantly reduce the costs of future SMA processes. However, we also argue that this bureaucracy does not add value, and that the real answer is to develop better institutional solutions not try to work through the current convoluted ones (see below).

One of the most important outcomes from the perspective of landholders now engaging in conservation on the Agulhas Plain was the "flipping of the bureaucratic mentality" associated with ABI. They are averse to measures that prioritize ticking off bureaucratic requirements (that are often of questionable conservation value) over the importance of conservation effectiveness. We need to seriously question the priority given to conforming to bureaucratic and legal requirements, as opposed to re-engineering these to improve conservation objectives².

Devolved, collective landholder conservation and regulation is powerful (and discussed in some detail in the document). This model is ideally aligned to South Africa's need to expand conservation onto private and communal land. UNDP and partners should prioritize the further development and replication of this model, perhaps using the Western Cape as a pilot area. In this regard, the participatory approach to planning and development being pioneered by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture is a significant departure from the normal prescriptive way of doing things (including by conservation agencies like SANParks and CapeNature) and may represent an important opportunity.

1.1.8 Lessons, and risk to replicating them

ABI is providing a good learning experience for policy makers within South Africa as a whole. It is generating lessons about resource economics, stakeholder processes, institutional rationalization, and cross-scale governance and learning, beyond the conceptualization of the Project document and, indeed, beyond theory and practice in South Africa more broadly. However, these lessons are not being fully analyzed and documented. They are only being absorbed superficially at higher levels of

² This "unflipped bureucratic mentality" for example is reflected in the Ingrid Coetzee (2010 draft report) Draft report on the evaluation of the ABI approach with specific reference to the SMA model and lessons learned from this model for replication purposes, Report commissioned by ABI

management. Policy is being developed deductively and largely from afar, without sufficient involvement in experiential learning. The impact of ABI on policy and practice remains far more cursory than is desirable.

1.1.9 Monitoring weaknesses

The design of ABI did not include sufficient monitoring, or the capacity to distill emerging lessons or embed them within South African policy and practice. This remains an important, but untaken opportunity.

1.1.10 Institutional rationalization and risks to sustainability and replication

Similarly, while ABI has rationalized institutions at local level, this has been done through personal relationships and laudable efforts by stakeholders (especially government officials in SANParks, CapeNature, Agriculture and Municipalities) to work together including through retreats, psychological evaluation, etc. However, these gains have not been formalized at the local level, and certainly not taken upwards into Provincial or National Processes. Formalizing this 'institutional rationalization' at the ABI level through a written compact should be a priority. Utilizing this experience to inform Provincial and National institutional rationalization is also a logical step that will add much value. In doing this, we emphasize that the <u>approach</u> of placing stakeholder goals and processes at the core of institutional rationalization is the guiding principle around which improvements in organizational configurations need to be designed.

1.1.11 Cross-scale learning not built into Project

The Project document states that "ABI would pilot new management measures and institutional arrangements for conservation at a sub-regional level, tied closely to the activities of the productive sectors and rooted in decentralized governance frameworks". It also emphasizes that the design will "distil lessons and best practices in Phase 1 of C.A.P.E., through demonstration activities geared to addressing gaps in the management framework, to inform implementation of subsequent phases of the CAPE Programme". However, these aspirations were not specifically built into the Project. Project design could have greatly enhanced the Project's ability to secure its enabling environment, and to positively influence policy and practice. Specifically, critical cross-scale linkages and evaluative mechanisms were not built into the Project document:

- ABI was not provided sufficient <u>technical capacity</u>, <u>power and legitimacy</u> to influence external factors like policy by taking experience upward.
- Neither were activities specifically designed to use ABI as an <u>experiential learning process</u> in the development of Provincial/National policy and practice. Well crafted policy is closely associated with high level policy-makers who are simultaneously actively involved with 'pet' pilot projects on the ground, and ABI could have been designed to ensure this.
- Further, <u>technical monitoring</u> of, for example, the efficacy of alternative protected area models, was neither conceptualised in the Project Document nor implemented effectively by the PIU. Thus many of the important lessons from ABI are not adequately supported by rigorous monitoring or analysis, and their ability to influence policy is thereby degraded.
- <u>Light-touch technical facilitation</u> of the type provided by the Chief Technical Advisor was critical to project administration. However, this was phased out in the latter stage of the Project "just when a lot of things were in place", stakeholders were eager to design new interventions based on experiential learning, and issues of economics and institutional governance were becoming ever more important.

1.1.12 Convincing economic models

An emerging goal of the Project was to "demonstrate convincing economic models" both through sustainable fynbos harvesting and "flipping the economic system" towards a bio-experience economy. Flower Valley made progress on the former, and the SMA is an emerging experiment in the latter by restocking with wildlife and developing innovate secondary industry around alien clearing, renewable energy and wetland rehabilitation. However, throughout the Project difficulties in obtain competent support in economic analysis has constrained progress. Flower Valley has not yet made its case. The economic model developed for the SMA was never strong enough to include in planning documents. The considerable potential for collective action mechanisms like Payments-for-Environmental Services described in the MTE were never developed. This remains an opportunity.

1.1.13 The uncertain future of off-reserve conservation

A significant threat to sustaining or replicating the gains made by ABI in South Africa is ambiguity towards (1) off-reserve conservation and who is responsible for this and (2) the role of protected areas as the seeds for landscape conservation and the foundation of a large biodiversity economy. Although SANParks now has a legal mandate for off-reserve conservation, it has not been provided the resources to support biodiversity conservation beyond the formal PAs that have hitherto been their mandate. ABI, especially the ABI PIU (Tertius Carinus, Willem Lowe) has developed irreplaceable skills in participation, organizational rationalization and off-reserve conservation. ABI is an irreplaceable pilot site from which to further conceptualize, develop and consolidate these processes. However, SANParks has made no decision to maintain either its approach to landscape conservation on the Agulhas Plain (i.e. the ABI PIU) or the personnel who developed this process. It is therefore high unlikely to replicate this approach.

This is a serious risk factor, not to only to ABI but to the future of conservation in South Africa. All of South Africa's national and provincial parks are small, and even Kruger's resilience is threatened by larger landscape processes (c.f. the healthy rivers programme). Resilience depends on functional connectivity, and therefore a landscape conservation approach, and is likely to become increasingly important in the face of climate change and economic globalization. The sustainability of protected areas depends on ecological sustainability, economic viability and socio-political processes and, as ABI has demonstrated, the future of conservation lies in a much improved understanding of conservation economics and governance. Given these factors, the risk of not sustaining and replicating approaches of the type exemplified and pioneered by ABI are therefore enormous, if long term.

The Terminal Evaluation is a long document for several reasons. First, ABI is a complex, multidimensional project. Secondly, the Terms of Reference call for an assessment of project formulation, implementation, results, and lessons learned, and fulfilling these through the suggested Table of Contents results in inevitable repetition. Third, ABI is not well documented. ABI is innovative, and has stretched implementers into new and inter-disciplinary fields like economics, stakeholder theory, governance, etc. At the stakeholder workshop the consultant was specifically asked to include some of this new knowledge, both theoretical and based on experience beyond South Africa, into the document. A conscious effort was made to record issues and lessons that are in danger of being lost (see Annex 5).

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The objective of this evaluation is to:

- Provide a brief overview of the Project and its development context
- Review the formulation of the Project including the process followed, the technical and conceptual strengths of the project analyses, an assessment of the Log-Frame and implementation plan, and the potential linkages and replication of the project
- An assessment of strengths and weaknesses in implementation,
- A detailed assessment of the results achieved by the Project
- A summary of the lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations
- Suggestions for taking ABI forward.

This evaluation will cover all the standard bases required by a Terminal Evaluation. However, it will step back to provide a fuller assessment of the Project's initial conceptualization and how our understanding of these issues have been changed by the project (and by general intellectual learning). Given the effort put into this Project by many stakeholders, and the importance of this Project, the TE will take particular care to provide recommendations for the way forward. This will inform the Executing Agency, the Oversight Committee, interested stakeholders as well as UNDP/GEF and other national and international partners.

2.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was conducted over July 2010. Key stakeholders were interviewed at macro (SANParks, UNDP), meso (CapeNature, SANParks, CAPE) and micro-level including key stakeholders and implementing agencies, including SANParks, Cape Nature, Flower Valley Conservation Trust, Agriculture, and the chair, vice chair and members of ABIOC. Field visits were made to Agulhas National Park, Overjaars Wetland Special Management Area, Flower Valley and several private landholders in the vicinity of Agulhas. Key documentary sources include the Project Document, Mid-Term Evaluation, Project Implementation Review documents, a series of technical reports produced by Flower Valley, the Draft Report on the Evaluation of ABI and other reports referenced in footnotes.

A considerable effort (from documents and interviews) was made to develop a complete list of achievements (see Annex 1). These are under-reported by the Project's reports which follow the Project Document and Log-Frame, deficiencies in which omit stakeholder processes and other achievements that have been so critical to the success of ABI.

An important caveat: ABI is a highly successful Project support by mature and committed managers and stakeholders. This Terminal Evaluation deliberately seeks to assess the project critically. I provide this caveat to ensure that the readers recognize that any criticisms that follow should be viewed primarily as a strength of the Project, not a weakness, because it has created an atmosphere of experimentation and intellectual debate that is much needed in addressing conservation challenges in the face of globalization, demographic change, climate change and the many other factors that require successful conservation to be innovative. If this TE failed to be critical (in a constructive manner) and intellectually challenging it would be a disservice to the efforts of many people who have assisted in developing ABI as a new and globally innovative conservation model.

3 THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

3.1 PROJECT START AND ITS DURATION

Agulhas Plain has high conservation value. Despite this, in 1990 only 4% of the area was formally conserved. Protected areas were small and isolated, conserving only three of the 35 vegetation types in the region. Indeed, the proclamation of some of the protected areas had little to do with conservation (SANBI 2006). De Mond and Walker Bay State Forests were created in 1941 and 1960 for reasons of state security in World War II and to stabilize sand dunes using exotic species to protect agriculture. In 1994, plans to build a nuclear power station on one of the most important biodiversity hotspots in the Agulhas Plain stimulated the first strategic and systematic biodiversity plan for the area. Work by scholars at University of Cape Town, the Botanical Society of South Africa and SANParks recognized that Agulhas' biodiversity could not be conserved without the participation of local landholders. Although initiated as a rather standard Protected Area enlargement Project, the conceptualization of the Project, and even more its implementation approach, created a highly innovative Protected Area Project that sought to conserve landscapes, and the social and institutional processes necessary for this, not just isolated Protected Areas.

In the early 1990s, SANParks investigated the potential to develop a new National Park on the Agulhas Plain. SANParks planned to purchase 26,000 hectares of land outright, and to enter into contractual arrangements to incorporate a further 44,000 hectares, concepts that conceptually underpinning the ABI project. However, it also became clear that many local landholders did not want to sell their land to SANParks. While accepting a conservation responsibility, they believed that farming and conservation activities could take place side-by-side. They were uncomfortable with an authoritative (top down) Stewardship approach and as the Project was implemented landholders have preferred Conservancy or SMA arrangements that lead to similar goals but are crafted by themselves. This led to a new approach to conservation on the Agulhas Plain that combines conventional state Protected Area (which have insufficient ecological scale and are costly), with the idea of the ecosystem approach, stakeholders processes and a mosaic of conservation approaches within "living landscapes".

C.A.P.E. deliberately developed the Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (ABI) to investigate the implementation of both institutional and ecosystem approaches to biodiversity conservation on the Agulhas Plain. With help from Fauna and Flora International, a project proposal was developed (with UNDP-GEF co-funding) and submitted to the Global Environmental Fund for co-financing through UNDP. This was signed as part of the GEF Biodiversity Conservation Focal Area. The total project cost was \$11,784,775 of which GEF would provide \$3,226,225 and South African and other partners \$8,558,550 over the period 2003-2008. The lead implementing agency was South Africa National Parks (SANParks), and the primary beneficiary was described as local communities. There were some delays in project start up, and in recruitment of staff. The mid-term evaluation was conducted in January and February 2007, and the Terminal Evaluation in July 2010.

3.2 PROBLEMS THAT THE PROJECT SEEKS TO ADDRESS

The Cape Floristic Region (CFR) Biodiversity Hotspot is a globally significant repository of biodiversity, recognized for its high irreplaceability and vulnerability. The Hotspot is threatened by a number of human-induced pressures which are gradually undermining key conservation values. The Government of South Africa has initiated an ambitious and comprehensive long-term programmatic approach to arrest these pressures and protect a representative sample of biodiversity. The Program,

known as Cape Action for People and the Environment (C.A.P.E.) will implement the Cape Action Plan for the Environment (CAPE Strategy), which was endorsed by the Government in 2000. The CAPE Strategy provides a long-term vision for biodiversity conservation in the CFR, and articulates an action plan and investment program to strategically address identified conservation priorities.

The C.A.P.E. Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (the project) comprises one of three complementary GEF initiatives in support of the C.A.P.E. program aimed at strengthening systemic, institutional and individual capacities and establishing the know-how for conservation management in different ecological and socio-economic conditions as needed to attain conservation.

The Agulhas Plain constitutes one of the largest extant storehouses of lowland fynbos and threatened Renosterveld habitats in the world. The diversity of habitat types, wetland ecosystems, Red data plant species and local endemics is unmatched in the CFR. The area is currently being threatened by a range of anthropogenic pressures, but nevertheless constitutes one of the best opportunities for conserving the CFR's lowland habitats. The primary threats to biodiversity in the Agulhas Plain were identified as:

- <u>Transformation through conversion to agriculture.</u> This was mostly completed by the late 1960s. However, new threats to biodiversity in agriculturally marginal area were emerging through the development of novel threats and cultivars such as wineand native flower cultivation.
- <u>Alien invasive species</u>. At least 14.7% of natural habitats were completely converted into thickets of aliens, mostly Australian acacia species, and a further 40% were infested to some degree.
- <u>Inappropriate fire regimes.</u> These reduced plant diversity and also impacted livelihoods.
- High concentrations of livestock along wetlands.
- <u>Unsustainable use</u> of natural resources such as wild flower harvesting although this was potentially sustainable
- Indiscriminate coastal development and urbanization.
- <u>Land degradation</u> including soil erosion, hydrological disturbance.

The solutions to these problems were conceptualized by the Project Document as:

<u>Conservation management in the productive landscape</u> of Agulhas Plain included the dual need to strengthen the management of Agulhas National Park and improve conservation systems on the private reserves. This required:

- <u>Collaborative institutional arrangements</u> were needed at the sub-regional level since existing conservation agencies were operating in isolation, with acute weaknesses in the provision of services to private landholders.
- Some mechanisms for institutionalising <u>private conservation</u> had been developed, but these needed to be tested.
- <u>Protected areas</u> were fragmented, protected only 3 of 36 vegetation types, requiring the purchase of more public land and improvements on management systems on private reserves.
- Integration of protected areas into local <u>planning</u> to ensure that off-reserve production systems are compatible with conservatin objectives. Plans with legal status were considered to be a powerful tool for assuring the integration of conservation and development tools.

- <u>Alien vegetation clearnance</u> utilizing the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's Working for Water Program and the Department of Agriculture's LandCare Project to clear aliens by providing employment for the socially marginalised populace.
- A fire management strategy
- Supporting biodiversity business based on the <u>sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos</u>
- Development of models for <u>nature-based tourism</u>. The primary mechanisms were seen as
- The need to develop regulatory tools and voluntary impact mitigation measures;
- building the <u>nature tourism sector</u> and tie its income specifically to biodiversity management (just how is not explained);
- To develop an environmentally and economically <u>sustainable nature tourism</u> sector through (a) marketing and branding (b) coordiantion of the sector (c) development of ecotourism products (d) inclusion of local communities for reasons of equity and (e) monitoring and regulating tourism and its impacts

The project was intended to pilot new management measures and institutional arrangements for conservation at a sub-regional level, tied closely to the activities of the productive sectors and rooted in decentralised governance frameworks. The following outputs were anticipated:

- Development of an innovative model for tying management of a mosaic of Protected Areas on public and private lands with production systems on neighbouring farmsteads. The Government of South Africa intended to replicate the model in other protected areas in the CFR and elsewhere, where decentralised conservation approaches are urgently needed. The project was expected to make a significant contribution to enhancing the sustainability of the national system of protected areas;
- Ecologically, socially and ethically sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos demonstrated as a viable land use;
- Participatory and responsible tourism strategy implemented in the Agulhas Plain and contributes to sustainable livelihoods; and
- Increased local support for biodiversity conservation in the Agulhas Plain generated through an informal awareness program.

Conservation actions were planned to be implemented through community-public-private partnerships negotiated by a well-capacitated extension service, with the GEF sharing the costs of the strategic interventions proposed by ABI with other financiers. ABI was to be implemented through a partnership between SANParks, Western Cape Nature Conservation Board, Fauna & Flora International and the Flower Valley Conservation Trust.

3.3 IMMEDIATE AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The goal and purpose of the Project are³:

Goal: By 2020 the biodiversity of the Cape Floristic Region (CFR) is effectively conserved, restored, and delivering significant benefits to the region. *The goal is the CAPE goal, since ABI is the pilot of CAPE*

Purpose: Biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on the Agulhas Plain are significantly enhanced through effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement.

³ Note that these are not included in the original Project Document or the Log-Frame (typing omission?) and are extracted from an updated Log-Frame

However, the "End of Project Situation" statement in the Project Document (quoted below) is considerably more Visionary than the objectives formalised in the Log-Frame and is an important statement that guides the PIU. In particular it emphasises developing and institutionalizing new models for landscape conservation:

- Testing new models of public and private Protected Areas that protect landscapes and ecosystem processes
- Developing new multi-stakeholder institutional arrangements
- Protecting landscapes economically by developing sustainable wild flower harvesting and nature-based tourism as viable forms of land use
- Codifying these models as a national approach

<u>End of Project Situation:</u> The project would have demonstrated the viability of a new model for managing protected areas, linking management within core protected areas, in the public domain, with various categories of private reserves, and surrounding productive landscapes. New institutional arrangements will have been developed and capacitated towards this end linking conservation agencies, municipalities, agriculture departments, tourism agencies, private landowners and community associations. Conservation aims would be mainstreamed into development, through integration of PA management objectives into the Integrated Development Plans and extension operations of the Overstrand and Cape Agulhas municipalities. Barriers to sustainable utilization of wild flowers and development of nature tourism will be lifted, and management systems and safeguards instituted to enable the sustainable utilization of wild resources, and in particular fynbos within specially demarcated zones in the Agulhas National Park and in private reserves, thus providing economic incentives for conservation and livelihood opportunities. The model will have been codified in conservation strategies and site action plans in other protected areas by SANParks, and will provide a model for spearheading conservation in Phase 2 of C.A.P.E.

Securing important biodiversity across the highly threatened Agulhas Plain required the integration of a number of activities (quoted below) ranging from alien control and fire management, to developing new economic models in the form of sustainable fynbos harvesting and ecotourism and an an informal education and awareness campaign:

The globally significant biodiversity of the Agulhas Plain will have been secured, across a mosaic of conservation compatible land uses. Alien control strategies will be coordinated and effectively implemented. The fire management strategy will include a conservation focus and the rapid-response teams would be more efficient. The sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos would be more tightly regulated, with better enforcement, and demonstrated as a viable land-use on Agulhas Plain. Harvesters will be receiving a premium on sustainable harvested wild fynbos and encouraged to keep their land under wild fynbos. Ecotourism would be generating new sources of revenue for biodiversity conservation, as the area will be better known and the number of nature-based tourists will have increased. Finally, the conservation constituency will have been strengthened through a broad based informal awareness campaign.

3.4 Results expected

The Project Document anticipated that four main outputs will contribute to achieving its purpose, namely:

<u>Output 1:</u> A landscape -level conservation management and planning system is developed and implemented in public-private partnerships negotiated by a well-capacitated extension service

<u>Output 2:</u> Ecologically, socially and ethically sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land use on the Agulhas Plain

<u>Output 3</u>: A participatory and responsible tourism strategy is implemented in the Agulhas Plain and contributes to sustainable livelihoods.

<u>Output 4:</u> Increased local support for biodiversity conservation in the Agulhas Plain is generated through a broad-based conservation awareness program.

The logic of this approach is summarized in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Illustration of Structure of ABI



Source: ABI 2006 Newletter

An analysis of the budget shows that 68% of the project reflected an investment in land and infrastructure, 13% on staff costs, 14% in technical advice and planning, 4% is stakeholder processes and 9% in M&E, the vast majority of this being research into sustainable flower harvesting (

Table 4). Some 49% of the budget was allocated to output 1, with 47% allocated to land purchases, legal costs and securing off-reserve conservation. Although 35% was allocated to output 3, if we remove investment in park infrastructure and heritage centers this is 6% (Table 5). To calculate these financial ratios, the budget was extracted from the Project document and reanalyzed (Table 6).

Type of Expenditure	Amount	Percent
Infrastructure, land purchase and legal costs	6,465,600.00	68%
Equipment & Training	411,440.00	4%
Staffing	1,279,000.00	13%
Implementation	47,680.00	1%
Training	191,050.00	2%
TA and planning	1,373,730.00	14%
Stakeholder processes	334,500.00	4%
Support contractual parks	678,450.00	7%
M&E	839,775.00	9%
	9,481,185.00	

Table 5: Analysis of budgets by outputs

	GEF	Co-	Total	Perce
		financing		nt
1. A landscape -level conservation management and planning	2,021,640	2,424,200	4,445,840	49%
system is established by public-private partnerships negotiated				
by a well-capacitated extension service.				
2. Ecologically, socially and ethically sustainable harvesting	415,235	720,150	1,135,385	13%
of wild fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land use on the				
Agulhas Plain				
3. Development and implementation of nature-based tourism	521,900	2,662,250	3,184,150	35%
activities				(6%)
4. Build local support for biodiversity conservation through a	237,500	70,000	307,500	3%
public awareness program				
Total Budget	3,196,275	5,876,600	9,072,875	100
				%
Percent	35%	65%		

3.5 MAIN STAKEHOLDERS

The main stakeholders are carefully identified in the Project Document and include:

- Statutory Conservation Agencies (SANParks, CapeNature)
- International Agencies (FFI, UNDP, GEG)
- Government Agencies (Public works "Working for Water", "Coast Care"; Provincial Departments; Local Government/Municipalities/District Councils; CAPE)
- State Enterprises, notably Eskon
- Conservation NGOs (Botanical Society, Flower Valley Conservation Trust)
- Private landholders, Conservancies, wine farmers and tourism bodies

The Department of Agriculture, subsequently a major player in ABI, is not mentioned specifically.

ΑCTIVITY	GEF	Co-financing	Infrastructure, land purchase and legal costs	Equipment & Training	Staffing	Implementa tion	Training	TA and planning	Stakeholder processes	Support contractual parks	M&E	Total
1. A landscape -level conservation management and planning												
1.1 Institutional strengthening, cooperation, capacity-building	817,440	1,777,000										
Park			1,461,000	105,040	574,000							
Joint extension service				144,400	310,000							454,400
1.2 Securing land under conservation management	130,150	335,900	2,827,600							662,450		3,490,050
1.3 Conservation management planning	178,600	86,600						147,000	118,200			265,200
1.4 Controlling alien spread	189,750	135,350						310,100	15,000			325,100
1.5 Fire management	124,500	37,350		162,000								162,000
1.6 Wetland rehabilitation	225,000							255,000				255,000
1.7 Participatory monitoring	48,700										48,700	48,700
1.8 Management/ABI Oversight Committee	307,500	52,000			295,000				18,500		46,000	359,500
2. Ecologically, socially and ethically sustainable harvesting of												0
2.1 Review/update legal framework for flower industry	28,200							28,200				28,200
2.2 Secure supply network for Flower Valley	23,000	1,000							24,000			24,000
2.3 Develop certification scheme	65,000	1,000							50,000	16,000		66,000
2.4 marketing is sustainable wild fynbos	88,500	86,800						175,300				175,300
2.5 Pilot recording system for harvesting species	13,000	18,430						31,430				31,430
2.6 Implement COP within supply network	24,100	12,450					38,550					38,550
2.7 Monitoring of sustainable harvesting	160,435	595,970				47,680		23,250			685,475	756,405
2.8 Replication is sustainable harvesting practices	13,000	4,500							17,500			17,500
3. Development and implementation of nature-based tourism												0
3.1 Strengthen coordination of tourism activities	261,000	1,564,900	1,738,000						87,900			1,825,900
3.1 Establish and market Agulhas Plain tourism route	52,500	282,950						335,450				335,450
3.3 Support community-based tourism initiatives	104,200	407,200	439,000				41,000		3,400			483,400
3.4 Monitor tourism activities	104,200	407,200									31,600	31,600
4. Build local support for biodiversity conservation through a												0
4.1 Awareness and outreach	98,000	70,000			100,000			68,000				168,000
4.1 Environmental education and Early Learning Centers	111,500						111,500					111,500
4.3 Monitoring strategy	28,000										28,000	28,000
			6,465,600	411,440	1,279,000	47,680	191,050	1,373,730	334,500	678,450	839,775	9,481,185
			68%	4%	13%	1%	2%	14%	4%	7%	9%	

Table 6: Analysis of ABI Budget

4 PROJECT FORMULATION

Repeating the caveat that the Project and its participants have developed new and innovative conservation models, and that criticism is therefore a strength rather than a weakness of the Project, we make the following general conclusions about project formulation.

4.1 A New Model for Landscape Conservation

The project document is innovative, very well written, technically at a very high level, and thorough. It is powerfully driven by science, especially the science of biodiversity conservation. The overall quality of the situation analysis in the project document is exceptional, especially the analysis of threats. This supports an impressive Vision of integrated land use as described in the Project Goals: "biodiversity ... effectively conserved, restored and delivering significant benefits to the region" which is articulated in the End of Project Situation statement in the Project Document (Paragraphs 73 and 74, quoted in full above), a paragraph that is frequently quoted by ABI managers.

Thus ABI promotes an exciting new model for protected area management within a larger landscape. That is particularly critical in the Cape Fynbos Region where 80% of the biodiversity occurs on private land. The Project Document also competently brokers and integrates several sources of co-funding. The formulation of ABI addressed fynbos landscape conservation in "an innovative manner" but was centered on a "Kirstenbosch wish list" rather than that of landholders because input from stakeholders in project formulation was superficial" (interview quote). The Project Document recognizes linkages between conservation outcomes and economic and institutions, but never formulated issues of institutional governance or land use economics with the same level of rigour applied to biodiversity. The STAP Comments appended to the Project Document (Ghillean Prance) note that the Project "combines and balances well the mixture of science and social issues". It associates science with biological conservation, landscape conservation and sustainable use, but does not mention economics or governance. Similarly, it likes the balance between conservation, sustainable use (tourism and fynbos harvesting), teaching and capacity-building, but again is does not mention stakeholder processes and organizational governance.

4.2 A BIO-CENTRIC APPROACH TO PROJECT DESIGN

Stepping back, the conceptualization of ABI addressed direct problems, the promulgation of new Protected Areas in a high biodiversity landscape, the biological and market challenges of making fynbos harvesting viable and sustainable, fire management, and alien clearing. It did not directly address the causes of these problems. For example, did biodiversity have an economic comparative advantage in Agulhas, and why was this comparative advantage not reflected in landholders and collective incentives? Was the governance structure for landscape conservation effective, and should it prioritize top-down planning and regulation or a bottom-up participatory approach? Retrospectively, and with the caveat that ABI has been highly successful, it could have been better in two facets.

<u>Slippage between technical assessment and implementation plan.</u> First, there is slippage between the excellent technical description of biodiversity issues in the Project document narrative and the translation of these into the log-frame and implementation plan.

<u>Broader conceptualization</u>. Second, the conceptualization of ABI would have been strengthened by a stronger understanding of institutional/organizational/governance issues and of economics, incentives and related policy. For conservation to be sustainable it has to be ecologically sustainable, economically and financially viable, and politically and socially acceptable. The project does not adequately address the need to understand and modify the (a) financial and economic incentives

needed to reach the Project's vision, nor does it specifically or intellectually tackle (b) the issues of organizational governance which continue to consume resource and constrain options. ABI has created opportunities to deepen our understanding of these critical issues, but this was not part of project conceptualization and has not been pursued as much as it could have been.

A comparison of the understanding of economic and social issues in the Project Document and subsequent PIRs, however, indicates considerable and rapid intellectual growth. There is an increasing emphasis on economics, institutional rationalization, governance and stakeholder processes that are were not explicitly built into the implementation plan. However, neither were processes for improve this understanding built into the Implementation Plan, a weakness that was overcome by sound and innovative intellectual leadership by the UNDP Technical Advisor, excellent relationships with the ABI Coordinator, larger learning processes associated with the CAPE Program and other experiments in South Africa, and the consequent important implementation adaptability and intellectual growth. Thus, the way the Project was managed, more than the way it was designed, has been critical in its evolution as a learning mechanism.

4.3 PRACTICE AND THEORY

Retrospectively, the Project focused largely on practical measures such as Protected Area purchase and development, alien clearing, fire management and area planning. The Project team only understood underlying causes intuitively. These include:

- improving economic governance to 'get prices right' to reflect the economic comparative advantage of biodiversity,
- incorporating the public good aspects of land management into private decision making (e.g. through PES-type experiments),
- improving organizational governance to facilitate effective land management
- reducing the transaction costs associated with a highly sectorialised and top-down public sector approach (e.g. facilitative, and landholder driven-, rather than authoritative stewardship arrangements).

Interestingly, having clear goals in terms of biodiversity conservation has forced the Project to begin to address these issues, or at least to identify the constraints they place on project sustainability.

4.4 TOOLS FOR MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY

Chapter 3 in the UNDP Primer is entitled "Tools for Mainstream Biodiversity into Land Use Planning and Decision Making". This chapter, and the general obsession with planning experienced in interviews with government officials, provides an important insight into why ABI was designed as it was. Chapter 3 comments on the importance of combining top-down and bottom-up approaches. However, the tools it describes focus exclusively on harnessing administrative planning arrangements. There is no mention that landholders are, in the final analysis, deterministic of land use, or that an alternative means of affecting land is therefore through policy that affects land use incentives (which includes reducing the cost of any bureaucracy that undercuts the competitive advantage of biodiversity, or subsidies and support to alternative sectors).

Interestingly, the use of positive incentives (rather than restrictions) is not emphasized as tools for mainstreaming biodiversity. This is a crucial omission. Incentive-led conservation is southern Africa's greatest conservation contribution. Land use has been transformed on both private and community land when policy makers have proactively recognized the importance of the devolution of use rights, reduced (not increased) administrative constraints and associated transaction costs,

encouraged the development of new markets and products, and facilitated the development of collective management and economies of scale through such measures as conservancies and producer associations.

Similarly, the development of Protected Areas is conceptualized rather narrowly in the Project Document, and its importance in influencing tourism, land use viability, employment, livelihoods or equity in the greater Agulhas landscape is not built into the Project Log-Frame or indicators.

4.5 LOG-FRAME, OUTPUTS AND INDICATORS

4.5.1 The Logical Framework Approach as a Development Hypothesis and Process

The logical formulation of a hierarchy of objectives, indictors, means of verification and assumptions in a matrix is exceedingly useful for tracking project progress through instruments such as the PIR. However, the Log-Frame Approach is also a conceptual approach and a participatory methodology that could have been used more effectively to strengthened Project formulation. As we note briefly below, there are several problems with the logic of the ABI log-frame. These might have been avoided had it been scrutinized by a well facilitated process including key stakeholders and experts than when conducted by one or two consultants on their own.

Developing the situation, problem, objective, and alternative analyses that are part of the Logical Framework Approach (and which underlie the formulation of the Project Matrix) is a highly intellectual process. Its purpose is to advance a development hypothesis necessary for a sound intervention provided. This should be well facilitated to bring together the worldviews and objectives of experts and stakeholders with different viewpoints. For instance, the ABI design might have been considerably strengthened with the inclusion of expertise in conservation economics and governance. Indeed, ABI lacks an explicit development hypothesis. This may be attributed to the rather narrow intellectual base and lack of stakeholder scrutiny associated with its formulation.

The Logical Framework Approach is a also a social process for generating a united Vision around commonly held goals, hypotheses for how this Vision can come about, and the space to negotiate roles and relationships(NORAD, 1992). All of these are critical for stakeholder buy-in and unified action.

Retrospectively, it is impossible to judge whether it was too early in the relationship-building process to use a Logical Framework Approach to formulate ABI. Landholders may have been too hostile. Alternatively, the stakeholder approach may have circumvented the impositional character of conservation interventions right at the beginning. However, by the MTE, the time was clearly ripe for such an approach (see Annex 2: ABI Stakeholder Mid-Term Evaluation) and strong recommendations were therefore made to do so (see p17, recommendations relating to "project implementation and review of log-frame"). This was not done.

We repeat the caveat that the Big Goals of ABI are laudable. UNDP and its South African partners must be congratulated on initiating a cutting edge program. This has brought considerable innovation and change to the biodiversity sector. It has also contributed to conservation of the critical Cape Floristic Region in particular.

4.5.2 The Log-Frame as an operational control mechanism

The use of a Log Frame Project matrix is also an invaluable mechanism to track and control implementation. The PIR reporting system, which is based on the log-frame, has been important for coordinating and tracking task management as well as progress towards the "End of Project

Situation". However, the strong Project Narrative regarding biodiversity issues was never adequately translated into the Log-Frame format and Implementation Strategy. These weaknesses in the log-frame are discussed in some detail in the MTE. The MTE provided significant recommendations on how to address the technical flaws in the log-frame. It also recommended that a participatory process to align the log-frame with expanding and changing (positively) Project objectives had many benefits. This included aligning outputs and indicators better with goals, and using the process to generate even stronger stakeholder commitment.

The Project would have been strengthened by defining procedures for using and changing the logframe, thus turning the log-frame into a real tool for adaptive management. The use of professional, external facilitation to re-develop the log-frame and as an annual input to a participatory annual performance review would also strengthen the Project.

4.5.3 Time Frames

The ABIOC preparatory meeting for the TE posed the following question: Was there sufficient lead time for relationships to develop between players and organizations (GEF, SANP and the project)? Were the ABI time-frames and objectives realistic?

The quick answer was that relationships have developed positively following a rocky start, but that this process could have been enhanced using professional facilitation, partly at local level, but primarily to clarify and seek meso and macro level commitments that have been a weakness in the Project.

Secondly, ABI is addressing fundamental issues about conservation. Time frames were realistic to get most of the activities done. However, they were not sufficient to address key issues like formalized institutional change and economic transformation. These were not anticipated, but their importance has emerged through project implementation. There is now insufficient time or capacity to address them, which is a serious threat to sustaining and learning from the Project.

4.5.4 General Comments on the Log-Frame

Having praised the Project for its innovative approach, albeit with caveats that these might retrospectively have been strengthened with greater intellectual rigour in design and implementation⁴, there are several weaknesses in Project design that were avoidable:

(a) Inconsistent Log-Frame.

The formulation of the Log-Frame does not reflect the strength of the Project document, and suggests that it was put together at the end of the formulation process rather than being uses as a principle design tool and process. The higher level aspirations stated in the "End of Project Situation" and in the Project Summary (such as decentralised governance) are not not adequately captured in Goal and Purpose statements. The formulation of Log-Frame activities and indicators does not always reflect the priorities and strengths of the Project Document, and there are real differences between the implementation plan (i.e. the detailed list of project activities in the budget and workplan, p88-100) and the expected results as summarised by Project monitoring tools (i.e. the Log-Frame, p86-88, and the PIR). This gap has complicated the Terminal Evaluation, which has constantly been required to negotiated between two sets of objectives that should be in complete alignment but are not. This has

⁴ e.g. by including additional expertise in design, for example from Zimbabwe or Namibia where understanding of economic and institutional aspects of conservation has progressed ahead of that in South Africa because of active experimentation with private and community conservation initiated in the 1960s and 1980s respectively

undoubtedly also confused and complicated the task of Project Management and greatly reduced the power of the Log-Frame as a tool for adaptive management and reflection.

(b) Weak indicators and Means of Verification.

The biggest weakness in the formulation of the Project Document is the Log-Frame indicators⁵ and MOV^{6} .

(c) Weak monitoring, evaluation and learning process.

ABI is data weak. Not only does this make it difficult to evaluate much of the anticipated experimentation with new approaches, but good data, properly visualized, is an excellent tool for building stakeholder processes by 'distancing' people from ideological or personal issues in the resolution of larger challenges. Data weaknesses in ABI are partly as a consequence of weak indicators and MOV. They are also a conceptualization failure – an experimental program like ABI should have erred on the side of too much rather than too little data, should have set up intellectual questions and the data to answer them (i.e. what is the relative effectiveness of different configurations of protected areas in terms of environmental, economic and socio-political sustainability). The absence of quantitative assessments of the successes and failures of the pilots established by ABI is a lost opportunity.

(d) Economics and Governance

Outputs 3 and 4 (i.e., responsible tourism and sustainable livelihoods; increased local support for biodiversity conservation) grappled their way towards an incentive driven approach to landscape conservation. However they, and the associated activities and indicators, were theory poor and poorly formulated (see MTE), presumably because they were also poorly conceptualized (see Section **).

(e) Project management

It is good practice to include Project Management and related indicators in the Project.

4.6 **PROJECT OBJECTIVES , OUTPUTS AND INDICATORS**

Methodologically, evaluating ABI is complicated because the Log-Frame is the weakest part of project formulation, and often does not properly reflect an excellent Project Narrative on which the Project Budget and Workplan is based. This section follows the standard practice of assessing the Log-Frame but, as noted above, requires constant cross-referencing to the Narrative and Budget because of the inconsistencies between these and the Log-Frame.

4.6.1 Project Goal:

Rather than adopting the CAPE Goals, ABI should have formulated its own goals. This would have given the Project a much clearer Vision. Nevertheless, the Goal level objectives and indicators are reasonable (Table 7), if general. The indicators are weak and the means of verification describe documents rather than exactly what data is needed to track progress. This is a weakness throughout the log-frame.

⁵ Indicators should clearly describe what the outcome of the related objectives should look likes. They need to be carefully selected, which requires experience and judgment. They must also carefully and methodically define targets in terms of quantity, quality, the target group, the place and the time frame.

⁶ The MOV should also be defined in terms of source (i.e. who will provide them and in what report) but also in terms of statistics, where Projects should not neglect to define exactly what the data describing the indicator should look like including whether the sources of information are specific reliable and accessible enough, whether the the cost of obtaining the information reasonable, and im particular in an innovative project like ABI that is testing new models, whether additional sources of data need to be created

Objectives	Indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions and Risks
Goal: By 2020 the biodiversity of the Cape Floristic Region (CFR) is effectively conserved, restored, and delivering significant benefits to the region. The goal is the CAPE goal, since ABI is the pilot of CAPE	 The priority species and habitats defined as irreplaceable in the CAPE are maintained; The levels of productivity measured in 2002 in indicator terrestrial (wildflower harvesting) and marine ecosystems (total catch) is maintained; Improved regional GDP Increased number of people in biodiversity- related employment 	 Cape M&E reports State of CFR biodiversity report; Provincial State of Environment reports; Annual reports of conservation agencies; Reports of the C.A.P.E. Co- ordination and Implementation Committees. 	There is continued private sector investment in sustainable biodiversity-based business.

4.6.2 **Project Purpose:**

Strictly speaking, the **project purpose** (Table 8) is incorrectly formulated because it describes two ends (biodiversity conservation; socio-economic development) and one of the means of getting there (effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement). Accepting that conservation and development are synergistic and linked, a more correct formulation nonetheless would be to place one of these objectives at the Goal level (i.e. contributing to socio-economic development) and the more immediate objective (i.e. achieving biodiversity conservation) at the Purpose level. A specific output should have been formulated to deal with "effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement" which, as it turns out, has been a major project activity and contribution yet is not reflected adequately in the log-frame or PIR.

A serious flaw in the log-frame is the weak formulation of biodiversity indicators, and the near absence of indicators for socio-economic development and effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement.

As noted in the MTE, the indicator for legally binding conservation agreements is good, but it is only a proxy for biodiversity for which, amazingly, there are no direct indicators nor investment in systematic monitoring. Also, through the CAPE program, the map identifying "Critical Biodiversity Areas" is regularly updated as new knowledge accumulates, but this dynamism is not built into ABI's indicators. Further, restoring natural hydrological regimes is a massive task in an environment long modified by human action, and without a clear technical description of what this requires and what the end point looks like, the indicator is unhelpful.

Objectives	Indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Purpose: Biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on the Agulhas Plain are significantly enhanced through effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement.	 Area of priority land under legally binding conservation management in productive landscapes on the Agulhas Plain doubled by the end of the project to encompass approx. 112,000 ha and continues to increase; No further loss of coastal of renosterveld and endemic Elim fynbos (1209ha and 3572 ha currently; 80% of the threatened vegetation types (see table) will be conserved by the end of the project; Priority wetland ecosystems (Soetendals vlei, Voelvlei vlei, Langpan, Ratel vlei and Modder vlei) recovered to restore natural hydrological regime by the end of the project 	 MoU for the ABI Oversight Committee; Minutes of meetings of ABI Oversight Committee; Annual Workshops proceedings; Annual M&E reports; Protected areas database (Conservation Planning Unit); Local municipal land-use zoning schemes; ABI annual economic performance report; Geographic economic data sources, e.g. Provincial Economic Development Agency, Central Statistical Services, Development Bank of South Africa 	 There is relative stability in the local economy. Political stability, law and order are maintained.

Table 8: Project Purpose and Indicators
4.6.3 Output 1:

The Output 1 objective statement is ill-defined and complex (Table 9), containing an objective (landscape-level conservation planning system) and two means (public private partnerships; well-capacitated extension service). The considerable effort and expense purchasing land to consolidate state protected areas is not recognized in the indicators. The indicators, similarly, are inconsistent and do not clearly define what is to be measured, the very purpose of indicators. For example, what is a conservation management plan or a protocol for farm conservation planning?; what is being monitored and what is the metric for stakeholder participation?; increased capacity for integrated extension services is an objective for which an indicator is required.

Objectives	Indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions and Risks
Output 1: A landscape-level conservation management and planning system is established by public-private partnerships negotiated by a well-capacitated extension service.	 Landscape-level conservation management plan implemented by the end of the project; At least ten contractual and ten management agreements are signed with both SANParks and WCNCB by the end of the project; Protocols for farm conservation planning in place, implemented in one pilot site (Haasvlakte) by the end of year 2 and replicated at the Agulhas Plain level by the end of the project; Independent monitoring confirms that, by Year 3, monitoring systems have high stakeholder participation (local communities, farmers, NGOs, land-owners, local authorities).and that collected data is feeding into management decisions SANParks and WCNCB have increased capacity for integrated extension services, by end of year 2 (25 additional people hired and trained by SANParks, 2 additional staff members recruited and trained by the WCNCB) 	 Project reports; Annual Plans of Operations and Budgets – SANParks and WCNCB; Conservation Management Plan; Protected areas database (Conservation Planning Unit); Fire Management Strategy; Alien Control Strategy; Wetland Conservation Strategy; Annual reports of two other National Parks; Conservation Management Plans for two additional Conservancies on the AP; Farm Conservation Plans; 	 Communication and trust between stakeholders and the project are maintained. Threats from alien species (alien type or rate of spread) or unsustainable harvesting do not increase significantly.

Table 9: Output 1 Objectives and Indicators

4.6.4 Output 2

This reflects Flower Valley's activities and objectives (Table 10), is well formulated and is also the one in which implementation was most successful. The Code of Practice indicator, however, does not apply a stakeholder group to which it should apply, and Flower Valley has probably involved stakeholders less than it could have in developing sustainable flower harvesting protocols.

Table 10:	Output 2	2 Objectives	and	Indicators
	0 m p m -			

Output 2: Ecologically, socially and economically sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land-use on	 At least 18 new entrants properly trained and accredited with ABI sustainable harvesting qualification by the end of the project. Harvesters receive 20% premium on sustainable harvested wild fynbos, by the end of the project and sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos demonstrated as a viable land-use form. Code of Practice for sustainable 	 Project reports; Provincial gazette; Code of Practice; Annual Report of WCNCB; Management agreements; Marketing and sales plans; Flower Valley accounting; 	 International wildflower markets remain stable or expand. Other packing sheds are willing to adopt the
economically sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land-use on Agulhas Plain.	 Harvesters receive 20% premium on sustainable harvested wild fynbos, by the end of the project and sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos demonstrated as a viable land-use form. Code of Practice for sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos is adopted by Flower Labeling Program by the end of year 2. 	 WCNCB; Management agreements; Marketing and sales plans; Flower Valley accounting; MoU for the Sustainable Harvesting Oversight Committee; Minutes of the Oversight Committee; ABI Annual Economic 	 Other packing sheds are willing to adopt the Code of Practice.
		Performance Report.	

4.6.5 **Output 3**:

The objective, indicators and activities for Output 3 (Table 11) are poorly formulated and unrealistic, and do not reflect the arguments in the Narrative Proposal. By contrast, the Narrative Proposal is strong and identifies the following constraints to ecotourism becoming a driver for biodiversity conservation on the Agulhas Plain including:

- Lack of coordination in the tourism sector at the local level
- The absence of land based ecotourism products
- The need for a market analysis, positioning and branding the Agulhas Plain, implementing this, and developing brand measurement tools.
- Local communities in the Agulhas Plain have few opportunities to participate in the industry, implying a risk that the benefits will be inequitably distributed
- A mechanism to monitor the impacts of tourism is lacking, hampering the task of adaptive management

It makes sensible suggestions, including establishing a Tourism Forum to bring together tourism operators and stakeholders on the Agulhas Plain. However, there is an unexplained gap between the quality of the Narrative Proposal and the budget and the guidance implementation provided by the Log-Frame which, it must be said, is a mess.

For example, the activity of testing a responsible tourism strategy is only one of many suggested in the narrative proposal and budget, but is somehow elevated to the level of an Output, where the indicator does not define what is meant by "a responsible tourism strategy" nor how to measure it.

Indeed, a responsible tourism strategy is an activity rather than an output, while the conceptual linkages between a responsible tourism strategy and ABIs goals are not clear.

The three indicators for tourism growth, employment and responsible tourism are unachievable, expecting an impossible economic growth rate of 3-500% in five years despite little associated investment or strategy. They are also are heavily dependent on external factors such as exchange rates, international events, national tourism policy and practice, etc, which should be recognized in the external factors. These indicators would be much more appropriate at the level of Purpose or Goal – Output indicators should be clearer and much more fully within the control of the Project.

While Output 3 activities are all useful they do not nearly add up to the ends required of them. The formulation of this Output must be seen as a **major flaw** in the conceptualization of ABI, albeit a flaw that is exacerbated by the way it was implemented. Surely the output should have been a tourism strategy that creates an industry and therefore the incentives to 'flip' the system into one based on biodiversity? If the investment in infrastructure in Agulhas National Park and two Heritage Centers is excluded, developing tourism on the Agulhas Plain attracts a mere 7% of the Project Budget (Table 5). The objective of marketing and branding Agulhas described in the Narrative and budget is well targeted. However, as emphasized in the MTE, an important omission is a detailed economic analysis of the sector, what it contributes to the economy including employment and GDP multipliers, how realistic it would be to flip the system, and what would be required to do so. Flipping the system would be a huge achievement, might well be possible, but to do so would need to be placed centrally as a project objective rather than an ill-formulated, under-funded add-on.

Table 11:	Output 3	Objectives	and Indicators
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Output 3: A participatory and responsible tourism strategy is implemented in the Agulhas Plain and contributes to sustainable livelihoods.	 Eco-tourism development activities are coordinated by a well capacitated multi-stakeholder Tourism Forum by year 2; By the end of the project the number of visitors to the key sites in Agulhas Plain exceeds 150,000 per annum compared to 50,000 at project start. A five-fold increase in current employment in community-based tourism activities on the Plain by the end of year 5; All tourism operators in protected areas are applying responsible tourism guidelines, by year 3 	 Minutes of the AP Tourism Forum; Project reports; Maps and guides of the route; Web; Tourism agencies publications; Annual Report – SANParks; Agulhas Park visitor records; ABI Annual Economic Performance Report; IDP; Minutes of WBFC. 	 SA remains an attractive market for tourism and the Agulhas Plain products are competitive. Dedicated champions can be recruited from local communities to drive tourism projects.

4.6.6 Output 4:

The Project Narrative proposes two primary activities, namely a broad-based conservation awareness and outreach, albeit with a purpose that is never clearly articulated, and an environmental education program that targets poor colored families working on fynbos farms. At the activity level, the awareness and outreach program adds value. However, awareness programs have to define both audiences and messages, and a clear conceptualization of their purpose (is is a general awareness of biodiversity, or is it a specific call to action?) is essential if they are to be effective and not so general as to be ineffective. Awareness, by its nature, therefore needs specific measurable outcomes. The awareness program in ABI has struggled to find its direction throughout the life of the project, not least because of the failure to articulate its purpose in both the Narrative and the indicators. The indicators are conceptually weak in that they fail to define either audiences or messages, and neither they nor the OVIs are formulated in a way to define performance metrics.

The environmental education program is described clearly in the Narrative, but the Log-Frame contains no specific indicators related to this investment.

Output 4:	Increased positive coverage in	Awareness	Target
Increased local support	the media by the end of year 1;	strategy;	audiences
for biodiversity	 All decision-makers and more 	 Project reports; 	receptive to
conservation in the	than 40% of the general public	 Annual Report and 	biodiversity
Agulhas Plain is	in Agulhas Plain are aware of	budget of	conservation
generated through a	the value of biodiversity and	SANParks;	messages.
broad-based conservation	10% are actively involved in	Awareness	 Local media
awareness program.	conservation-related activities by	Surveys;	willing to
	the end of the project.	 Project records; 	collaborate.
		Council	
		resolutions;	
		• Revised IDPs.	

4.7 CONCLUSIONS ON LOG-FRAME.

In summary, the excellent Narrative description in the Project Document is reflected in the budget and workplan but differs in important respects from the Log-Frame, the formulation of which is much weaker than the narrative description. The Log-Frame provides the basis for project monitoring and assessment, including the PIRs, MTE and TE, confusing and complicating management, performance monitoring and evaluation.

Outputs 3 and 4 did not receive the same level of attention from the designers as the competent output 1 and the highly competent output 2. Consequently, implementers (and stakeholders) never really understood or appreciated outputs 3 and 4, the implementation of which was not therefore prioritized. Following the MTE, ABIOC agreed to reformulate them. The indicators and MOV are also weak. Better defined, they provide the logical prioritization for a sound M&E management information system, the absence of which is a weakness in project design.

4.8 PROJECT BUDGET

According to the Project Document, the total cost of the Project was anticipated to be US\$11,649,725, excluding preparatory assistance. The incremental costs to be financed by the GEF amount to US\$3,148,175 and co-financing to US\$ 8,501,550. GEF investments represent a modest increment to South Africa's own commitments to conservation and sustainable development. The budget summary below provides a breakdown of costs.

Table 13: Project Budget

Project Outputs		GEF	Co-financing	Total
				(US\$)
1. Landscape-level conservation	on management and	2,051,640	SANParks: 4,603,550	7,499,990
planning system developed an	d implemented in		WCNCB: 216,800	
public-private partnerships neg	gotiated by a well		Municipalities: 19,700	
capacitated extension service			FFI: 608,300	
			Total: 5,448,350	
2. Ecologically, socially and e	thically sustainable	415,235	WCNCB: 8,600	1,137,385
harvesting of wild fynbos is de	emonstrated as a viable		Grootbos: 13,500	
land use on the Agulhas Plain			FFI: 700,050	
			Total: 722,050	
3. A participatory and respons	ible tourism strategy is	433,300	SANParks: 1,508,100	2,704,350
implemented in the Agulhas P	lain and contributes to		Tourism Bur.: 357,950	
sustainable livelihoods			WBFC: 395,000	
			Total: 2,261,050	
4. Increased local support for l	piodiversity	237,500	SANParks: 70,000	307,500
conservation in the AP Plain is	s generated through		Total: 70,000	
abroad-based conservation aw	areness program			
Total Full Project		3,147,675	8,501,550	11,649,225
Project Preparation GEF \$78,550				
	SANParks \$ 28,000			
	FFI: \$29,000			
GRAND TOTAL (FULL PRO	JECT +	3,226,225	8,558,550	11,784,775
PREPARATION				

4.9 PREPARATORY WORK AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

C.A.P.E. deliberately developed the Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (ABI) to investigate the implementation of both institutional and ecosystem approaches to biodiversity conservation on the Agulhas Plain. A project proposal was developed (with FFI and UNDP-GEF co-funding) and submitted to the Global Environmental Fund for co-financing through UNDP. This was signed as part of the GEF Biodiversity Conservation Focal Area. The total project cost was \$11,784,775 of which GEF would provide \$3,226,225 and South African and other partners \$8,558,550 over the period 2003-2008. The lead implementing agency was South Africa National Parks (SANParks), and the primary beneficiary was described as local communities. There were some delays in project start up, and in recruitment of staff. The mid-term evaluation was conducted in January and February 2007.

4.10 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES

The project document states that a comprehensive stakeholder analysis was undertaken as part of the project preparatory process, a claim supported by the stakeholder analysis on p116. It noted that SANParks, FFI and their key partners organized consultative workshops with the identified stakeholders to ensure that: (a) their input was fully considered and integrated for data collection

purposes; (b) stakeholders are aware of project objectives and activities; (c) stakeholders participate in project design and in the determination of implementation arrangements; and (d) project development is integrated with ongoing and planned initiatives both in the country and in the project area.

However, an ABIOC meeting in preparation for the TE asks the question: Did ABI adequately understand the social and other drivers which influence conservation action? This supports the implication in the MTE that the consultative process may have involved biodiversity scientist and officials, but that the process was imperfect and local landholders were largely excluded; the Project had to make considerable efforts to overcome stakeholder suspicion, particularly amongst landholders, a deficiency it has addressed rather well. Dropping an externally conceived project into a landscape of communities and landholders caused anxiety and, in some cases, resentment, and the ABI coordinator has done a great deal of positive work to overcome the negative effects of this. There is now considerable social capital for highly collaborative and integrated landscape management.

In retrospect, many of these problems might have been avoided, and the Project conceptualization strengthened, had the Project been developed through a participatory Logical Framework Process. Likewise, an annual collaborative review of project progress using the log-frame and facilitated by a qualified and experienced facilitator would have strengthened collaboration and adaptive management (including re-formulation of log-frame). Such is the power of a facilitated annual Log-Frame-type peer-performance review that it is hard to understand why this is utilized so rarely in Projects.

4.11 ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

4.11.1 Conservation, complexity and the importance of external factors

Cross scale linkages and external effects are particularly critical to the success and broader impact of ABI. As a bold experiment in landscape conservation, ABI was "designed to maximize opportunities for replicating new conservation methods, institutional arrangements and know-how" (Project Document, p35). It is also a local project, managed by mid-level managers who operate in hierarchical conservation agencies. External effects therefore needed to be incorporated in Project Design, to increases its broader impact, and reduce risk including the current feelings of abandonment⁷. Indeed, the importance of external effects is recognized in the design of Log-Frames (i.e. the assumptions column).

In ABI, Project design and implementation was weakened by:

- inadequate conceptualization of external factors (always a difficult task), and
- omission of activities to manage and monitor them.

For example, ABI and ABIOC needed the mandate, resources and capacity to work at Provincial and National levels to improve the enabling environment for ABI. Similarly, tasking and funding agencies at Provincial and National level to develop an enabling environment for ABO, or specifically use ABI as an experiment for replication, would have contributed to Project goals.

⁷ At the recent ABIOC meeting attended by the TE, considerable concern was expressed about the lack of support from senior figures at Provincial and National level, noting that they seldom visited the project, often left meetings early and hardly ever did field visits.

4.11.2 Using the Log-Frame to manage external factors and risks

The Log-Frame is a valuable tool for identifying, managing and tracking external factors. Conservation is complex, requiring more emphasis on concepts like resilience and adaptability, external effects, and cross-scale institutions and governance. This requires:

- Taking more care with Project conceptualization so that important external and cross-scale issues are included in the "assumptions and external factors column".
- Including activities to manage external factors, for instance, supporting SANParks and CapeNature head offices to support ABI
- Actively monitoring the impact of external factors on Project performance. This requires simply adding an indicator column for the assumptions and risks, and the necessary activities to monitor and manage them (see Table 14).

Table 14: Suggestion for modifying Log-Frame Structure to Manage Cross-Scale and External Risks and Opportunities



4.11.3 Risk identified by the Project Document

The following risks were identified by the Project Document, with a column added to retrospectively assess this risk (Table 15):

Risk	Rating	Abatement Measure	Current Status	Future Rating
SANParks and WCNCB unable to maintain the level of personnel and material support to the project	[L]	SANParks and WCNCB are part of the ABI Project Oversight Committee and their missions and roles are aligned with ABI.	 Project affected by CapeNature Capacity constraints (fynbos harvesting; monitoring contracts). Project retarded by SANPark difficulties in effectively staffing Outputs 3, 4 and PIU. Unclear SANParks commitment to off-reserve conservation is a serious risk to sustainability and replication 	F
Mismatched programming of project and baseline activities	[L]	Strong management can reduce this risk; The POC would play a pivotal role in assuring joint programming of the project and baseline	• Unclear what this means. PIU and ABIOC implemented a complex project well	??
Conflict of interest between stakeholders	[M]	Stakeholder meetings; conflict resolution training; encourage open communication of project objectives and stakeholder interests/needs	 Strong networking skills of ABI Coordinator, ABIOC and other stakeholder forums, and specific conflict resolution interventions proved effective at managing conflicts of interest. Greater inclusion of stakeholders in Project formulation and monitoring/ evaluation would further enhance mutual goals formulation and implementation 	M
Insufficient incentives for sustainable use of natural resources	[M –L]	The project would focus sustainable use interventions on industries where economic returns appear promising, such as wild fynbos harvesting and ecotourism. This risk would lessen over time as barriers to management are removed	 Risks reduced by: External factors like improving terms of trade for ecotourism and growth of South African tourism market Active measures including development of flower markets, facilitation of SMA through investments in wildlife, legal arrangements, carbon/alien clearing secondary businesses 	L
Land-owners are unwilling to enter into management and contractual agreements	[L]	A joint extension service will be established to actively liase with the landowners and to mobilize sufficient positive incentives to encourage them.	• Landholders, especially SMAs and Conservancies, developed legal conservation arrangements that they were more comfortable with	L

The 2009 PIR document gives the project a low risk rating and identifies no serious risks. However, as will be discussed in more detail in the result section, the lack of clarity provided by SANParks to its managers about their role and futures in off-reserve conservation has negatively affected Project implementation and is a serious threat to its sustainability.

4.11.4 Replication approach (as a model for SANParks, CAPE)

ABI was designed to develop and replicate new conservation approaches, strengthen Protected Areas, demonstrate cost-effective off-reserve conservation and was the first time SANParks extended itself beyond formal Protected Area boundaries. Interviews suggest that ABI is viewed favourably by CapeNature and Cape Department of Agriculture and has provided lessons to CAPE and SANParks about off-reserve conservation. Experience with ABI is helping SANParks work through its off-reserve role, for example using the SMA model to inform the buffer zone management in the emerging Garden Route National Park. However, an important impediment to replication is that SANParks has neither clarified its role in off-reserve conservation, nor made a commitment to it. While the intention of ABI to inform CAPE and SANParks with a view to replicating the ABI approach is discussed several times in the ABI document (e.g. paragraph 95, p36), this has been left to the vagaries of change as no activities or indicators were designed specifically for this purpose. A better approach may have been to link CAPE, SANParks and CapeNature to the Project by involving them in activities like conservation planning, legal work, resource economics, and lessons learned that had wide, cross-scale applicability but were outsourced to consultants

Replication also requires careful analysis and dissemination of results. ABI has commissioned a consultant to "evaluate the ABI approach with specific reference to the SMA model and lessons learned from this model for replication purposes⁸". However, Project design did not specifically incorporate monitoring or evaluation capacity and processes to properly draw out the lessons, and this report has struggled to obtain the necessary evaluative data (Ingrid Coetzee, personal communications). Moreover, consultants' reports have limited value and legitimacy. Peer reviewed research is more widely recognized and would have provided an additional (to consultants) independent source of critical analysis, ideas and support. Building an institutional relationship with one of the local universities into the Project, may have yielded analysis and lessons better located in the scientific literature, at a relatively low cost, and with a higher likelihood of longer-term institutionalization.

4.11.5 Linkage of the project and other interventions within the land management sectors within the ABI area

The Project Document envisaged that, "key governmental organizations that will provide support within the ambit of their administrative functions include the parastatal agencies (SANParks and WCNCB), local authorities (Overberg District Municipality, Cape Agulhas Municipality, Overstrand Municipality), particularly with regard to Integrated Development Planning and tourism related functions, and Provincial Government structure, especially the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF)". It also mentioned "Multi-stakeholder forums includ[ing] all of the catchment management forums and future catchment management authorities, Integrated Development Planning forums as well as the Fire Protection Agency (FPA)". The implementation plan briefly mentions stakeholder consultation, but only allocates this a budget of \$10,800 (p93). Apart from this, additional activities are not designed for this purpose and neither is this function mentioned in the Terms-of-Reference for long- or short-term staff. The success of this aspect of the project, therefore, needs to be attributed to the personal attributes of stakeholders rather than the design of the Project. In this regard, the ABI Coordinator, staff in Flower Valley and Department of Agriculture, and stakeholders in ABIOC, require particular praise.

⁸ Ingrid Coetzee (2010 draft report) Draft report on the evaluation of the ABI approach with specific reference to the SMA model and lessons learned from this model for replication purposes, Report commissioned by ABI

5 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 **IMPLEMENTATION**

This section reviews the project management and implementation arrangements at all levels, in order to provide an opinion on its efficiency and cost effectiveness. The Project Implementation Structure is summarized in Figure 2. The ABI PIU is staffed by SANParks, which also services Output 1 through the Conservation Planning Manager. Flower Valley is responsible for Output 2, and the staffing and implementation of outputs 3 and 4 has been intermittent. The ABI Coordinator reports to ABIOC (whose responsibilities are not fully formalized). ABIOC was initially designed as a mechanism for approving or changing financial decisions, but has grown organically into a stakeholder forum. ABIOC in turn reports to CAPE on Project progress. The ABI Coordinator manages the Project through SANParks structures with a second layer of reporting and accountability to UNDP (i.e. financial report, PIR, audits).

Figure 2: ABI Project Implementation Structure



In the past six years, ABI has managed a direct UNDP spend of R45m and co-financing of R280m (albeit including two big items - road construction and park purchase). Money is well accounted for, and expenditure has been careful, rapid, effective and frugal. This is a remarkable achievement.

The biggest problem is that ABI is operating outside SANParks normal comfort zone, and the ABI PIU sometimes has to operate without clear guidance from above.

5.1.1 Processes and administration:

(a) Was project cycle and disbursement process effective? Did it link UNDP and Partner planning and spending cycles? (preparation, lead-up time, sequencing of planning and spending)

The Project was approved in October 2003 and the first disbursement made on 3 March 2004. Initially co-financing, including staff appointments, was delayed by partners by 1-1/2 years. Partners had to approve budgets for activities like new staff appointments and only did this after project was formally approved. Further delays were caused by a 'normal' procurement delay of 9 months associated with hiring people and purchasing equipment – this was not considered in the project time frame. The Project caught up with the disbursement schedule by 2006. Disbursement was then effective until January 2009 when administrative changes and gaps caused by staff changes in UNDP delayed disbursement for the whole of 2009.

(b) Project related administration procedures

The Chief Technical Advisor built the capacity of the Project Coordinator in project management (e.g. financial and technical reporting, disbursement) and to provide expertise in project implementation. This was extremely beneficial. The main administrative tasks established were:

- Establishing the Project Implementation Unit to coordinate implementation of ABI, work programming, and monitoring, certifying expenditures and preparing ToRs for consultants and tender documents for sub-contracts (a lot of these)
- Financial Reporting. This included linking the UNDP quarterly financial report to the SANParks expenditure ledger. In Year 1 auditors helped PIU considerably to develop financial systems.
- Controlling Budgets and Expenditure. Budgets were adjusted slightly following the MTA
- Technical Reporting. The Project Implementation Report was submitted annually
- Establishing and reporting to the ABI Oversight Committee. ABIOC was established to institutionalise collective stakeholders participation, including authorising activities and changes in activities and budgets (within line items) on behalf of UNDP. Some difficulties were faced initially when there was not UNDP person at the ABIOC meeting. ABIOC minutes were used to formally track decisions.

(c) Milestones(Log-frame matrix)

Milestones were tracked using the Log-Frame (annex 6) and work plan matrix (annex 6). These provided the framework for the annual PIR. Initially partners and stakeholders (who were not involved in setting objectives, e.g. "edaphic line") saw the detailed plan as an imposition, and this had to be carefully managed by the PIU. The PIU also had to approach the consultants who had defined the indicators to explain them as they were often too technical to follow.

(d) Key decisions and out puts

Initially key decisions were made by ABI Coordinator and Chief Technical Advisor, and later this was done through ABIOC.

A key decision not envisaged in the Project Document was to emphasize a partnership approach and, wherever possible, to get the partner to implement and drive the process rather than the ABI PIU. SANParks also decided to involve local landholders and other partners in the Project far more than initially envisaged.

Output 1, which involved Park establishment and extension, was broadened by:

- bringing together Department of Agriculture and Local Authorities into a multi-actor extension process,
- negotiating a single approach to landholder conservaiton between CapeNature and SANParks at local level,
- facilitating landholders themselves to drive the process of conservation expansion. This included participatory conservation planning that integrated agricultural planning with conservation planning and municipalities. It also included shifting from a 1:40,000 to a 1:10,000 scale for mapping, which was contentious at the time.
- Relying far more on collective action and stakeholder-driven establishment of new conservation approaches than planned through the Contract agreements noted in the Project document. A key result was the formation of the Nuwejaars SMA
- Expanded alien clearing, fire management and wetlands programs hugely because the stakeholder approach attracting a lot more money. Also focused on alternative methods including technical (e.g. fire and clearing) and institutional changes (e.g. not just government to government but also government to private)
- Adding wildlife restocking to earlier priorities

Regarding Output 2, SANParks approached Flower Valley to implement the sustainable harvesting component of the Project. After MTE, an additional \$80,000 was transferred to this output (mainly from savings on park tourism infrastructure)

Output 3 had no major changes, except that support was shifted from a defunct tourism forum to the emerging and active Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau which will drive the implementation of proposed studies and strategies.

Following the MTE, a new strategy was developed for Output 4, and Agri-Promo was contracted to implement it.

(e) Major project implementation documents prepared with an indication of how the documents and reports have been useful

The following implementation documents are noteworthy:

- The 2006 Institutionalization study got senior officials thinking, and although it was never implemented, it perhaps prompted the new DEAT rationalization study
- PIRs are valuable for tracking and reporting implementation
- MTE showed partners, especially SANParks, that Project was performing and being innovative, and is being used to make a case for the ABI-approach to SANParks. It also refocused management on Big Goals, helped keep management on track but also to make critical changes (see above)
- Ingrid Coetzee study on Lessons Learned will be used to promote project lessons

5.2 TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The MTE noted that the programme's key emerging strength is bringing people together around the issue of landscape conservation with the Project Coordinator, Mr. Tertius Carinus, being exceptionally suited to this networking and relationship-building role. However, it also noted that the Project had far less high level technical assistance than was available to it at the time it was formulated. It recommended that the Project be strengthened though technical ecological expertise (to upgrade biodiversity indicators and monitoring systems), but especially by the emerging need for economic and institutional expertise. The absence of expertise at this high level was identified as a

serious constraint to the potential of ABI to become <u>THE</u> example of integrated park and landscape management. This was note provided, and ABI has therefore not achieved as much as it could have, especially in testing new conservation models quantitatively, and in developing PES.

5.2.1 Project Establishment and Management

Strong technical support from FFI, first by Adrianna Dino and then by Martin Hollands, were important for the establishment of the project. Support by the Chief Technical Advisor (Martin Holland) was invaluable through the life of the Project, and the reduction in this effort probably contributed to some of the problems faced by Project in its final two years. Technical and moral support from the UNDP Technical Advisor (Nik Sekran) was also invaluable, and the open relationship between him and the ABI Coordinator (Tertius Carinus) were a critical factor in the ability of the Project to grow into areas not anticipated in the Project Document (e.g. strengthening stakeholder relationships and partnerships with Department Agriculture) and to grasp new opportunities, including the Euro2m grant for the SMA. However, it is unclear how much technical support was provided by SANParks, CapeNature and CAPE, with only the latter supporting ABIOC meetings with senior personnel. The utilization of a competent facilitator to negotiate roles and responsibilities among agencies and stakeholders, and to facilitate a process of participatory peerbased performance assessment of the Project, are highly likely to have had considerable added value⁹.

5.2.2 Upward and Sideways Linkages.

While CapeNature, SANParks and CAPE all claim to have benefited from the ABI experience, there is no obvious evidence that the reverse was true, nor is there strong evidence of an effective sideways learning process between ABI and the other landscape conservation processes falling under CAPE, or the processes managed by SANParks (i.e. Garden Route, Greater Addo). People mention having been facilitated to meet people from other projects, but the TE did not once hear a specific lesson learned from somewhere else. This was not built into the Project Document.

5.2.3 Evaluations and PIR.

The ABI Coordinator completed the PIR largely on his own, with inputs from staff or partners responsible for different outputs. Although the MTE suggested that the PIR be utilized to build a common stakeholder appreciation of the Project this was not done. A Mid-Term Evaluation of the Project was complete in March 2007, and the Terminal Evaluation in July 2010, a year later than expected because the Project was extended through the BMU funding.

5.2.4 Land use planning.

The Department of Agriculture provided many important inputs not anticipated in Project design. This included housing ABI in their offices in Bredarsdorp (the "Integration Center"), considerable help with GIS capabilities, integration of conservation objectives into land use planning and, most valuable of all, improved relationships and legitimacy with landholders and other stakeholders at local and provincial levels. The Project is probably more strongly supported by the Department of Agriculture than by the conservation agencies.

⁹ The success of the institutionally complex CAMPFIRE programme in Zimbabwe was greatly enhanced by a stakeholder workshop to develop a clear conceptual Vision of the project and to negotiate the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders. The clarity provided by this single workshop continued to have positive effects for at least ten years. Similarly, regular facilitated reviews of the progress of CAMPFIRE by its stakeholders were an important input in programme success. A similar combination of processes (i.e. design, annual evaluation) was a critical factor in the turn-around of the Luangwa Integrated Rural Development Project in Zambia

5.2.5 Conservation and biodiversity (research, monitoring).

Flower Valley, and Sean Privett in particular, conducted and sourced excellent research into the sustainability of wild flower / fynbos harvesting, providing considerable inputs into the licensing and certification of these uses. Working with Walker Bay Conservancy, Privett has also undertaken invaluable research into more effective means of alien clearing. However, as noted elsewhere, systematic monitoring has not been undertaken.

5.2.6 Economics.

The Project has struggled to get technical help to assess key economic aspects of the program including land use economics, payments for environmental services, evaluating the magnitude of the tourism sector on the Agulhas Plain or, at a higher level, incorporating economic principles to drive and guide the emergence of new institutions for biodiversity governance and resource allocation.

Several studies have been commissioned that cover some aspects of biodiversity or tourism economics. Those available to the TE, including an earlier assessment of the economics of flower harvesting, and the draft evaluation of the ABI approach, do not develop convincing economic arguments in sufficient depth to change thinking or the way Agulhas is management. The questionnaire for the tourism study looks more thorough, but this study is still in progress.

Generally, at the time of the TE, economic data remains extremely weak and neither is there evidence in ABI documentation that economic data or thinking is being effectively incorporated into the Project. This is an extremely important lost opportunity. Such analyses can build powerful cases to redirect investments and public funds, and for the redesign of the institutions governing wild resources. For example, it is highly likely that a competent analysis of the tourism economy and associated multipliers would provide a persuasive case for local or provincial government to invest in biodiversity and ecotourism¹⁰. Analyses of land use options would assist landholders greatly in making land use decisions (e.g., Table 16), and have been demonstrated (e.g. in Zimbabwe) to rapidly facilitate the transition from conventional agriculture to a bio-experience economy. Thirdly, economic modeling of the public good aspect of biodiversity is an invaluable tool for assessing if this needs to be done, and for making a case to develop appropriate institutions where the it is.

Table 16: Land Use Economics and Transformation on the Agulhas Plain

The Draft Evaluation of the ABI Approach, provides economic data on land use option on the Agulhas Plains. Although the analysis is cursory (and contains errors), it is the first (only?) attempt to do so despite the importance of economics in driving land use change both at landholder and collective (e.g. SMA, municipal) level. In a very preliminary analysis it suggests that the following returns per hectare apply to the Agulhas Plain (net profit, albeit not defined):

Ecotourism	R 70
Fynbos	R 77
Sheep	R 358
Diary	R 154
Wildlife	R ??
Wheat	R 116
Vineyards	R18,080
Protea cultivation	R12,624

There are many weaknesses in this draft analysis (sources of data not specified, profit not defined with respect to whether it net of variable and/or capital costs, no measure of return on capital investment - IRR incorrectly used, no assessment of scale effects or public good aspects of land use options).

¹⁰ The TE has personal experience of this, where an analysis of the financial and economic potential of protected areas in Zambia and Egypt provided a powerful case for institutional reform and funding.

Nevertheless, a financial (i.e. from the perspective of the individual firm) comparison suggests that a mere doubling of income from bio-experience uses would make it competitive with wheat and dairy and a quadrupling would make it competitive with sheep. The next step in the analysis is to include economic (i.e. societal) benefits such as (1) the economic/employment multipliers associated with bio-experience enterprises and (2) currently unpriced values associated with ecosystem services like biodiversity conservation, scenery in support of passing tourists, water provision and climate change mitigation/adaptation. This, no doubt, would swing the analysis even further in favour of the biodiversity experience.

Across South Africa, the average return from wildlife in terms of land and capital investment is R220/ha and 10.3% return on capital. This compares to livestock at R80 and 2-7% respectively¹¹. In the Eastern Cape, flipping from conventional livestock to high-end wildlife operations increasing employment 4.5X and total wages 32X. These economic forces have driven a transformation of land use in South Africa, as well as on private land in Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. In South Africa there are now 9,600 wildlife ranches covering 20m hectares. This transformation has occurred despite an environment where policies, regulations and support services, rather than being aligned to support the sector, often act against it. They burden wildlife enterprises with an unlevel playing field that imposes unnecessary and non-value-adding regulations and conditions (and therefore additional costs) that conventional livestock raising and farming would never accept.

Ironically, conservationists must be partly blamed for undermining the successful spread of the bio-experience economy. They fail to integrated economic principles into environmental policy in a way that favours the bio-experience economy. Also, ecological purism, including disproportionately tough regulations on the use of wild resources compared to domestic resources, and fussy rules about extra-limital gene pools and species restocking that are not applied to really extra-limital species like sheep, cattle, wheat, etc., act strongly against biodiversity-based land use. For example, restocking Agulhas with white rhinos would provide considerable impetus towards 'flipping' land use¹². Narrow biological purism is correct that white rhino are probably extra-limital on the Agulas Plain. But isn't this a narrow and small-minded viewpoint where we consider that 50% of biodiversity has already been lost through land conversion (and up to 90% elsewhere in the Overberg), that nearly 100% of large herbivore diversity is comprised of sheep and cattle (not indigenous herbivores), that white rhino would favour habitats that have already been converted into pastures, and that the economic impetus provided by an economically viable wildlife/flower/PES sector is one of the few proven ways of pushing back the frontiers of conventional agriculture to make more room for biodiversity?

5.2.7 Stakeholder processes and institutional rationalization.

The ABI Coordinator, with considerable help from the Department of Agriculture and ABIOC has played an important, if intuitive, role in developing stakeholder relationships. This is a real (and unanticipated) strength of the Project. In interviewing stakeholders for the TE, a great deal of time was spent discussing interagency roles, rivalries and overlaps. It is clear that interagency transaction costs are high, and agencies spend a lot of time and energy negotiating their roles that could be better spent on activities that add value to conservation.

ABI has worked through many of these problems at the local level, and there is good institutional coordination and cooperation on the Agulhas Plain. However, progress is based on personal relationships rather than on formal institutional commitments. Further, no activities were built into ABI specifically to institutionalize these relationships at meso and macro levels, and ABI so far has not been successful in doing so. This is not surprising given the hierarchical managerial culture of South Africa's state agencies, and the added complexities of working with national and provincial levels.

To resolve questions of institutional rationalization, ABI commissioned an institutional rationalization study from a consultant in 2007. This made some progress but ultimately did not succeed. More

¹¹ Dry, Gert (2010) Why game farming should be taken seriously.

¹² A further reason that white rhino are not being restocked is fear that they will be poached by marine pearlemon poachers, a fear shared by the landholders who would benefit from rhino

recently, DEA (sparked by the ABI and Western Cape rationalization studies) commissioned a former Director of DEAT to undertake a Rationalization Study for Parks and Landscape Conservation in South Africa. This report has not been made public. Both attempts at rationalization used technical consultants (rather than stakeholder processes) that had long familiarity with conservation agencies (rather than breadth of experience, including exposure to institutional approaches outside South Africa, or capabilities in organizational development and political administration). It is likely that the approach selected will reinforce the status quo rather than generate ideas for the real change that might be needed.

Rationalizing the governance of Protected Areas in areas like ABI is challenging because it includes a complex matrix of land use categories, a mixture of private and public costs and benefits, and a plethora of authorities and agencies. ABI is, and remains, an excellent pilot site to test success. However, it is missing several key ingredients:

• A champion able to work at effective both ABI and national level, crossing hierarchies, jumping levels and creating cross-scale linkages, including comparative analyses of ABI to other landscape initiatives in South Africa and elsewhere (i.e. horizontal) and an ability to use a local example to inform and drive national change (vertical)

At least three sets of skills are also required:

- An understanding of land use economics, governance, policy and institutional reform,
- An understanding of institutional, political and administration processes and reform, including knowledge of approaches to similar problems in the region and world (see, for example, Table 35),
- The ability to manage a change management stakeholder process.

5.2.8 Sustainable Use of Flowers.

This was a new field. Flower Valley made remarkable strides developing its own technical capacity to understand the ecological sustainability of flower harvesting, and translating this into licensing and certification. Indeed, through experiential learning, Flower Valley must be considered a world leader in these issues.

Initially Flower Valley struggled to obtain the commercial and entrepreneurial expertise to develop new markets for ethical, sustainable wild flower harvesting. Huge strides were made in a short period when the correct person was found, but Fynsa was unable to retain his skills, and the person is now in the process of establishing a second ethical sustainable wild flower harvesting operation and opening up new markets in the U.K..

On the economic side, a number of consultants were used, but this never provided an effective economic analysis of wild flower harvesting nor built a strong economic case for it (see above). Again, finding the right kind of economic skills proved problematic.

5.2.9 Tourism.

Working through the Municipalities, ABI funded the development of a tourism strategy for Agulhas that is now used by municipalities. However, the plan struggled to develop a sound market analysis and branding program as initially envisaged in the Project Document, suggests that obtaining the right expertise in tourism was difficult. The economics of tourism still remains an area that the Project is struggling to address. The position description for the nature-based tourism specialist (in the Project Document) conceived of a person with skills at organizing meetings and education, developing

workplans and business plans for Heritage centers, and developing tourism partnerships, packages and tourism routes. To repeat a common theme in the TE, the importance of skills in financial and economic analysis and institutional reform were not conceptualized. High high-level professional skills were required to really transform ABI, were not identified by the Project Document, and SANParks recruited a mid-level position. As noted, tasks were done enthusiastically and well, but Output 3 was never afforded the prominence it deserved.

5.2.10 Fire and Alien Clearing.

Large amounts of money have been spent on clearing aliens and controlling fire and large areas have received the technically accepted treatments. However, ABI stakeholders are at the forefront of asking questions about whether the recognized treatment of an initial clearance and two follow-ups works.

Experimentation on Walker Bay Conservancy (provided in part through ABI) suggests that a combination of fire and clearing is technically more effective. The synergies between fire and alien clearing suggests that alien clearing needs to be planned at a much higher temporal and spatial scale¹³.

5.3 PROJECT OVERSIGHT AND ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT BY UNDP AND ABIOC

An assessment of the PIR documentation and interviews of UNDP staff suggests that ABI is well understood by UNDP. The UNDP Technical Advisor, in particular, has remained intellectually engaged with the ABI Project. The ABI Coordinator, similarly, is in regular communications with UNDP and this has greatly facilitated project implementation.

ABIOC was designed to oversee ABI;s finances but has evolved into steering/management committee. ABIOC fills an important gap in upper level leadership, and plays a key role in receiving and commenting on reports, involving stakeholders and making financial and technical decisions about implementation. ABIOC, however, needs to be strengthened with a stronger charter, and with greater participation from the private sector.

5.4 PROJECT EXECUTION BY SANPARKS, CAPENATURE AND FVCT

As noted, the Project has been managed competently by SANParks at all levels, and SANParks has played an important role in providing staff and establishing reliable financial and administrative systems. SANParks provided competent staff for the PIU and Output 2, but has been less successful with managers for outputs 3 and 4, while the provision of administrative assistance to the ABI Coordinator has been poor. Output 2 was outsourced to Flower Valley. However, following problems recruiting and retaining staff for outputs 3 and 4, these were outsourced respectively to Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau and Agric-Promo. However, ABI's lack of capacity in these areas meant

¹³ Fire frequencies are optimized at periods of about 15 years, and fires cross landscape boundaries. Taking a landscape approach to alien clearing, in turn, implies a far greater need to balance ecological, employment and economic options across a wider range of stakeholders (i.e. both private and public land, government-funded extended public works programs like Working for Water that work almost exclusively on public land, and LandCare which works on private land). This suggests that successfully clearing aliens needs to simultaneously resolve:

[•] technical issues (what combinations of fire, clearing and chemicals works; how this affects water supplies)

[•] economic issues, such as sustainable funding of alien clearing and payment for the water produced

[•] institutional challenges, including how a range of public agencies work on landscapes that are owned by public, private and community entities

that ABI focused far more on outputs 2 and 3 although these needed particular attention to compensate for naivety in design.

Due to circumstances not foreseen by the Project CapeNature lost capacity. It provided strong support to flower certification. It supported off-reserve conservation when it had capacity, noting that there has been a decrease both in off-reserve extension staff (from three to one at most) and some concerns expressed by stakeholders at the qualifications of extension staff. De Hoop and De Mond, currently have a warden, and this is reflected in declining METT scores. Due to lack of financial resources and capacity, CapeNature transferred its GIS role to the Western Cape Department of Agriculture which have provided additional equipment and staffing. CapeNature has assisted game restocking in the Nuwejaars SMA, and have also allowed more porous game fences than originally defined in regulations to allow freer movement of wildlife.

As noted below, Flower Valley has performed well.

5.5 **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: UNDP AS THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY**

The Chief Technical Advisor has been very supportive towards ABI, including accessing Euro 2m BMU funds. UNDP financial and project reports are competent and easy to follow. In short, the project is competently, and sometimes innovatively, managed. UNDP also helped to develop the project management capacity of the ABI PIU. Country Office support was limited at the beginning of ABI (but supplemented by the Chief Technical advisor paid through ABI), was effective for the majority of the Project, but following excessive staff changes in UNDP has been ad-hoc since late 2008.

5.6 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

5.6.1 Project disbursements

(a) Provide an overview of actual spending against budget expectations

In 2004 and 2005, spend was delayed (reasons include moratorium on SANParks staff recruitment), but by 2006 project was at full speed utilizing 97% of the budget. The fact that the project proceeded on track with delays in UNDP/GEF Project funding, indicates the strength of the in-country financial commitment to it, with SANParks providing cash when needed.

The Project still has some \$354,171 that is committed but not spent. The PIU has good documentation for this (see notes in Table 17) and expenditure exactly matches the budget and approved changes following the MTE.

	Original Budget	Agreed	Expenditure	Commitment	Variance on	Variance
		Budget			Original	
		Change			Budget	
Output 1	2,102,640	1,894,640	1,849,382	45,258	87.96%	100%
Output 2	415,235	495,735	495,735		119.39%	100%
Output 3	402,300	457,300	261,223	196,077	64.93%	100%
Output 4	227,500	300,000	187,164	112,836	82.27%	100%
Project Total	3,147,675	3,147,675	2,793,504	354,171	88.75%	100%
Output 1:	Reallocated \$318,0	000 from park to	ourism infrastru	cture (replaced l	by SANParks ma	tch)
	Additional \$95,000 for CTA and PIU and consultancies					
	Likely to overspend as this line item covers TE (\$30,000)					
	Commitment to Lessons Learned study: 12,427					
	\$2831 held back for project close out					
Output 2:	Reallocated \$80,500 as recommended by MTE					
Output 3:	Reallocated \$55,000 from Output 1 for tourism study; not yet spent					
	Committed \$57,00	0 SANParks inf	frastructure, \$20),142 Red Door	Training;	
	WBFC \$16,000; \$23,719 Heritage Center Equipment; \$24,216 for ABIOC					
Ouput 4	Reallocated within this budget: and added \$72,500 from output 1					
Ouput	Committed \$30,000 communications strategy					
	\$25,000 held back for and of project contingencies					
Other	$\varphi_{2,3,000}$ for DIU and CTA to along out project workshops CTA travel final and it at			t ata		
Oulei	945,462 101 FIU al		e out project - v	vorksnops, CTA	uavei, illiai audi	ι, εις.

Table 17: Summary of ABI Finances (Provided by ABI Unit, July 2010)

(b) Critically analyse disbursements to determine if funds have been applied effectively and efficiently.

Expenditure has closely followed Project budget, and by all accounts funds were used for exactly what was required of them, and used effectively. Post MTE, there were minor but focused changes to the budget to reallocate \$376,000 which ensured a better Project conclusion.

(c) Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and provide an opinion on the appropriateness and relevancy of such revisions

There were minor and highly appropriate budget revisions following the recommendations of the MTE. These are detailed in Table 17.

5.6.2 Budget procedures

The Project Document provided detailed guidance on how to allocate the budget (p42-58). This has been followed closely by the PIU, which discussed all changes in detail with UNDP before implementing them. Audits have been generally satisfactory. For example, the 2008 audit stated that "the statement of assets and equipment presents fairly, in all material respects the fixed assets of the project" and that "the statement of cash position presents fairly, in all material respect the cash balance of the project".

Financial disbursements and timing were generally competent, although a one-off problem unnecessarily delayed project disbursements for more than a year¹⁴. This would have caused serious

¹⁴ The 2008 audit noted that the expenditure reports listed in the UNDP CDR and that of the implementing partner (i.e. ABI) did not reconcile. This problem was attributed to a failure by ABI to comply with prescribed

delays and disruption to the project had SANParks not covered these interim costs. These sources of these problems are administrative and should have been dealt with far more quickly than they were both by UNDP and by ABI. The underlying problems appear to be excessive turnover in UNDP staff, insufficient communication from UNDP staff to the Project, and the fact that the Project never developed competent and dedicated administrative capacity (the ABI Coordinator was over-stretched and took on the role of financial manager, which was not a sensible allocation of skills).

Financial and project reporting by the ABI Coordinator is reliable. Money is properly accounted for with little risk of misappropriation. The performance of expenditure by ABI is well done, and ABI is highly rated by UNDP/GEG in terms of disbursement. However, the responses to financial queries (e.g. audits) are sometimes slow, causing delays in disbursement (see above). Managerially, ABI is responsible for managing two large projects yet is not supported by a qualified financial manager. Although finances are properly reported and accounted for, improvements in the timeliness and presentation, for example, cash flow, income and expenditure statements and other financial analyses would improve management effectiveness. Laudable attempts by the ABI PIU to be financially transparent with its stakeholders through ABIOC are also weakened because financial reports and graphics are in formats that are hard to follow.

Project staff in UNDP have changed several times during the Project. This has resulted in different sets of procedures and instructions to the ABI Coordinator. A negative consequence is that, for example, a discrepancy in exchange rate calculations delayed funding by over a year (with SANParks stepping in to fill the gap).

Interviews with the ABI Coordinator and ABIOC suggested that financial management was sound. This was confirmed by the ability of Project management to respond immediately and in full to all requests for financial information, and by the Audit Reports. Within a day of a request, the Project provided summaries of its financial status, including expenditure against budget, variance and full explanations of variance. This is adequate, even impressive. Audit reports are completed on time and show that project expenditure is controlled well. The MTE reports that both ABI Implementation Unit and UNDP Project Unit were asked to provide a summary of expenditure to date. Their financial information coincided exactly.

5.7 COST EFFECTIVENESS (OF PROJECT AND PROJECT OUTPUTS)

With an investment of \$3,147,675m UNDP/GEF investment has leveraged a large amount of activity, including the consolidation of 161,699 ha of private and state protected areas protecting critically endangered lowland fynbos, the clearing of 74,567ha of aliens, the development of sustainable fynbos harvesting supporting 150 jobs, and many other achievements as listed in the ABI Project Results Matrix. This is extremely cost effective.

Co financing of some \$21.5m is significantly greater than initially anticipated (

UNDP procedures, and inadequate or lack of supervision by UNDP staff of the Project. This coincided with a period when UNDP staff were changing, and when new rules or interpretations of rules wer eimplemented, not all of which were adequately explained to the Project. After stating that the following statements were fair (see above) the audit also flagged the non-submission of formal UNDP statements, namely the statement of cash position, and the statement of assets and equipment.

Table 18). However, this data still under-estimates co-financing provided through improving relationships and synergies, for example the inputs to the Project provided by the Department of Agriculture, or the value of land, time and management expenditure provided by private sector partners. However, the consultant's impressions agree with that of stakeholders, who stated that ABI has encouraged a much larger inflow of financing into the project area than is indicated by the project budget, both through additional financing found by project partners. For example financing provided by a number of extended public works programmes exceeded R12m alone following the 2006-fire, and is not included in **Error! Reference source not found.**

The Project appears frugal and highly effective, using resources carefully and effectively. There was also no sign that resources were being squandered or wasted, indeed the appearance was very much the opposite, with overheads being kept low (as offices were minimally equipped, even Spartan, and vehicles used were old if reliable) and money targeted at conservation priorities. The Project has every appearance of being cost effective, leveraging the conservation of over 100,000 hectares of land for some \$3.2m.

Table 18: Summary	of	ABI	Co-fin	ancing
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Nature of Contributor	Name of Contributor	Amount used in Project Preparation (PDF A, B, PPG)	Amount committed in Project Document[10]	Additional amounts committed after Project Document finalization	Estimated Total Disbursement to June 30, 2009	Expected Total Disbursement by end of project
GEF	GEF	\$0.08	\$3.15	\$0.00	\$2.96	\$3.15
Contribution	BMU-Germany	N/A	N/A	\$2.62	\$1.17	\$2.62
	UN Agency	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cash Co-Finar	icing					
Government	SANParks	\$0.06	\$6.18	\$1.10	\$7.34	\$7.34
	Western Cape Nature Conservation Board	\$0.00	\$0.23	\$0.57	\$0.51	\$0.80
	Dept of Agriculture	\$0.00	\$0.02	\$0.44	\$0.54	\$0.58
	PAATA/Agriseta (as part of FVCT co-fin)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.07	\$0.07	\$0.07
	Dept of Tourism	\$0.00	\$0.30	\$0.00	\$0.21	\$0.30
	Dept of Transport	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2.86	\$3.36	\$4.62
	Municipalities	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.71	\$0.71	\$1.86
Multilateral Donors	Development Marketplace/World Bank	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.16	\$0.16	\$0.16
NGOs	Flower Valley Conservation Trust	\$0.00	\$0.20	\$0.11	\$0.22	\$0.31
	DG Murray Trust (part of FVCT)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.13	\$0.13	\$0.13
	Shell Foundation (part of FVCT)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30
	Ackerman PnP Foundation (part of FVCT)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.47	\$0.47	\$0.47
	State Lottery (part of FVCT)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.20	\$0.15	\$0.20
	Table Mountain Fund (TMF) (part of FVCT)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.03	\$0.03	\$0.03
	Fauna Flora International	\$0.00	\$1.10	\$0.10	\$1.20	\$1.20
Banks	Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.08	\$0.06	\$0.08
Private Sector	Haasvlakte Farmers Association	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.01
	Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy	\$0.00	\$0.40	\$0.00	\$0.18	\$0.40
	Grootbos	\$0.00	\$0.02	\$0.00	\$0.02	\$0.02
InKind	Earth Voice	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.03	\$0.03	\$0.03
Cofinancing	Elim Community	\$0.00	\$0.05	\$0.00	\$0.03	\$0.05
	Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau	\$0.00	\$0.01	\$0.00	\$0.01	\$0.01
TOTAL CO-	Total Co-Financing	\$0.06	\$8.51	\$9.99	\$16.91	\$21.59
FINANCIN G ¹⁵	Total Project Budget	\$0.14	\$11.66	\$9.99	\$19.87	\$24.74

¹⁵ This does not include all co-financing. SANParks may commit \$520,000 for purchasing property to add to Agulhas NP; Pick n'Pay Foundation will provided additional funds fro market development

5.8 COORDINATION

The ABI Coordinator plays a major role in linking together the different actors in the Agulhas Plain. This is formally coordianted through ABIOC, while the Bredasdorp Integration Centre provides an effective means of linking SANParks and Agriculture in achieving conservation and other objectives on land. ABI has spawned numerous additional examples of semi-formal coordination through stakeholder forums including ABIOC and its working groups, the Agulhas National Park Forum and its working groups, the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau, and the Nuwejaars SMA. As noted elsewhere in the MTE, these stakeholder groups are extremely valuable, they are a cutting-dege example of the emergence of public-private stakeholder partnerships in South African conservation. However, they need to be formalized and empowered with legal rights and responsibilities.

5.9 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

The project is formally monitored and evaluated through the log-frame and PIR. This is effective at keeping tasks on track. However, the Project is based largely on opinion, albeit often experienced and well informed opinion. A general weakness of the Project is the lack of quantitative data, which can be attributed to the neglect of this in both its design and implementation.

The following data exists:

- METT analyses for six protected areas, including Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy, collected on an annual basis (noting that the METT is based on qualitative opinion rather than quantitative assessment)
- The system for monitoring flower picking being developed by Flower Valley
- Monitoring of alien clearing (excellent maps)
- The extent of private, municipal, community and state protected areas (good maps)
- A survey of landholder attitudes and economics, which was not available to this TE
- A pending survey of tourism enterprises and willingness to pay for responsible tourism

However, key data are not collected, for example:

- The status and health of biodiversity
- Attitudes of stakeholders to ABI and biodiversity in general
- Socio-economic data including employment, well-being, etc.
- Economic data on the number of tourism enterprises, turnover, net margin, economic multipliers, employment, etc.

A big opportunity has not been taken to use ABI to generate information through its activities and surveys (e.g. tourism) to influenced practice within the ABI area?

5.9.1 Is the reporting framework effective/appropriate?

Reporting framework (i.e. PIR) is strong, easy to follow, and effective, but would be strengthened by increased quality of log-frame design. The new PIR Excel format is, however, problematic and more difficult to use.

5.9.2 Assess the extent, appropriateness and effectiveness of adaptive management at all levels of the project implementation

A process of trial by error combined with stakeholder processes has created a lot of learning and movement in a positive direction. This has happened at several levels, including among landholders (e.g. the Nuwejaars SMA), through ABIOC level (e.g. example Department of Agriculture adjusting

priorities to fit in with ABI goals) and more broadly (e.g. Flower Valley and CapeNature incrementally improving flower certification).

However, adaptive management is a rigorous process that includes setting objectives, formulating a hypothesis to address this, implementation, monitoring, review and reflection at the activity, hypothesis and objective levels of analysis. Strictly speaking ABI is learning incrementally through trial-and-error, and only very loosely following an Adaptive Management Process. Adaptive Management was not specifically designed into the log-frame, which lacks a development hypothesis, does not define clear monitoring goals, and is not really used adaptively.

5.10 RISK MANAGEMENT

5.10.1 Were problems/constraints, which impacted on successful delivery of the project identified at the project design stage and subsequently as part of the Mid Term Evaluation (MTE)?

ABI was generally perceived to be a low risk project. The 2009 PIR states that "there are no critical risks". As noted elsewhere, the design of ABI neglected the importance of cross-scale linkages so ABI was not generally equipped to manage external factors, including issues of replication and sustainability. One problem not identified was staff changes at both local level, but more importantly in project leadership position e.g. all four senior positions in SANParks were changed after ABI was formulated and did not participate in this process. A similar problem not identified was South Africa's skills gaps, with problems recruiting staff to lead outputs 3 and 4, and for economic consultancies in particular.

The project has resolved several interpersonal conflict issues with professional facilitation. However, the project had to resolve such problems amongst themselves, when light-touch outside support from would have greatly facilitated resolution of such issues.

5.10.2 Were there new threats/risks to project success that emerged during project implementation?

Project sustainability and replication is highly dependent on SANParks. However, when SANParks lost grant funding for protected area expansion, this placed a large question over SANParks long term commitment to off-reserve management. SANParks is not against this, but perceive that they have an unfunded mandate in this regard.

Exchange rate risks were not identified in the Project document, and reduced project expenditure. Macro-economic risks, too, were not identified. The slowdown of the global economy may well have affect tourism growth rates. Hosting of the soccer world cup has also affected government capacity. SANParks' off-reserve and reserve expansion programmes, and therefore ABI, are victims of these macro-economic issues.

During the project life span, ABI has dealt with two major fires and a flood. These have not caused significant risks, with ABI playing an important role in ameliorating the negative employment effects of the 2006 fire.

Climate change is an important emerging risk. Through the BMU project ABI has addressed:

- adaptation to climate change through capital investment in wildlife and tourism,
- securing of natural habitats through improvements and investment in alient clearing, fire management and wetland rehabilittion.

Importantly, ABI has initiated experiments in developing secondary industry to create a sustainable income stream from alien clearing, in renewable energy to fund off-reserve management, and in the use of the products of alien clearing to restore wetlands (i.e. bio-logs)

ABI dealt well with the risk of fire, took advantage of BMU funding to address the emerging challenge of climate change, and as a Project has the intention to address issues of sustainability and replication. However, sustainability and replication are outside the control of ABI and are not appropriately dealt with.

5.11 WERE RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE MTE ADDRESSED?

At least 70% of recommendations from the MTE were addressed. The MTE was used to develop a workplan to address these problems. Two failures were that the recommendation to work more closely with local authorities was affected by instability within them, and that recommendations for using the log-frame process as a tool for participatory adaptive management (using a facilitator) were not taken up. We must note however, that implementing the BMU absorbed much of the Projects administrative capacity and this affected follow through.

5.12 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

5.12.1 Assessment of national level involvement and perception

The policy framework needed to manage the PA system effectively, and ensure its integration within core development strategies, may be inadequate. This hampers the integration of PA under different management categories and ownership regimes (such as co-management, different tenure regimes) into a common framework to meet national goals. This may be compounded by the lack of a robust management and operational planning system, measures to distill and disseminate knowledge to improve systems, and weak public acceptance of the development function of PA systems.

Highly centralized PA administration tends to cause a disconnect between management and needs on the ground. Institutional arrangements for PA governance may be complex with overlapping mandates between different institutions. These complexities impede the definition of clear goals and standards, increase costs and reduce efficiencies. The (non) alignment of legislation under which different agencies and authorities operate, complicated delivery by ABI.

5.12.2 Partnerships and Planning Arrangements

As noted, ABI succeeded in bringing many government and non-government partners together, implementing activities largely through informal local arrangements. ABI also influenced the development of planning processes, including collective conservation through the SMA which is being more widely considered by SANParks, and Area-Wide Planning by the Department of Agriculture.

6 PROJECT RESULTS

6.1 APPROACH TO EVALUATING RESULTS

ABI is a complex multi-stakeholder program. The project has made very good progress towards meeting its objective, and most of the objective indicators will be largely met, completely met, or exceeded.

It has also delivered a significant number of positive unintended benefits that project conceptualization did not foresee. Many of these are related to stakeholder process and institutional rationalization.

The evaluation is complicated by three factors:

- important outcomes are not included in Project Conceptualization and especially in the Project Log-Frame. Key amongst these are stakeholder/ institutional processes and project management.
- there are inconsistencies in the design of the log-frame, including poorly formulated objective statements, weak indicators and Means of Verification.
- the scope of the Project has grown over time, in a very positive direction. The Project was envisaged as a practical approach to conserving critical biodiversity on the Agulhas Plain. It is increasingly recognised as an important experiment in new forms of Protected Area Management. Thus the 2009 PIR notes that the "project would pilot new management measures and institutional arrangements for conservation at a sub-regional level, tied closely to the activities of the productive sectors and rooted in decentralised governance frameworks".

ABI has gone well beyond its initial aims, and this progress needs to be recognized explicitly. Further, given the weak log-frame, ABI is unlikely to have worked had it not informally moved well beyond this conceptualization. The regular PIRs follow the narrow conceptualization of ABI, and consequently significantly under-report Project achievements. To rectify this, considerable effort has been invested in populating the Project Results Matrix (Annex 1). This requires adding outcomes related to (1) stakeholder processes, (2) institutional rationalization and (3) project management. A number of missed opportunities are also included in the Project Results Matrix status column to shed further light on Project Design and Implementation. The Project Results Matrix is the most comprehensive listing of project achievements so far available.

6.2 OVERALL RATING OF AGULHAS BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVE

ABI is a complex multi-dimensional Project, so the TE rates progress in terms of whether path breaking work was made rather than in the more simplistic manner of whether the project had shortcomings. Defining HS as having no shortcomings is not very useful. It is more useful to define HS as a situation where the project actually pushes conceptual and implementation boundaries to a new level (Table 19).

Rating	Definition of UNDP Ratings as defined in C.A.P.E TE	Definition of Rating Used in ABI TE
 Highly Satisfactory (HS): Satisfactory (S): Moderately Satisfactory (MS): Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): Unsatisfactory (U): Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): 	 No shortcomings Minor shortcomings Moderate shortcomings Significant shortcomings Major shortcomings Severe shortcomings 	 Pathbreaking progress made Excellent progress made Adequate progress made Progress should have been better Major shortcomings Severe shortcomings

Although difficult to apply simplistic ratings to a project with as much complexity and dimensions as ABI, an overall rating of ABI against best practice is provided in Table 20. This suggests that:

- Project design was exceptional is some aspects (e.g. quality of environmental and environmental threat assessments) but weak in others (economics, governance).
- The Log-Frame is problematic. Outputs are not intellectually consistent. Indicators are weak and do not reflect the budget and implementation plan.
- The inclusion of stakeholders in the implementation of the Project allowed enormous progress. This was not the case in the expert-driven project formulation stage.
- The attainment of outcomes and objectives (assessed in detail in the next sections) is uneven but generally competent or exceptional
- The contribution of ABI towards pushing the boundaries of conservation practice in South Africa is exceptional, but not recorded if assessed by the Log-Frame. External factors, however, prevent the uptake of these lessons at higher levels.

Table 20: Overall Rating of ABI including Conceptualization, Implementation and Broader Impact

Project concept and design		
Understanding of ecological processes		
Understanding of economic processes	MS	
Understanding of stakeholder processes	MU	
Understanding of governance processes	MU	
Budget	S/HS	
Implementation plan	S/HS	
Log-Frame	U	
Stakeholder participation in project formulation	MU	
Implementation approach		
Addressing ecological processes		
Addressing economic processes	U	
Addressing stakeholder process		
Addressing governance processes	MU	
Monitoring and evaluation	U	
Stakeholder participation		
Attainment of Outcomes and achievement of Objective		
Relevance, Effectiveness and Sustainability	S/HS	

6.3 ATTAINMENT OF PROJECT OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES

According to the UNDP Principal Technical Advisor (see 2009 PIR), "the Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (ABI) Project was designed to incorporate land on the Agulhas Plain into the Protected Area System. The Plain lies in the Cape Floristic Region—a globally significant, yet highly vulnerable, repository of biodiversity. One of the biologically richest, yet most threatened vegetation types in the CFR, lowland fynbos, is found in the Plain. The threats facing this region include habitat clearance for agriculture, wetland drainage, the uncontrolled spread of alien invasive trees and human induced fire. The latter two threats are likely to be exacerbated by climate change. Less than 5 % of the CFR is afforded protection in the Protected Area estate. Much of the land on the Agulhas Plain is under private land ownership; the project has addressed that challenge by purchasing land for a core PA, and entering into management compacts with adjacent land owners to create a complementary network of privately administered PAs".

Table 21 summarizes the performance of ABI against its objective statements (i.e., purpose, outputs). The Consultant is obliged to rate the Project against the Project Log-Frame as the primary evaluative tool. In this case, this is intellectually questionable because the Log-Frame is seriously flawed. It:

- Does not reflect the project Conceptualization as described in the Project Document, including the budget and workplan (which is what implementers followed, not least because of problems in the log-frame).
- Does not reflect the higher goals attributed to the Project by many stakeholders including the UNDP Principal Technical Advisor.
- The project is highly likely to have failed had it followed the log-frame, which omits key processes including (1) management and (2) stakeholder processes.
- •

To fulfill the ToR obligation, the Project is scored here using a single rating. A more nuanced appraisal is provided in Annex 7.

<u>Purpose</u>. **S** At the purpose level, ABI has been S in developing new models for conservation landscapes. It would have been rated HS if conceptualization implementation had focused more attention to developing socio-economic aspects of conservation landscapes, to field-level monitoring of performance (not included in log-frame), and to securing a supportive macro-governance support (not included in log-frame)

There has been important unanticipated progress in stakeholder approaches and institutional rationalization at local level. Several stakeholders stated that ABI has moved agendas that were mainly "green" to include agendas that were developmental or "brown"; in other words, ABI has begun to mainstream biodiversity on the Agulhas Plain. However, weakness in Project design, and especially weaknesses in linking experiential learning at the micro scale (i.e. ABI) to the evolution of macro-level policy processes and personnel (including SANParks), meant that many potential gains have been neither formalized nor scaled up.

The overall (and very positive) assessment is that stakeholders and landholders are buying into the Vision of "ABI as One Big Conservation Area" at all levels, and are responding to this on-the-ground, although operational practicalities still need to be adaptively developed and tested.

<u>Outcome 1.</u> **HS** The anticipated results from output 1 (landscape level conservation management planning system) have been S/HS. Progress has exceeded expectations, especially the emergence of collective stakeholder action which was not envisaged by the Project Document.

<u>Outcome 2</u> HS (sustainable flower harvesting) was well conceptualized, implemented with passion and tenacity, and has made cutting-edge progress in harvesting, establishing standards, and developing markets. This output is one the Project can be particularly proud of, and is rated **HS**. Although done really well, this is not to say that a stronger focus on economics (capacity in natural resource economics seems to be a skills gap in South Africa) and great stakeholder involvement in certification might not have resulted in even stronger results.

<u>Outcome 3</u> U (responsible tourism and sustainable livelihoods) was poorly conceptualized, not prioritized in implementation, and although some progress was made (especially recently), this was an opportunity lost. Rating U.

<u>Outcome 4</u> MU (increased local support for conservation through an awareness program) was also poorly conceptualized, not prioritized in implementation, but contributed in many small ways including some excellent programs (e.g. Ecoschools). At a conceptualization and task level, and particularly in regard to a stand-alone awareness activity, this is rated **MU**.

However, overall ABI has had the effect of mainstreaming conservation (but not through the activities under outcome 4). At the purpose level, therefore, "local support for conservation" it is rated **HS** given that 48% of the area is under conservation management, an additional two SMAs are being initiated by landholders, and ratepayers and municipalities are increasingly prioritizing conservation.

Table 21: Summary: Ratings of Project Outcomes and Achievements¹⁶

Objective Statement	Dating
Objective Statement	Kating
Purpose: Biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on the Agulhas	S
Plain are significantly enhanced through effective management and coordinated	
stakeholder involvement	
• Landscape conservation (HS) 48% of the Agulhas Plain is now under some form of conservation management	
• Park management and consolidation (S) has been effective, with state, provincial municipal Protected Areas covering 30% of the area.	
• Off-reserve conservation is proceeding far more rapidly than expected (HS), is developing new institutional models, and is formally conserving 19% of the area.	
• However, systematic monitoring of biodiversity outcomes is not in place (U)	
• Employment (S). Some 2,500 people are employed in the bio-experience economy,	
mainly tourism, expanding by 30% during the Project lifespan. There are an additional	
250 in expanded public works program, with ABI coordination bringing in considerable	
funding for this (e.g. R12m after 2006 fire, BMU project, etc.) 150 permanent jobs	
created through sustainable flower harvesting, and likely to expand if new pack sheds are successful	
• Stakeholder coordination (HS) at ABI level is highly satisfactory, but reliant on personal	
relationships (MS).	
Outcome 1: A Landscape Level conservation management and planning system is	Highly

¹⁶ In the Final Draft TE, two outcomes were added to this summary rating of project outcomes and achievements. The project succeeded largely because of its (unplanned) emphasis on stakeholder processes. It is also usual for a Log-Frame to include Project Management as an outcome. At the request of UNDP these have been removed to provide a rating consistent with the usual practice of a TE and the Log-Frame that informs it. However, both are critical to the success of the project, and the original comments can be found in Annex 7.

	17
established by public private partnerships negotiated by a well capacitated extension	Satisfactory ¹⁷
service	
• A total area of 169,699 ha (48% of Agulhas Plain) is in some form of protection (see	
above). $(2740 + 660161) + 660 + 1000000000000000000000000000000$	
• 44% (2,749 out of 6,216 ha) of five prioritized vegetation types is jurisdictionally	
and needs to be reassassed	
and needs to be reassessed.	
• 80% of important ecosystem processes conserved compared to 18% at Project Start (HS) • 74.547ha of aliana have been alagred 161% of initial targets (HS) ADI apardination of	
• 74,547ha of alleris have been cleared, 101% of initial targets (HS). ABI cool difficult of this output has accessed significant additional funding through extended public works	
programs and the BMU project. There are questions about effectiveness of current alien	
clearing approach and ABI is developing new technical and institutional solutions	
• A well capacitated and integrated conservation-agriculture extension service is in place	
led by Department of Agriculture (HS). SANParks will no longer support off-reserve	
extension and CapeNature's resources to do so are limited (US). New mechanisms (e.g.	
sector associations) may need to be developed to fill these gaps	
• Systems for integrating landscape management are emerging through collective action at	
the landholder level (e.g. Conservancies) and by linking farm planning into municipal	
planning and zoning systems (S).	
• The South African planning and legal frameworks are complicated, hard to follow and	
time consuming. The efficacy of planning and associated costs has not been	
convincingly demonstrated. There is a significant risk that conservation is captured by	
legal/planning compliance (the added value of which is not clear) at the expense of on-	
the-ground conservation outcomes	
• The absence of systematic monitoring system for biodiversity and socio-economic	
Outcomes is a weakness of the project (US)	II ahla
Outcome 2: Ecologically, socially and economically sustainable narvesting of who fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land-use on Agulhas Plain	nigiliy Satisfactory
• Employment doubled to 150 families in pack sheds and sustainable barvesting on	Satisfactory
30 000ha. This is supported by multi-faceted conservation/life-skills training and ethical	
labour management procedures (HS).	
• Preferential retail outlets developed in UK and South Africa increasing payments to	
flower-pickers six-fold (R0.5 to R3.3 by $2007/8$) and turnover to R13m ($2007/8$) (S).	
• Potential doubling of the above through new sustainable/ethical business emerging out of	
Flower Valley (Better Flower Company)	
• Comprehensive research on sustainable use flower harvesting incorporated into Codes of	
Practice, adopted in CapeNature permiting processes, certification accepted in principle	
by Protea Producers South Africa (HS)	
• Financial and economic questions about the long term viability of fynbos harvesting, and	
removal of economic barriers to progress, inadequately addressed (US)	
• Sustainability at risk because of viability of development partners such as Cape Nature	
and FVCT	
Outcome 3: A participatory and responsible tourism strategy is implemented in the	Marginally
Aguinas Plain and contributes to sustainable livelihoods.	Satisfactory
• This output was neglected by PIU, exacerbated by poor formulation of output and failure of SANDarka to adocutely staff this position (US)	
• Developed Cane Agulhas Tourism Development Framework - Devision of Dian for	
• Developed Cape Aguinas Tourism Development Framework. Revision of Fram for Lighthouse / Southern Most Point Precinct Market research and branding envisaged in	
the Project Document was not implemented except for the useful. Agulhas Tourism Man	
(US).	
• Good work on a number of useful projects by mid-level personnel has been useful (S)	
• Staffing and conceptualization has gone nowhere near achieving this goal and lacked	
capacity to pioneer opportunities to 'flip' the region into a bio-experience economy, or to	
develop PES models (US).	
• Reformulation following MTE is building economic studies on tourism and willingness	

¹⁷ There is a caveat. Legal compliance of the SMA as formal protected area is awaiting the Minister's signature (and is an external factor), but conservation is written into title deeds and is an objectives of landholders.

 to pay for responsible tourism into a stakeholder process to develop a tourism strategy. Incomplete at time of TE, but appears adequately conceptualized and well supported (S) Efficacy of tourism forums waxed and waned over Project lifespan, and ABI is now supporting the newly established Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau which appears both stable and competent (S). Fragmented growth of tourism in the absence of a collective vision is threatening its potential on the Agulhas Plain and it is important that CATB resolves these issues. 	
• The number of companies rated as Fair Trade has increased from 1 to 5, with several	
leading examples recognized in national and international awards (S)	
• Persistent efforts to include Historically Disadvantaged People in ecotourism proved challenging, but a number of positive examples have emerged (S)	
• Monitoring of tourism economics and employment uses results from key tourism entry	
points but remains inadequate (US)	
• Overall, rated marginally satisfactory because ABI has done a fair job on a poorly	
conceived project component with many external factors	
Outcome 4. Increased local support for biodiversity conservation in the Agulhas Plain	
is generated through a broad-based conservation awareness program.	Marginally
• At a task level this output was neglected by PIU, exacerbated by poor formulation of	Unsatisfactory ¹⁸
output and failure of SANParks to adequately staff this position. Good work on a	
number of useful projects, the contribution of which to the larger vision was not always	
clear (U)	
• The indicator for "positive coverage" in the project document defines neither the target	
audience nor the anticipated message. ABI has nevertheless developed adequate	
promotional materials including books, newsletters, websites and press releases (S)	
• The highly participatory nature in which ABI's has implemented all components has	
resulted in widespread buy-in to project objectives by conservation agencies, planning	
agencies and Municipanties, Agriculture, farmers and local communities, nence the	
integrating conservation objectives into the mindsets and activities of municipalities	
rate payer associations landholders and educators many of which were predisposed	
ratepayer associations, randholders, and educators, many or which were predisposed	
towards conservation (HS)	
towards conservation (HS) • Flower Valley integrated conservation into 18 Ecoschools, and Junior Landcare and Kids	

In summary, the project has made very good progress towards meeting its objectives, and most of the objective indicators will be largely met, completely met, or exceeded. Key achievements include:

- The consolidation of Agulhas National Park and assoicated management systems
- The investment in developing a sustainable flower harvest business in the area including the certification for sustainable harvesting for flower pickers;
- The manual clearance of 87,250 hectares of invasive and highly combustible alien species
- The stengthing of fire prevention measures on the Plain;
- The testing and development of new models of off-reserve conservation and of linkages between state and private conservation. This development of stakeholder driven collective action is a new form of conservation approach. This includes the Nuwejaars Wetland Land Owners Association's (NWLOA) binding commitment to conservation management of their land, with breakthroughs in collective land management, constitution development, legal mechanims for including conservation objectives in title deed restrictions, and in testing the process of obtaining formal Protected Area status

¹⁸ This rating applies to the outcome and its activities. Interestingly, despite this outcome being badly designed and not being prioritized in the budget and implementation, ABI as a whole has contributed to the mainstreaming of biodiversity on the Agulhas Plain (see Annex 7). This should be a purpose level indicator.

through Section S29(1)(b) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (NEMPAA 57/2003), SANParks and the Minister of Environment. However, the value of these legal and administrative processes needs to be questioned at a policy level.

6.4 EVALUATION OF OUTPUTS

6.4.1 A Comment on the Methodology Used in the Detailed Evaluation of Outputs

Project stakeholders are managing and reporting on the Project using level 4 objectives (i.e. activities). They are also strategically and intuitively moving towards a larger Vision for ABI than envisaged in the Project Log-Frame, albeit mentioned in the Project Document and PIRs. Further, ABI deserves to be held up against a much wider intellectual analysis and best practice to guard agaist the narrow interpretation of performance that a weak log-frame provides, especially important issues like governance and land use economics. As noted, this puts the Reviewer in considerable difficulties because the objectives set out in the project narrative, log-frame, understanding of the project by managers at all levels, and best practice, are not consistent – against which set of objectives should performance be judged?

One result is that important achievements that are not captured by the PIR (which reflects the logframe) which consequently under-reports progress. To counter this, considerable effort was made to populate the Project results Matrix (Annex 1). Further, the TE recognizes the weaknesses in the Log-Frame and also reports ABI achievements against the Project Narrative, emerging understanding of ABI by those associated with the project (e.g. in the PIR), and best practice.

However, ABI:

- Developed New Models for Conservation
- Was effective because of its emphasis on and investment in stakeholder processes
- Initiated an important, if informal, process of institutional rationalization

These are enormously important contributions, have been critical to the success (even survival of ABI), but are not reflected in Project Outcomes. They are discussed at some length in Annex 6, sections 5.10-5.12.

(a) New models of conservation

The MTE noted that progress towards developing "new models of conservation" was highly satisfactory but further could be advance by:

- More imaginative partnerships with landholders,
- Continuing to develop a common vision amongst all landholders and eventually institutionalizing this vision,
- Investing in efforts to demonstrate that ecosystem conservation can pay, e.g. through financial/technical support to Nuwejaars Wetland SMA
- Experimentation with payments for environmental services (landholders suggest that even simply recognizing their contribution would be a considerable incentive)

Continued investment in stakeholder relationships, and especially the ability of ABI and UNDP to source Euro 2m from the BMU for the SMA, contributed to first three points, but no progress was made on PES.

(b) Stakeholder processes

In interviews, a consensus emerged that ABI's greatest achievement (not emphasized in the Project document) was bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders towards an integrated Vision of landscape conservation. See Annex 6, Section 5.11.

(c) Organizational and Institutional rationalization

At the level of ABI, stakeholder processes have led to significant organizational cooperation and rationalization (but these have not been formalized, nor have the lessons from ABI been scaled up to inform a national approach). See Annex 6, Section 5.12

6.4.2 Purpose: Enhancing biodiversity and socio-economic development on Agulhas Plain

The Project was designed to incorporate land on the Agulhas Plain into the Protected Area System. Much of the land on the Agulhas Plain is under private land ownership. The State has traditionally established PAs through the purchase of land but realized in the case of the Agulhas Plain, as in many other parts of the country, that the costs of doing so would be prohibitive. The project has addressed the challenge by establishing a core PA through land purchase, and entering into management compacts with adjacent land owners with the aim of creating a complementary network of privately administered protected areas. Given that the lands targeted for the creation of PAs are production lands, or have potential for production, the project is seeking to develop incentives for conservation compatible livelihoods. Two opportunities in particular have been pursued, namely wild flower harvests and, more recently, nature tourism. The project has continued to make very good progress towards meeting its objective, "Biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on the Agulhas Plain are significantly enhanced through effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement".

(a) Securing land for conservation

Figure 3 illustrates the effectiveness of ABI in protected land through a complex mosaic of conservation categories. Fully 49% of the ABI area is under some form of conservation arrangement (

Table 22). These data clearly illustrate that ABI has been successful at securing land for conservation.

Thirty percent (30%) of Agulhas is protected by <u>state agencies</u> including SANParks, CapeNature, Municipalities and the Overberg Test Range. Agulhas National Park is 60% established, and the management plan was finalized (an initial non-participatory process meant it was rejected by stakeholders, but these issues have been resolve d positively). Slow development of Park infrastructure is retarding tourism sector

Nineteen percent (19%) of Agulhas is protected through <u>private land arrangements</u> including Private Nature Reserves, Conservancies, the SMA and title deed restrictions. There are currently a further three areas of private land interested in this collective natural resource management covering some 60,000 hectares. Several landholders are doing conservation outside of any formal conservation arrangements, including clearing aliens and restocking wildlife.

One of the most significant achievements has been the conclusion of an agreement with the Nuwejaars Wetland Land Owners Association NWLOA (that includes the Elim local community) to make a binding commitment to conservation management of their land and including a written constitution and management plan. The 23 landowners of the Nuwejaars Wetland Land Owners Association have signed a legally binding agreement about the sustainable management of their land. Additional contractual agreements have been concluded with another individual land owner and a company to consolidate the Agulhas National Park sea shore. Management agreements have also been concluded with two state institutions (for the lighthouse and Overberg Test range). Four new arrangements for stewardship arrangements have been made with the private sector.

Several of the new PAs including the Nuwejaars Wetland Special Management Area have yet to be formally gazetted as protected areas; efforts are underway to complete the gazettement, which should be concluded by the end of the project (the landowners have however placed restrictions on land use on their title deeds—demonstrating their strong commitment to conservation).



Figure 3: Map of areas under formal conservation

Table 22: Summary of formally conserved land on Agulhas Plain

Name of Area	Area (ha)	
Agulhas National Park	23,404	
Provincial Protected Areas	41,595	
Overberg Test Range	31,793	
Local Authority Reserves	2,283	
Akkedisberg Conservancy	8,603	
Blinkwater Conservancy	514	
De Diepegat Conservancy	5,051	
Kleinriviersberg Conservancy	4,585	
Napier Conservancy	2,827	
Private Nature Reserves	6,704	
Nuwejaars SMA	24,401	
Solitaire Conservancy	3,609	
Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy	6,330	
TOTAL	161,699 ¹⁹	
State Conservation Area(30%)	99,075	
Private Conservation Area (19%)	62,624	
Total Area of ABI	333,658	

Categories of Protected Land

<u>Contractual Parks</u> (the Agulhas National Park includes: land contracted from National Ports Authority at the Lighthouse; part of the Rietfontein farm is contracted with original landowners).

<u>Management Agreements on Public Land</u> (Overberg Test Range, Bredasdorp Municipality Nature Reserve Heuningberg),

<u>Conservancies</u> (Akkedisberg, Blinkwater, De Diepegat, Kleinriversberg, Napier, Solitare, Walker Bay)

Private Nature Reserve (Tsaba Tsaba)

<u>Special Management Area or Protected Natural</u> <u>Environment</u> (Nuwejaars Wetland)

¹⁹ This data is incomplete. Not all the data on the extent of nature reserves and other stewardship arrangements are recorded.

(b) Securing key vegetation types

Figure 4 illustrates the vegetation types prioritized for protection by the Project document. This is an area of exceptionally high regional biodiversity with over 1,750 species including 23% regional endemics, 5.7% endemic to the Agulhas Plain and 112 Red Data Book species. TABI prioritized five types of fynbos that occur predominantly on private land and in the central Agulhas Plain (Figure 4). Overall, some 44% of this is protected against a target of 80% (Table 23). However, there is no evidence that the areas that are not formally protected are threatened, indeed the opposite is true – some landholders are actively conserving fynbos regardless of legal arrangements. Monitoring includes only the conservation status (protected or not) rather than the actual health of the fynbos, a concern also noted in the MTE. However, on-reserve fynbos was not included in the Project Document and is not monitored in the PIR.

The original conservation targets were based on the cadastral areas in which this fynbos was present. More detailed information on the exactly extent of fynbos was developed as part of the Bioregional planning process and these indicators were consequently updated to reflect the real area of natural vegetation. Much better mapping is now available to assess conservation status.



Figure 4: Map showing threatened vegetation types and protection of this

	Total	Protected at Start	Protected	Percent
Renoster fynbos	281	-	281	100%
Elim fynbos	4,170	-	1,179	28%
Renosterveld	281	-	777	277%
Renoster grassland	1.8	-		0%
Elim transitional fynbos	1,482	-	512	35%
	6,216		2,749	44%
(c) Securing landscape processes

The Agulhas Plain contains some of the largest remaining areas of contiguous indigenous lowland vegetation in the Cape Floristic Region. It is assumed that this enables key functional processes to be maintained on the Plain, whereas in other lowland regions vegetation remnants are isolated islands vulnerable to the collapse of functional processes. Consequently, ABI prioritized the creation of a number of different corridor types and significant progress has been made in this regard. The Project made considerable progress in protecting the land that the Project document identified as being critical to maintain ecosystem processes. This included protecting:

- 67km of waterways (edaphic interface),
- much of the Nuwejaars catchment and floodplain which is an important feature of the Agulhas Plain. Wetland rehabilitation includes SANParks (working to clear aliens outside protected areas unusually), SANBI investing in gabions to protected headcuts and restore flow, the SMA (with German funding) clearing aliens and using bio-logs to recover scoured rivers and redevelop peat lost in the 2005 floods, and experiments in the upper catchment with charcoal production.
- two corridors supposedly to allow the movement of wildlife across ecological gradients (Figure 5),
- two areas supposedly large enough to enable meso-predators (caracal, jackal), and
- a sand corridor. In the sand corridor the exotics that had been used to stabilise the sand dunes were cleared (by Working for Water and by CoastCare) because they blocked the flow of rivers into the ocean, for instance to keep the mouth at de Mond open.

A map of the faunal corridors along North-South altitudinal gradients and an East-West coastal corridors is provided to illustrate Project thinking (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Map of important faunal corridors



The Project Document prioritized the protection of five ecosystem processes in seven areas. Table 24 shows that the geographic protection of these processes has increased from 18% to 88% during the Project.

Ecosystem Process	Target	Protected at Start	Status	Percent
Edaphic interface	53	-	67	126%
Quaternary catchment (G50C)	42,116	336	34,251	81%
E-W Faunal Corridor	10,422	-	5,005	48%
N-S faunal corridor	9,181	-	7,117	78%
Die Dam meso predator habitat	15,000	-	8,625	58%
Haasvlakte meso predetor habitat	15,000	16,806	26,925	180%
Brandfontein/De mond sand corridor	1,794	-	602	34%
Area Protected	93,566	17,142	82,592	86%
Percent protected		18%	88%	

Table 24: Summary of important ecosystem processes conserved

The Project document neither described not makes provision for a technical plan reflecting the objective "wetland ecosystems recovered to restore natural hydrological systems", although there is reference to experimenting with rehabilitation in one catchment. After many decades of habitat modification for agriculture, including draining, alien infestation and other changes, wetland rehabilitation is a massive (and insufficiently planned or funded) undertaking. SANBI has been requested to provide a wetland recovery plan, has provided guidance for one tributary, and has also invested in restoring head cuts caused by the 2005 floods using rock gabions. Both SANParks, and Nuwejaars SMA (through BMU funding) are clearing aliens. The later is testing innovative means to use the by-products of aliens using bio-logs made of wood chips to recover watercourses and re-create peat beds.

(d) Addressing alien infestation

One of the key threats to biodiversity on the Agulhas Plain is invasive alien plants. These were introduced to stabilize dunes and also accidentally, and are particularly dense in key wetlands and coastal dune corridors. Aliens exacerbate the impact of wildlife as they are flammable and increase fuel loads. They also impact the functioning of wetlands, exacerbating flooding, failing to protect soil during flooding, and reducing water production.

Some R40-60m was spent clearing 87,235 ha of alien vegetation (Table 25). This including R12m (half through CapeNature and half through Municipalities) to create jobs following the 42,664ha fire in 2006 which put many flower pickers out of work. ABI was instrumental in accessing these funds by bringing stakeholders together and making the case to municipalities (R6m) and CapeNature (6m) that post-fire was an opportune time for additional clearing both on technical grounds and to provide alternative employment to flower picking teams displaced by the fire. A further R11m was raised for a climate/ carbon adaptation project and ABI's ability to access the BMU funding.

There is no technical consensus on what is "cleared". Current policy includes an initial clearing plus two follow ups, but several interviewees suggests that aliens still came back even when cleared regularly over a 30 year period. Experimentation in the Walker Bay Conservancy (R2.2m) partially funded through ABI, however, suggests that if clearing is done immediately following fire and combined with herbicide it can work. However, the majority of funding for alien clearing are job-creation programmes like Working for Water which are seldom linked to burning programs. Although it is increasingly apparent that alien clearing and fire management need to be linked, fire authorities are also reluctant to issue burning permits because of the high risks associated with

combustible exotics and high winds. In addition to the Walker Bay experiment ABI and partners are experimenting with secondary industries that can generate a financial return from alien clearing so that clearing programs can be sustained.



Figure 6: Map of areas cleared of invasive alien plants

Table 25: Summar	y of extent	t of invasive	aliens and	l clearing o	of them
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Clearing of Alien	Status and	d Targets		Overall			
Vegetation	Extent in Clearing		Treated	Treated	Total	Percent	percent
	2000	Target	without fire	with fire		of target	cleared
High	45,681	22,841	5,117	5,613	10,730	47%	23%
Moderate	36,172	10,852	6,346	4,823	11,169	103%	31%
Low	250,613	12,531	38,313	27,023	65,336	521%	26%
Total	332,466	46,223	49,776	37,459	87,235	189%	26%

However, there is no still no technical consensus whether clearing works, and the costs are prohibitive with landholder generally reluctant to participate without significant subsidization given that many of the benefits such as biodiversity conservation and improved water supply are public goods. Walker Bay Conservancy is working with the ABI Alien Clearing Working Group to incorporate its experience in CapeNature's guidelines "Using Fire as an Alternative to Labour Intensive Methods". Using BMU funding, the SMA is experimenting with the development of secondary industries to generate income from alien clearing in an attempt to make it financially viable. This includes a charcoal factory (funded by Province and CSIRO) and alternative wind/energy units whereby wineries pay for the electricity generated thus providing the SMA with a long-term revenue stream.

(e) Reducing unplanned wildfires

Fire is a complex issue. Although the flora in the CFR is adapted to fire, and many species require fire to reproduce, most species cannot withstand frequent, hot fires, and if too frequent fires prevents seeding of slower growing plants such as proteases. It can also cause extensive damage to human infrastructure and livelihoods of resident communities in the area, including those engaged in the harvest of wild flowers.

The Project has worked with local Governments to strengthen the fire prevention service in the Agulhas Plain. This has involved the manual clearance of invasive and highly combustible alien trees—with funds sourced from a South Africa Public Investment Program, known as Working for Water. This also protects biodiversity and provides employment ABI, supplemented by BMU funding, assisted municipalities to equip and train fire prevention units. While improving through ABI's stakeholder efforts, fire control is hampered by what can be done on whose land (e.g. firebreaks) when a collective landscape approach would be more effective.

Since ABI, there have been two massive wildfires, burning 46,000 ha in 2006 and some 16,000 ha in December 2009 including 67% of Agulhas National Park.

Collaboration engendered by ABI in response to the 2006 fire raised R12m which was used to clear invasive alien species and the workforce that lost their flower picking income, while Flower Valley developing product lines that used burned flowers in the market. A number of single institution approaches were made to Provincial and National Government, but only the collaborative approach coordinated by ABI was able to the mobilization of more than 1R2 million to create employment to remove alien plants.

(f) Benefiting historically disadvantaged families

The baseline data and monitoring for tracking employment (which should be an indicator at the Development Objective level because it is outside the direct control of the Project) are weak. However, there is no doubt that the bio-experience economy is creating jobs, including some 1,150 families picking flowers, an additional 150 families employed through the Flower Valley sustainable fynbos harvesting initiative, 250 families through extended public works program with additional jobs post the 2006 fire (R12m) and in the Nuwejaars SMA (R11m), and an estimated 2,500 jobs in tourism.

6.4.3 Outcome 1: Landscape level conservation, planning, partnerships and extension *(a) Landscape conservation planning*

ABI played a critical role in creating bridges between CapeNature's Stewardship programme and the Department of Agriculture's Area Wide conservation approaches by demonstrating commonality of vision and implementation.

Considerable efforts have been invested in improving the quality and integration of planning. Plans have been developed for individual land units including Cape Agulhas National Park, Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy, Nuwejaars SMA and Elim community.

One of the Country's first Bio Regional Plans²⁰ was piloted in the area by SANParks and SANBI and greatly improved the mapping of biodiversity, especially for the Overberg. ABI has also been used to

²⁰ <u>Bioregional Plans</u> are essentially a fine scale map of biodiversity that is used as a point of reference for decision making at the municipal level. These need to be taken into consideration by law during the process of developing Spatial Development Framework and Integrated Development Plans. The latter circumscribe land

pilot fine-scale <u>Area Wide Planning</u> by the Department of Agriculture, a process that works up from the farmer. In addition, through the efforts of ABI, conservation objectives are included in the plans of the Overberg District Municipality and sub-municipalities like Cape Agulhas through their Spatial Development Framework and Integrated Development Plans.

The manner in which these plans are integrated is sometimes difficult to follow, given the number of overlapping initiatives, acronyms and authorities. A perusal of several plans (e.g. Nuwejaars SMA, and Cape Agulhas Municipality Strategic Development Framework) suggests that they are often highly complicated, difficult for implementers to follow, and do not set priorities or provided actionable plans and associated budgets. Moreover, the absence of sound information on economic options at individual and collective level is a significant impediment to their effectiveness.

Several interviewees have commented on the obsession with planning, suggesting that it has disproportionately eaten up staff capacity and questioned its added value. Perhaps planning itself needs to be planned, as an important forum for stakeholder integration, with an output in the form of simple, clear, actionable plans (not large, complex documents)²¹.

(b) Contractual parks

ABI highlights the potential for private land to contribute to South Africa's Protected Area Expansion Strategy given the financial constraints to the purchase of conventional state-owned protected areas. ABI has contributed greatly to protecting the Agulhas Landscape (see

development and use management. The <u>Spatial Development Framework</u> is a set of zones, maps, and directions for future growth. The <u>Integrated Development Plan</u> is essentially a listing of priority projects, and has important implications for public funding).

²¹ The Namibian CBNRM programme, for example, summarises planning objectives (e.g. zoning maps, log-frame-type outputs) on a single poster that is widely accessible, while the protected area agency in Zimbabwe provided each park with a 5 page policy document setting out key priorities.

Figure 3) but also to increased civic involvement in biodiversity conservation and improved cooperative governance at landscape level. ABI is also providing greater confidence in landholder-based protected area models, as reflected in changing attitudes and greater acceptance by conservation officials.

The Project assumed that ABI's off-reserve objectives would be pursued through formal Stewardship partnerships with CapeNature and SANParks. However, landholders were suspicious of arrangements that they considered impositional, and the tax and other incentives intended are insufficient to be effective. Instead, landholders designed their own collective conservation arrangements, including a number of Conservancies and the SMA. They have also placed conservation restrictions on land they own or have sold. This suggests that landholders have similar objectives to conservation agencies, and that a more collaborative and bottom-up approach in the design and formulation of off-reserve conservation arrangements may have been more effective.

The SMA has made an important contribution to the evolution of off-reserve models. The process required to achieve this is summarized in

Table 26:

Table 26: Activities to develop a Special Management Area

Activities and Transactions Costs Associated with Development of Special Management Area							
Activity	Date	Implementation	Cost (Rand)				
Constitution of the Nuwejaars Wetland Land Owners' Association ("NWLOA") + template of legal agreements amongst landholders	4 years	Lawyer (Smit)	212,000				
Development and Management Framework for the SMA	2007	Dennis Moss Associates	550,000				
Not-for-profit Section 21 Company, Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Nuwejaars River Nature Reserve;		standard shelf company	7,500				
A management plan for the proposed Protected Environment	2009	Planner (Davies)	163,000				
A Biodiversity Assessment conducted	Consultant (Euston- Brown, Coetzee)	90,985					
Draft final Regulations for the management of the PE		Lawyer (Smit)	313,529				
A Memorandum of Understanding between SANParks and the NWLOA dated 7 April 2010;	Lawyer (Smit)						
Notational restrictions on the title deeds on 121 title deeds relating to the 23 landholders in the program		Lawyer (Smit)					
TOTAL Cost			1.337.014				
This does not include substantial effort of ABI Coordinator, Manage	er, SMA Cha	air	_,,				
1. Drafting and registration of material agreements (servitudes in terr	ns of constit	tution)	89,000				
2. Land use agreements between landholders and SMA			17,100				
3. Funding agreement SANParks - SMA			26,250				
4. Application for Protected Area Status (MoU; meetings)			4,750				
5. Meetings and workshops			14,725				
6. Draft agreement between Minister and Management Authority			3,800				
7. Registration of title deed restrictions (in terms of Protected Enviro	nment status	5)	89,000				
8. Miscellaneous (meetings) 30,400							
VAT			38,504				
TOTAL			313,529				
Future costs have been considerably reduced by SANParks experience	ce in develop	ping Nuwejaars SMA, i	.e.:				
• Legal fees to register title deed restrictions - \$3-4,000/title c	leed						
Biodiversity assessment - could be done by SANParks, CapeNature							

This is now accompanied by a letter from SANParks CEO and from DEAT to the Minister to support the application by the SMA be declared a Protected Area in terms of Section 28(1) of the National Environmental Management Act: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003.

The SMA, supported by ABI and BMU funding, has worked through many of the legal and other bottlenecks to developing formalized, collective landholder protected areas. This capital investment (money and time) should greatly simplify further applications by SMAs.

However, we need to question the conservation effectiveness of these onerous, complex, and time consuming procedures which place few legal obligations on SANParks or the Government of South Africa. The high costs of declaring an area a Protected Environment are not offset by benefits like monitoring, regulation, payments for environmental services, technical advice, or reduced bureaucracy on biodiversity-based land-uses. The primary benefit appears to be the formal declaration itself. This raises the important question: do the ends justify the costs; is this worth it?

(c) Extension services

Extension services are important for sharing technical information across geographic and hierarchical scale. An Overberg Sustainable Development Integration Centre (OSDIC), as well as a Stakeholder planning forum, was established by ABI which shares offices with the Department of Agriculture. . The integration of extension services provided by SANParks and Department of Agriculture through the Bredarsdorp "Integration Center" has been extremely important for developing stakeholder relationships, and has also played a role in improving access to technical information about agricultural production, and important biodiversity areas.

A major impact of the project has been the establishment of a joint extension service between the two conservation bodies (SANParks and Cape Nature) and the Department of Agriculture. Most of the land in the Agulhas Plain is under private ownership and zoned for agriculture use under the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture. The joint extension service is currently overseeing 120,000 ha. Cooperation amongst and between different stakeholders and role players has increased significantly. The extension service has increased knowledge about biodiversity priorities and opportunities.

(d) Independent monitoring and data improving management decisions

The sharing of ideas in the forums facilitated by ABI has been important for improving management decisions and for integration across sectors. This includes reviewing management actions through the ABI reporting framework and ABIOC. However, quantitative data collection and monitoring is limited to the areas cleared of aliens, and to research conducted by Flower Valley. This is a significant weakness in the Project.

6.4.4 Outcome 2: Ecologically, socially and economically sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos demonstrated as a viable land-use on Agulhas Plain

This is one of the strongest aspects of the Project, and is described in some detail in the rest of this section. The investment in developing a sustainable flower harvest business is informative and deserving of analysis and publication (a recommendation of this TE).

(a) Overall results

The project worked through a local NGO, the Flower Valley Conservation Trust, and a private company set up to promote sustainable wild flower harvesting, FYNSA, to set up sustainable production and distribution systems and to secure market access for flowers harvested according to a strict code of conduct. FYNSA was able to secure access to large lucrative niche market outlets within the United Kingdom and South Africa for sustainable practices that do not entail the loss of biodiversity.

One hundred and fifty local families are benefitting from the job opportunities associated with the sustainable harvesting, sorting and packaging of the fynbos flowers. Flowers are being sourced from

private lands with a collective area of over 30,000 hectares and the income earned from the sale of flowers is providing an incentive for biodiversity conservation.

The certification for sustainable harvesting for flower pickers has been completed and seven suppliers have been trained and certified—to be able to sell flowers through FYNSA. The project has been unable to secure premium prices for sustainably harvested fynbos flowers; however, it has secured a direct sales market with retailers, reducing payments to middlemen. This has increased the returns at the farm level. These direct markets would not have materialized without the sustainable production and verification systems developed under the project. The code of practice for sustainably harvested wild flowers has been adopted by CapeNature, SANParks and the fynbos industry body. This means that most of the supply-side elements for the sustainable harvesting of fynbos wild flowers are now in place and more effort can be directed towards marketing and the demand-side. Markets pose a challenge during the current global financial crisis, as flowers are clearly within the luxury and optional goods sector of the market, and prices are likely to remain static for the time being.

(b) Historical background to the development of sustainable fybos harvesting

An expanded history of sustainable harvesting output is provided to emphasize the exceptional progress made through this output and how the development of science, standards and best practice in the sustainable harvesting industry was driven by Flower Valley and ABI. Moreover, this progress is not adequately reflect in the PIR, and a significant number of unrecorded accomplishments needed to be added to the Objectives/Outcomes matrix.

A scoping document on the flower industry developed by Sean Privett in 2003 and commissioned by the ABI preparation team identified opportunities for conservation and social development. At the time Flower Valley was purchased by Fauna and Flora International to save it from development as a vineyard and to experiment with translating and testing the challenges of ecologically, economically and socially sustainable use (developed largely in wildlife rich savannas) into the fynbos biome.

In the late 1980s prospects for biodiversity conservation on the Agulhas Plain were bleak²². Despite its extraordinarily rich biodiversity, by 1990 only 4% of the Agulhas Plain was formally conserved, and a comprehensive survey suggested that most harvesting was not sustainable (i.e. >50 % of inflorescence left on the plant) (Heydenrych 1999). Habitats previously thought to be marginal for cultivation were threatened by novel forms of land use including the cultivation of wildflowers and viticulture. In previously disadvantaged communities (i.e. Coloured and African groups) unemployment was rife, and white commercial farmers were facing economic hardships associated with the withdrawal of state subsidies for the production of certain commodities. These circumstances called for a new conservation approach that involved private landowners, disenfranchised local communities, and considerable innovation in the science and practice of a sustainable use approach. Consequently Flower Valley farm was purchased and developed by Flora & Fauna International and donated to Flower Valley Conservation Trust to:

- save a highly threatened site in the 'hottest' of global biodiversity hotspots,
- develop methodologies for invasive alien plant removal,
- develop and demonstrate the economic returns from conservation and emerging paradigm of sustainable use

²² This summary is extracted from the excellent history and analysis by, Sean Privett (2009) Flower Valley Review for the Arcadia Fund, Draft Report.

The broader goal was "to influence the use of land over the greatest possible area in the Cape Floral Kingdom such that the conservation of flora and fauna, especially fynbos vegetation, becomes an integral part of land use planning and practice".

(c) Developing certification

The strategy for influencing land use in the CFR was to develop the science, social responsibility, production systems and markets to develop sustainable fynbos flower harvesting as an important conservation mechanism including through a combination of standards and economic incentives. Harvesting of fynbos products for the cut flower industry was valued at about R178 million per annum in the year 2000. Over eight years, Flower Valley developed a niche market and demand for sustainably harvested, as against cultivated, fynbos products²³. It learned experientially using its own flower picking business on farms covering 20 000 hectares of the Agulhas Plain. In pursuit of an internationally recognized certification²⁴ or "green labeling" system, it developed a Code of Practice (COP) for sustainable harvesting, and incorporated this technical knowledge into the licensing system administered by CapeNature. Flower Valley developed an in-depth research programme to support this Code of Practice because information on impacts of harvesting on species and sustainability thresholds was virtually non-existent.

The certification of sustainably harvested fynbos envisaged in the Project Document proved very difficult. Flower Valley has developed considerable knowledge about certification in pursuit of this goal, and one of the recommendations of this TE is that these lessons are widely published through the peer review literature. While certification that incorporates environmental, labour and social practices are more generally available, FVCT partnered CapeNature to develop highly specialized local certification for fynbos-specific ecological/conservation parameters. This was accomplished as a pilot at the scale of seven suppliers to the Fynsa pack shed, but a process to roll out this certification to the industry is now in place.

The development of codes of practice for ethical, sustainable harvesting was driven by Flower Valley, with deep support from CapeNature at a time when the agency was suffering considerable budget and capacity difficulties. Based on effective research into the impact of harvesting on different fynbos guilds, inter-specific competition and long term monitoring of different levels of offtake, Flower Valley has developed:

- A code of practice for sustainable wild harvesting²⁵
- A vulnerability index was developed for 71 harvested species and 79 species with harvest potential ²⁶ (only 150 of some 2,000 species are commercially harvested)
- An online database Monitoring and Evaluating System has been piloted to track and analyse harvesting according to pickers, properties, species, etc.

²³ Income derived from cultivated fynbos can be far higher than flowers harvested in the wild (one hectare cultivated generates the same as 50 to 100 ha of natural vegetation). However, cultivation is negatively influencing the biodiversity of the region. Most cultivation replaces pristine fynbos; the production of cultivated species is also less labour intensive than wild flower harvesting, an important consideration in a region with unemployment of over 50%.

²⁴ Key requirements for certification would include strict harvesting techniques, road and fire management, alien plant control, payment of correct wages and provision of proper working conditions and housing

²⁵ Rodger Bailey (2009) Best Practice Guidelines for Sustainable Utilization of Indigenous Wild Fynbos Resources, Flower Valley Conservation Trust

²⁶ Sean Privett, Roger Bailey, Domatilla Raimondo, Donovan Kirkwood and Douglas Euston-Brown (2005) A vulnerability index for rare and harvested plant species on the Agulhas Plain, The Flower Valley Conservation Trust, Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (OUTPUT2: Sustainable Harvesting of Wild Fynbos, Subcomponent 7.4)

• A pilot farm management plan has been developed to guide sustainable harvesting²⁷

In short, the legal framework to guide fynbos harvesting has been updated through cooperation between Flower Valley and Cape Nature, leading to permitting guidelines and a soon-to-be approved certification system. The Provincial Ordinance guiding flower picking has been amended as a result of the Project to include a lot of vulnerable species, but have not revised the Ordinance to include them (lacks resources for field inspection).

Additionally, SANParks used the above, and experimental harvesting in Agulhas National Park (the only such example in National Parks), to formulate their Fynbos Resource Use Policy²⁸. Delegates from the Department of Environment and Tourism visited Flower Valley which is likely to influence the National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan. Additionally, Flower Valley wrote texts books Unit Standards 1, 2 and 3 (i.e. agree standards for training in the National Qualifications Framework) and these have been incorporated by the Agriculture Sector Education and Training Authority.

Flower Valley obtained R3m grant from Pick 'n Pay / Altman Foundation to develop a Certification process (with a R1m sub-grant to CapeNature to fund a position) and this partnership is working through the Protea Producers Association of South Africa to ensure that the industry owns this process

(d) Market Development

The project document under-estimated the challenges of market development. Establishing markets for sustainably harvested fynbos overseas proved difficult, with important lessons for future projects. Using its pack shed to develop a model, including links to suppliers (flower pickers) and property owners, FVCT (as an NGO) struggled with these complex commercial challenges Prompted by declining financial performance of its flower business, it sold the business to Fynsa Pvt Ltd in 2003. There were serious challenges aligning the goals of a start-up, for-profit businesses with the process of developing new ethical and ecological sustainable approaches, and serious disagreements undermined the relationship for several years. These problems were quickly resolved when Peter Steward became MD of Fynsa in 2006, with an ethical and entrepreneurial approach that rapidly grew the business by establishing a direct market to M&S in the U.K. However, Fynsa was unable to retain Steward²⁹. It also proved too small to provide the momentum to drive a certification process, although the M&S market supports (just) the existing supply network of seven accredited PDI businesses. Additionally, a new market is currently being tested through the Pick 'n Pay retail chain. At a regional level, Flower Valley is now working with the Protea Producers of South Africa (PPSA) which changed its constitution to accommodate members who are primarily harvesters of wild fynbos. PPAS also runs a wild harvester's forum and workshops (supported by Flower Valley), and support for a regional certification programme is gradually building.

²⁷ Anon (2005) Sustainable Resource Farm Management Plan Guidelines

²⁸ Roger Bailey, Sean Privett and Douglas Euston-Brown (2008) Resource Base Assessment of Wild Fynbos Harvestable Plants A PILOT STUDY FOR SANPARKS: Soetanys Farm, Flower Valley Conservation Trust, Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative, Output2: Sustainable Harvesting of Wild Fynbos, Subcomponent 7.5: Resource Base Assessment

²⁹ One of the unintended benefits is that Steward has set up his own business, Better Flower Company, in 2007, with Waitrose supermarket chain. They are developing their own network of certified suppliers, thus expanding the influence of the ethical, sustainable approaches developed by Flower Valley.

(e) Technical understanding of sustainable fynbos harvesting

At Project start, there was insufficient technical understanding on the sustainability of fynbos harvesting, so a research program was initiated and led by Sean. This included:

- Developing a vulnerability index for all species harvested on the Agulhas Plain
- Developing a cost effective tool for assessing the wild flower resource on a property.
- Understanding tehabilitation of orchards, old farm lands, and the clearing of alien infested lands.
- The impacts of broadcast sowing of commercial species on the ecology of natural vegetation in the wild flower harvesting industry.
- A carbon stocks study (grant from the Shell Foundation in 2008) to explored the case for sequestering CO₂ or halting the release of CO₂ through the restoration of degraded land (i.e. agricultural land or land invaded by alien vegetation), and developing a carbon case for the preservation/restoration of natural fynbos.
- Whether the socio-economic value of fynbos restoration for the flower and related industries outweighs its costs, focused on Flower Valley to develop a methodology for the wider industry

(f) Enviromental education and early learning

Flower Valley also plays an important role developing training capabilities and methodologies. Using its impressive Early Learning Centre (ELC) as a model, Flower Valley has been a major player in developing Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes to raise environmental awareness amongst children, young adults and teachers on the Agulhas Plain (see Output 4). As part of the greater FV Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme, seventeen teachers were trained and qualified as ELC practitioner's, a Environmental Education and ECD short course have been developed, an eco-schools network and nodes have developed in the region, and an ECD service provider forum has been established.

Flower Valley also:

- developed and offered courses in sustainable harvesting and fynbos management to pickers, supervisors and farm managers/owners;
- facilitates a monthly supply network forum where flower pickers, pack sheds, conservation managers and researchers share lessons information sharing sessions;
- runs workshops on sustainable harvesting for CapeNature, SANParks and the Overstrand Municipality; and
- issues regular newsworthy articles for publication

(g) Indicator 1: Historically disadvantage teams trained and employed

FV aims to have eighteen certified veld harvest suppliers by the end of 2009. Over the Project period, employment in picking and pack sheds doubled from 80 to 150³⁰, but a decision was made to consoldiate seven small businesses rather to split the market amongst a greater number of businesses that might not be viable. The expansion of the accredited supply network was constrained by market demand, effectively capping the area under sustainable harvesting. A positive trend is that Fynsa/FVCT flower bouquets are selling well through M&S in the UK and Pick 'n Pay in South

³⁰ For example, the number of people directly benefiting from employment in the supply network during 2007/08 was 133 (95 woman and 38 men).

Africa. At Project start, FV purchased some R500 000 of flowers from local suppliers, but this increased to R3.3 million by 2007/08 and BP5m in 2010. FVCT has benefitted local people, in particular women and children from informal settlements, providing employment under conditions superior to those of most rural employers in the district, and by developing their capacity through early childhood development programmes, training (courses and on-the-job), and opening up progression opportunities.

Between 2005 and 2008 over 100 workers, supervisors and business managers on the Agulhas Plain have undergone certified training in sustainable flower harvesting. Training has been provided to FVCT and Fynsa employees, Fynsa suppliers, children and youth participating in the Early Childhood Development programme (ECD), Land Care programmes and their teachers, and staff from the Department of Agriculture and CapeNature.

(h) Indicator 2: Markets for ethical, sustainable fynbos developed

The supply of flowers to M&S has provided Fynsa with a steady, reliable demand for its fynbos bouquets since 2006, increasing employment and providing a year round industry. Fynsa sales for the twelve months ended February 2009 were R12 973 349 showing a healthy growth of 11.1% over 2008. By 2010, Fynsa's turnover was approaching \$7m. Another major milestone reached in 2009 was the supply of bouquets to South Africa's largest supermarket retailer Pick n Pay. The Ackerman Pick 'n Pay Foundation have supported the work of the Trust since March 2006.

However, the assumption that ethical and sustainable labeling would generate premiums has not played out in reality, and the value of labeling appears to be not in price premiums but in preferential market access, which is extremely important. Consumers are not generating a market pull for certification so retail chains are not typically prepared to pay for it on flower bouquets. Margins are not large enough in the wild fynbos flower industry, and operations are not big enough, to interest suppliers in certification. Costs of preparing for and being audited are substantial and the question remains as to whether the industry (and for that matter the resource) is large enough to handle a fully developed certification scheme.

To date Flower Valley has not demonstrated that wild flower harvesting is a viable land use. The farm itself is not financially viable from flower harvesting, but an important contributing factor is the significant costs associated with developing new markets, certification, training, etc. associated with a new industry. More broadly, flower harvesting has not been demonstrated to be viable on its own, although it supplementary income from unmodified fynbos areas is important for farm viability and creates incentives to leave this land wild. Landholders currently get 1/3 of packshed factory door prices (i.e. 23c/stem for fillers; R1 for each focal flower) and fynbos generates R1,800-2,300/ha (research by Mike Murray in 2007). A natural resource economist (Beatrice Conradie) has been contracted (with funding from the Arcadia fund via FFI) to look at the economics of wild flower harvesting, how this effects farmer's land use decisions, and to develop economic argument for wild fynbos harvesting.

(i) Indicator 3: Code of Practice for sustainable harvesting of wildlife fybos developed

As described above, Flower Valley has provided considerable support and impetus for CapeNature to develop a permitting, auditing and certification systems, and that a process is in place to spread this to the wider industry through the Protea Producers Association of South Africa.

Buy-in to sustainable harvesting and the Code-of-Practice, and the development of these process, would have been significantly enhanced had Flower Valley worked in a more participatory manner

with landholders supporting flower picking to ensure that their concerns, experience and realities (economic) were included in the process.

6.4.5 Outcome 3: Tourism in ABO contributing to environmental health and livelihoods

The project budget describes the activities planned for Outcome 3 (Table 27). However, the relationship between these activities and the transformational impacts suggested by the log-frame indicators are not credible. This is even more so given that 64% of the budget was allocated to infrastructure, 19% to investments community initiatives, and only 16% to potentially transformative activities that include developing a tourism forum, market analysis and tourism monitoring. There was no investment in understanding the tourism economy, economies of scale and public good aspects of this economy, or how to unleash its potential to flip the landuse towards a bio-experience economy.

The project funded tourism research to support the development of the Cape Agulhas Tourism Development Framework. This was mostly co-financed by Province, which provided an additional R1.1 m to construct a boardwalk in Agulhas. The Province also initiated a competition to plan the southern tip of Africa. The envisaged Walker Bay tourism trail was developed, with one private landholder investing R680,000 (Mozoic farm), but it operates as a set of individual tourism opportunities not as a trail. Elim Heritage Center was completed and the community has taken ownership. Planning for the lighthouse Heritage Center is complete, but investments not yet done. The restcamp was built in Agulhas National Park, with 32 beds rather than 72 as planned.

Outcome 3 achieved useful results in a piecemeal manner, but was not designed, implemented or resourced to achieve the strategic objectives of transforming land use. This output was never afforded the importance it deserved for several reasons:

- late staffing of this position by a junior professional who subsequently left the project (an implementation weakness),
- the absence in the Project, Project team and network of sufficient capacity and vision in tourism, market develop and tourism/landscape private/public economics (a conceptual weakness in project design)
- organizational and personnel instability and role definitions in the tourism stakeholder forums (an external factor rectified in 2008 by the formation of the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau)

Budget for Output 3: A participatory and responsible tourism strategy is implemented in the Agulhas Plain and contributes to sustainable livelihoods.						
Activity	Budget	Percent				
Establish Agulhas Plain Tourism Forum	87,900	3%				
Tourism Infrastructure - 2 Heritage Centers and ANP	1,738,000	64%				
Market analysis and marketing	335,450	12%				
Community initiatives (mainly hiking trail \$439,000)	511,400	19%				
Tourism monitoring	31,600	1%				
TOTAL INVESTMENT IN TOURISM	2,704,350					
GEF	3,226,225					
Co-financing	8,558,550					
TOTAL INVESTMENT IN ABI	11,784,775					
Tourism as a percent of total project 23%						
Non-infrastructure tourism as % of total budget		7%				

Table 27: Assessment of Budget for Output 3

The PIR reports that the project had mixed results in seeking to develop a sustainable tourism industry in the area. Tourism is growing, and nature based tourism is providing conservation compatible land use opportunities in some areas, but an overarching strategy for nature based tourism has not yet been finalized. There is still a need to get universal agreement on the system for recording visitor numbers to the area. Current data suggests that tourism is stagnant (Figure 7), but this belies the obvious increase in tourism businesses and the general understanding that tourism has expanded by about 30%. This cannot be attributed solely to the efforts of the project. The Project is contributing to important socio-economic project and tourism visitation, but the log-frame targets are wholly unrealistic. A five-fold increase in employment in community-based tourism activities as envisaged by the log-frame is unrealistic. The proposed tourism strategy and economic flow study, including clear baseline figures and accepted measurement tools, are still cleared needed.

The PIR suggests that some tourism developments, particularly along the coastline may threaten biodiversity unless better managed. The MTE suggested that the long-term potential of Agulhas (including L'Agulhas, Suiderstrand and Struisbaai) is being squandered to cheap, ad-hoc development, quoting *Getaway*, February 2007 in support of this observation. The PIR suggests that there is a need to build the capacity and accountability of local government to regulate such development. The MTE suggested that SANParks, CapeNature, Municipalities and stakeholders develop a common vision for this high-potential area, including zoning and development plans and reliable economic research and monitoring. These issues are now being pursued through the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the cleanliness of tourism facilities is improving, and signage and boardwalks have been provided in new areas. The Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau confirms that Municipalities have invested in refuse collection, coastal clearance and clean up and other tourism related improvements.

(a) Indicator 1: Effective collection action in place for tourism³¹

A Tourism Forum was established in 2005. The MTE notes that it initially focused on petty operational difficulties rather than developing a broad tourism vision and strategy. It, and this Output, also suffered a number of personnel and institutional changes. For example, the Project initially supported the Overberg Tourism Bureau, a Section 21 not-for-profit company, which closed in 2008. Tourism marketing was conducted independently by the four Municipalities in the area, and was disjointed and uncoordinated with a lot of clashes. The SANParks appointee to the ABI tourism position also resigned in 2007, was not replaced, and facilitation of this output waned. The MTE noted that "a tourism forum is in place and partly funded, but it cannot be said to be well-capacitated or coordinating eco-tourism development activities at the necessary scale". As noted, the Overberg Tourism Bureau collapsed in 2008.

However, ABI helped to align the many groups and forums often working at cross purposes and even under-mining each other, with the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau emerging to lead this process. In 2008, the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau was established. CATB is a non-profit membership organization, currently representing some 170 tourism operations or 80-90% of the sector. It is competently staffed and works closely with ABI. An important indicator is that the financial

³¹ Eco-tourism development activities are coordinated by a well capacitated multi-stakeholder Tourism Forum by year 2; Agulhas Plain Tourism Forum established and its capacity strengthened.

contribution from Cape Agulhas Municipality to the Cape Agulhas Tourism association has increased from R170 000, to R560 000 in 2010 and R600 000 in 2011.

Further, the MTE suggested that, while the work program related to this output was piecemeal it was adding value, but should be reviewed by ABIOC to use resources more strategically. Achievements included:

- The completion and wide availability of a tourism map of the ABI area.
- Two heritage centers established one at Elim and the other at Agulhas. Progress of the former was initially delayed by the complexities of working through a community. The latter was delayed by SANP planning and co-financing procedures. Both are now operating.
- The Walkers Bay Fynbos Conservancy Hiking trail as a new tourism product that encouraged new entrants into tourism, with opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups

<u>Convincing economic models.</u> Nevertheless, the MTE suggested that Big Picture thinking was necessary and that the absence of "convincing economic models and arguments" were a major impediment to the long term vision for the Agulhas Plain. ABIOC consequently agreed to commission a tourism study (through Beatrice Conradie at University of Cape Town) as the foundation of a stakeholder process to develop a tourism strategy.

A study has been commissioned to assess the economic value of tourism and whether tourists are willing to pay for responsible tourism. Implementation was set back by delays in disbursements to ABI and is expected to be complete in September 2011. This process is deliberately not rushed because the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau is also using the study to encourage stakeholder ownership of a visioning process aimed at developing a tourism strategy for the area and the tourism enterprises that are its members. The Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau has also changed its constitution to focus on transforming the tourism industry on Agulhas Plain, with an emphasis on nature-based tourism, and has taken measures to facilitate participation of previously disadvantaged people into the CATB, including fee waivers.

(b) Bio-diversity based tourism expanding on Agulhas Plain³²

It is unclear which baseline data informed these Project goals. There is no decent M&E system for tourism monitoring, and (according to interviews) there are no studies or research on tourism available for the area. Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau has complied statistics on tourism (Table 28,

³² Indicator 2: By the end of the project the number of visitors to the key sites in Agulhas Plain exceeds 150,000 per annum compared to 50,000 at project start

Figure 3). Tourism, as recorded consistently at three sites, grew steadily from 1993 to 2000/2002 and then stagnated. However, interviews suggested that tourism is still growing, and a large number of small tourism businesses have been established since 2000, albeit with a number of closures in the recent economic recession. For example, almost 25% of shop fronts in Napier are tourism related, which was not the case in 2000, most farms now have home stays which are mostly recent developments, there are many more restaurants and tourism services than there were, and tourism (especially self drive, and tour buses) seems to be increasing. The contradictions between the data and anecdotal information confirm the importance of a reliable data management system to track this important indicator. Unpublished survey results from 2007 suggest that 88% of tourist are attracted by coastal resources, 34% scenary, and 16% small towns and agriculture.



Figure 7: Cape Agulhas Visitor Statistics

Table 28: Cape Agulhas Visitor Statistics

	B-	De	De		Hota gterkl	struis	L'Agul	Lighth	Napie	Ship wrec	Index	
	dorp	Mond	Hoop	Elim	ip	baai	has	ouse	r	k	(3)	Total
1993			5,466					13,595		9,197	28,258	28,258
1994			6,353					17,070		8,633	32,056	32,056
1995			7,817					20,721		9,117	37,655	37,655
1996			10,123					25,113		9,425	44,661	44,661
1997			11,514					25,339		9,001	45,854	45,854
1998			13,873					14,911		7,545	36,329	36,329
1999			15,967					30,879		8,595	55,441	55,441
2000			17,479					27,586		8,417	53,482	53,482
2001			15,207					25,206		8,155	48,568	48,568
2002			17,124					30,018		8,698	55,840	55,840
2003			18 0/0					27.013		10,06 7	56 029	56.029
2003			20 100					27,013		, 8.078	52 841	52 8/1
2004			16 286					24,005		7 659	50,577	50 577
2003			10,380					20,333		7,038	50,577	50,577
2006			11,496				16,858	26,929	3,376	9,680	48,105	68,339
2007	3,326		15,858	1,754			14,221	27,563	3,967	10,39	53,819	77,087

	N	ovember	10, 2010
Q	I.		

										8		
2008	5,550	-	14,938	5,072	-	-	14,422	23,520	3,120	9,364	47,822	75,986
2009	3,769	5,201	18,201	2,135	559	126	15,650	23,058	3,429	7,789	49,048	79,917
2010	682	1,892	3,916	511	392	-	3,642	6,636	866	2,011	12,564	20,548

The Project invested in Agulhas National Park through activities listed under Output 3 (e.g. \$1,644,000 in tourism infrastructure in Agulhas National Park and the Cape Agulhas Center) presumably to contribute to the socio-economic indicators for Output 3.

The relationship between tourism development in Agulhas National Park and economic development more generally has never been spelled out. At the time of the MTE, locals resented the development of Agulhas National Park, fearing competition for their tourism businesses and the loss of local access and culture because the land purchased for the park had been used and appreciated by local communities for generations. These issues were exacerbated by communication difficulties and a perception that SANParks was inward looking. The plan to develop Agulhas National Park was initially rejected by the stakeholder forum. The failure of SANParks to develop "the southern-most tip of Africa" after eight years has retarded growth of the tourism sector.

Protected Areas play a critical role in the conservation and socio-economic development of the wider landscape. The ways these relationships are managed have far greater consequences than is normally recognized. For example, the economic impact of tourism is normally many fold the park entrance fee, especially when economic and employment multipliers are considered (Figure 8). Parks are also critical in developing the brand of a tourism area. Consequently additional comments on the situation in Agulhas and on these issues more generally are provided (Table 29).

Table 29: A comment on the impact of Protected Areas on the wider landscape and economy

Commercial policies and operational management of state protected areas have a huge impact on the local economy. While many stakeholders saw the development of Agulhas National Park positively, the assumption by UNDP that the formation of Protected Areas would automatically enhance tourism in incorrect, and Agulhas National Park needs to be specifically and carefully developed for this purpose.

- Delays in expenditure, and the incorporation of BEE criteria into the purchasing process, have reduced the value of the R14m investment in a road and restcamp in Agulhas National Park so that an eight unit camp (24beds) has been constructed rather than the envisaged 72-bed operation.
- The process of building the restcamp through complex procedures and unreliable contractors has placed a considerable administrative burden on park administration, diverting human resources from other objectives.
- Further, the diseconomies of scale associated with a camp of this size place serious questions over its financial viability.

This situation is unlikely to be resolved in the short term because SANParks has decided its financial priority will be to invest in high performing rest camps rather than develop new ones.

In de Hoop, after a long bureaucratic nightmare, a large proportion of the tourism facilities have been outsourced and upgraded.

Clear commercial vision and streamlined commercial processes in state protected areas can greatly enhance their ability to catalyze the tourism economy in the wider landscape. However, protected areas are often inward looking at the expense of public benefits. For instance, the greatest concern for Protected Area agencies is usually developing their own financial viability, but far more is at stake because the failure to properly develop tourism in a protected area in a key site has huge implications in terms of employment, economic activity, and employment and economic multipliers forgone.

Consequently, new models should be tested including, for instance:

- Operating all ABI Protected Areas as a <u>single, autonomous cost centre</u> with clear organizational goals that support national responsibilities.
- Far great use <u>participation of stakeholders</u> in developing the Vision for the development of Protected Areas to achieve greater integration into the local economy and to incorporate more imagination into the Vision.
- Specific consideration of the <u>public good aspect</u> of the Protected Area, including the economic multipliers mentioned above and the potential to influence land use outside the Park. In Zimbabwe, for example, the policy was to develop tourism accommodation outside the park because it created a smaller ecological footprint but more importantly because it created strong incentives for these properties to flip land use from agriculture to wildlife, effectively expanding the area of the Protected Area.

A specific problem is the propensity for State Protected Area agencies to develop a private rather than a public financial philosophy. For example, SANPark's current priority is to generate sufficient funds to keep its operations viable. An important public investment is the cross-subsidization of sixteen non-viable National Parks from the four that are viable. However, SANParks is forced by its financial situation and mandate to become inward looking.

There are clear advantages to Protected Areas retaining their income and striving for commercial viability. However, care also needs to be taken to ensure that the enormous potential impact that a Protected Area can have on its immediate economy and land use practices is not lost. A way to address this might be to 'charge' a Park a percentage of the capital investment by the government in that Park (say 1% of capital value, or 5% of recurrent budget), and to earmark this for specific public good functions.

(c) Historically disadvantaged people and communities increasingly participating in tourism³³ The formulation of this indicator is ambiguous. Community-based tourism was extremely underdeveloped at the beginning of ABI. Given that some 2,500 people of colour people are employed in tourism the baseline of 1,100 must apply to this rather than specifically to community-based tourism. Employment in tourism probably increased 30% over the lifespan of ABI. Considerable efforts have been made in the ABI region to develop community based tourism and employment through a growing culture of working together and addressing past disadvantage (rather than directly by ABI). Some examples are listed in In addition that Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau notes that Overberg District Municipality has budgeted R100 000 for tourism specific training in the 2010 financial year, which is a first. This training (site specific tour guide training) will be undertaken by accredited service providers in August 2010. While there is no dedicated tourism training budget in Cape Agulhas Municipality, CATB is often successful when it identifies training opportunities and approaches CAM for additional funding due to improved relations and greater understanding of the value of tourism to the economy of the area.

ABI efforts have increased awareness of tourism opportunities, and improved relationships between previously disadvantaged communities and SANParks. Nevertheless, progress in developing Heritage Centers in Elim was slow. In Elim, for instance, jealousies and power struggles within community are

³³ Indicator 3: A five-fold increase in current employment in community-based tourism activities on the Plain by the end of year 5

retarding implementation of many tourism ideas. On the positive side, there is some perceived improvement in attitude and participation of people who used to be alienated. In Agulhas, field-guide training has been tendered, which is expected to lead to greater participation of disadvantaged people in the tourism sector. The Napier tourism office is being used to display arts and crafts, but interviewees suggested that a lot of the arts and crafts produced are still not marketed. There have also been delays in the growth of tourism related to slower than expected investment in Agulhas National Park, especially the rehabilitation of the "southern Most tip", lighthouse and proposed rest camp.

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Table 30: Examples of community tourism initiatives

- The number of historically disadvantaged people who are members of the tourism association (CATB) has increased from 3 in 2005 to 11 in 2010
- Crafts, for which there was previously no market, are now being sold through tourism bureaus and hotels although the quality and turnover is still low;
- Township tours have been developed in Arniston, KassiesBaai and Elim
- Homestays and farmstalls have been developed in Arniston
- Grootbos is training 12 professional gardeners every year, all of whom are palced in employment. Grootbos: <u>http://www.grootbosfoundation.org/</u>
- Ecotourism based at Grootbos is provided a significant number of jobs
- Several guides have been trained and are now making a living from guiding including fynbos day trips and a marine guide, with their services being marketed through tourism bureaus
- The proposed walking trail was invisaged to provide five over-night stops, and although development of this product has been uneven, both Mosaic farm and Klipgat cave are operating ventures and providing employment
- Langezandt Fishermen's Village (massive property development) has given mentoring and other support (sponsorships etc) to the Hotagterklip Community project (Hotagterklip Farmstall, B&B and craft centre) in Struisbaai
- Hotagterklip Padstal and B&B (mentioned above). See http://hotagterklip.yolasite.com/. This project was initiated by CAT, and has received funding from both ODM (Overberg District Municipality) and CAM, to the tune of around R150 000. The cottages are heritage sites and are situated on municipal property.
- The Elim Heritage centre was funded by ABI and is now generating income for the community.
- The Kassiesbaai community in Arniston have started several restaurants and craft shops, and with the entire village being a national heritage site. This provides a wonderful tourism opportunity for thise operating within the community, as well as the local guides who do walking tours through the village.
- The Napier and Bredasdorp information offices both have locally produced crafts on display and for sale. Where possible these crafts are produced by PDI's, but are supplemented with others, to enhance the overall quality of the products on sale.
- Investment in the small-scale Hotagterklip business failed, with three trainee entrepreneurs prefering employment to entrepreneurship
- Marine Dynamics and Dyer Island Conservation Trust (Shark diving) have develoepd a series of exceptional community projects in Gansbaai, winning the First Choice Responsible Tourism Award for work they are doing for conservation and the local community http://www.sharkwatchsa.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=52:first-choiceaward&catid=38:news

(d) Tourism conducted ethically and sustainably³⁴ ('responsibly')

This is a good intention supported by a vague indicator with no MOV. Since the project stated, DEAT has developed guidelines for responsible tourism. CapeNature and SANParks invariably apply high standards of ecological responsibility to their investments. An industry leader in responsible tourism, Madikwe Investments, has recently been awarded tourism contracts in de Hoop, and is instituting important responsible activities including local sourcing of materials and services – for example, it has established small businesses in Bredarsdorp to manage laundry. ABI is also the site of several tourism operations that are global examples of Fair Trade or responsible Tourism, including Farm 215, Grootbos and Marine Dynamics (In addition that Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau notes that Overberg District Municipality has budgeted R100 000 for tourism specific training in the 2010 financial year, which is a first. This training (site specific tour guide training) will be undertaken by accredited service providers in August 2010. While there is no dedicated tourism training budget in

³⁴ Indicator 4: All tourism operators in protected areas are applying responsible tourism guidelines, by year 3

Cape Agulhas Municipality, CATB is often successful when it identifies training opportunities and approaches CAM for additional funding due to improved relations and greater understanding of the value of tourism to the economy of the area.

ABI efforts have increased awareness of tourism opportunities, and improved relationships between previously disadvantaged communities and SANParks. Nevertheless, progress in developing Heritage Centers in Elim was slow. In Elim, for instance, jealousies and power struggles within community are retarding implementation of many tourism ideas. On the positive side, there is some perceived improvement in attitude and participation of people who used to be alienated. In Agulhas, field-guide training has been tendered, which is expected to lead to greater participation of disadvantaged people in the tourism sector. The Napier tourism office is being used to display arts and crafts, but interviewees suggested that a lot of the arts and crafts produced are still not marketed. There have also been delays in the growth of tourism related to slower than expected investment in Agulhas National Park, especially the rehabilitation of the "southern Most tip", lighthouse and proposed rest camp.

Table 30). The importance of responsible tourism is certainly spreading, but uptake is difficult to measure.

6.4.6 Outcome 4: Increased support for biodiversity conservation on Agulhas Plain

The project has continued its education work under Component 4. Although the mid term evaluation indicated that the scope of this component should have been broader, and was not sufficient to wholly shift attitudes to conservation in the area, the project has met most of the targets that were originally set.

Media coverage³⁵ has been improving, and has recently been outsourced to Agri-Promo. There have been several useful outputs:

- An Agulhas Plain coffee table book has been published
- Quarterly newsletters are now produced in association with the ANP and distributed with a local newspaper
- An ABI Information sheet was developed forwarded to the media
- Regular press releases, e.g. articles about reintroduction of Bontebok placed in various papers and outdoor magazines.

A further indicator was that key decision makers aware of importance of biodiversity and sustainable development³⁶. There has been considerable progress in making key decision-makers aware of biodiversity and sustainable development. This has been achieved mainly through the energy of the ABI Coordinator, PIU and ABIOC, and through on-the-ground results, than through the more superficial public relations-type activities specifically designed under output 4. The response of landholders to the bio-experience economy and conservation landscapes has been described in detail above. <u>Municipalities</u> are members of ABIOC and including ABI activities in their plans. <u>Ratepayers associations</u> are increasingly active in both urban and rural conservation (see Annex **). <u>Tourism businesses</u> are participating through the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau. Presentations about ABI have been given to <u>Business Chambers</u>, <u>Farmers' Associations</u> and <u>Tourism Bureaus</u>.

To influence leaders of the future, ABI also created a valuable educational component. Early Learning Education Materials developed by Flower Valley were rolled out to 18 pre/junior schools now registered with National Ecoschools Program in the Agulhas Plain. This included facilitation and training of teachers. Syllabuses and modules developed by Flower Valley were also integrated into early childhood development curriculum through Cape Department of Education Led by Flower Valley. This ensures that people entering workforce have an awareness of fynbos conservation and employment opportunities. With the support of Department of Agriculture and SANParks, successful Junior Landcare camps, and Kids in the Parks camps run with more than 1000 participants for two years in a row now

6.4.7 Project Management

<u>Leadership and Communication.</u> The ABI PIU, and especially the ABI Coordinator, should be complemented on the insight, commitment and tenacity they brought to the program. The

³⁵ Indicator 1: Increased positive coverage in the media by the end of year 1

³⁶ Indicator 2: All decision-makers and more than 40% of the general public in Agulhas Plain are aware of the value of biodiversity and 10% are actively involved in conservation- related activities by the end of the project.

Coordinator's enormous strengths in building relationships with stakeholders were absolutely critical to the success of the project. Finances are properly accounted for, and disbursement is rapid. The Coordinator kept UNDP informed in a timely manner, built a trusting relationship with them, and this improved the adaptability of the Project and its responsiveness to opportunities such as the SMA, Agriculture, BMU funding and many others. At times, the turnover of UNDP staff caused initial miscommunication and disjuncture in administrative processes.

<u>Stakeholders and ABIOC.</u> ABIOC is powerful forum of key stakeholders that has been invaluable to the success of ABI. However, the membership of ABIOC needs to be broadened (i.e. more private sector participation), and it has recently fallen into the trap (as has the Coordinator) of managing rather than leading the programme – meetings focus on task management and detailed minutes rather than relationship building, Vision and opportunities.

<u>Finance and Administration</u>. The PIU should be congratulated on administering two projects and managing some R45m in disbursements, despite being administratively under-staffed. The ABI Coordinator took on much of the responsibility for financial management and project reporting. The tireless work he put into administration should be acknowledged, but he and his managers should have kept him focused on his strengths (stakeholder management) and not allowed him to bury himself in administration. Latterly, higher level objectives have suffered because of this. One of the weaknesses of the Project was the sourcing and management of staff, and both outputs 3 and 4 suffered because of this.

<u>Project Support.</u> Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the Project has been insufficient high-level support. At the ABIOC meeting attended by the TE, disappointment was expressed about how few, far-between, and rushed visits from senior personnel were, leaving stakeholders with the feeling that their efforts were not appreciated or sometimes even fully supported. Off-reserve conservation was a new area for SANParks, and needed strong communication between field managers and leadership. Yet many stakeholders were concerned that ABI PIU managers were provided with little guidance on how to deal with issues, and often left with difficult decisions with little guidance or moral support. In a hierarchical organization like SANParks this left managers personally vulnerability especially if they were innovative.

When ABIOC requested a meeting to discuss ABI with SANParks leadership they were told to use the usual hierarchical channels of communications, which may be fine for internal administration but is worrisome way of treating civil society. There is concern that SANParks' hierarchical procedures may be necessary for administrative management, but serious impede critical learning, stakeholder processes and civic accountability.

6.5 ABI CONTRIBUTION TO PARTNER SUSTAINABILITY

As local stakeholders vested in the sustainability of ABI, ABIOC posed four insightful questions about the future of ABI:

- How has ABI contributed to the sustainability of the partners' respective programmes? (TH)
- To what extent have the ABI processes and systems been institutionalised within the relevant organisations? (RB).
- Is the hard work by landholders and field personnel being accepted and institutionalised by parent organizations?
- Has the broader community (from individuals to organisations) taken on a greater responsibility for conservation through ABI's influence? (RA)

<u>Cape Nature:</u> Improvements in CapeNature's licensing and regulation of flower harvesting, and supporting scientific knowledge, are a product of ABI including direct start-up funding of a new position. CapeNature recognizes the importance of civil societies' involvement in biodiversity conservation and praises ABI's role in promoting cooperative governance and the mobilization of landholders through ABIOC, LandCare, working groups and participatory planning more generally. CapeNature supports and accepts ABI's contributions, suggesting that the development of the SMA is a significant result and provides a new dimension to stewardship policy and practice and South Africa's Protected Area Expansion Strategy. CapeNature noted that "people are queuing up to follow the SMA model". However, CapeNature questioned whether all agencies had bought into the concept of cooperative governance which remained personal rather than embedded in policy. On the negative side, CapeNature is under-resources and lacks the capacity to provide the extension support required by the Project. The Manager of de Hoop and de Mond management has not been replaced, and METT scores have consequently dropped.

<u>SANParks</u>. SANParks has been instrumental in implementing ABI and at field level has developed many of the processes and systems on which ABI depends. It has also provided staffing and critical administrative support, including through HQ in Pretoria. ABI has developed critical capacity in SANParks to manage stakeholder processes. However, ABI has not changed SANParks' management paradigm. Insiders say that ABI has taught them a lot about off-reserve conservation, but the "ABI way" has not been institutionalized in SANParks which is still ambiguous about this role. Many outsiders think it is important to convince SANParks to roll out ABI-like processes nationally, but say that SANParks' is still in the acquisition rather than a stewardship paradigm. It is unclear whether SANParks at higher level appreciates the hard work and progress made by ABI, and its on-going commitment to ABI is far from guaranteed.

<u>Department of Agriculture</u> The Department of Agriculture has contributed far more to ABI than initially planned. Agriculture created a new section and office in Bredarsdorp to support instituional integration, extension, and develop new participatory planning systems. It has provided equippment for the GIS system that undergirds fine-scale mapping, and has also provided full time person. In the Project, \$28,000 was provided for a farm planner, but Agricuture has provided far more than this, maintaining a senior manager who contributes significantly to ABI, plus well trained extension officers and a GIS technician.

ABI has provided considerable support to Flower Valley, which has played an important role in sustainable harvesting, but also in obtaining matching funds. ABI supported municipalities to integrate conservation into their planning procedures, and despite instability in these organizations, this is still having some effect.

6.6 **RISKS AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Most of risks faced by ABI are related to an uncertain future. Project implementation proceeded relatively smoothly and most of the assumptions held.

6.6.1 Threats to the implementation of ABI

An assessment of the assumptions in the Project Matrix suggest that most of them held true (Table 31), which is why the Project is said to "suffer no major threats" (PIR 2009).

Objective	Assumption in Project Log-Frame	Current status of assumption
Goal	• There is continued private sector investment in sustainable biodiversity-based business.	
Purpose	There is relative stability in the local economy.Political stability, law and order are maintained.	StableStable
Outputs	 Communication and trust between stakeholders and the project are maintained. Threats from alien species (alien type or rate of spread) or unsustainable harvesting do not increase significantly. International wildflower markets remain stable or expand. Other packing sheds are willing to adopt the Code of Practice. SA remains an attractive market for tourism and the Agulhas Plain products are competitive. Dedicated champions can be recruited from local communities to drive tourism projects. Target audiences receptive to biodiversity conservation messages. Local media willing to collaborate. 	 Some interpersonal conflicts threatened the Project, but conflict management processes reduced the threat. No change Proved harder than anticipated. Problem managed by recruiting good entrepreneur Appear to be willing provide Code rolled out using an inclusionary process Assumption held Hard to judge – some local tourism actors did emerge Poor indicator Poor indicator

Table 31: Comparison of current status with log-frame assumptions

(a) Inter-personal conflict

Several inter-personal conflicts did disrupt the project, but these were resolved using conflict resolution facilitators. A major cause of this conflict was complex administrative processes where individuals got caught up in the clash between different organization processes. This threat could have been significantly reduced by providing external support to ABI through a technical board.

Implementing the BMU, created a number of tensions because disbursement followed tight deadlines, but rapid means different things to the private and public sectors which have different administrative priorities. There was also a clash over issues that in some circumstances might be construed as conflict of interest. This is almost inevitable in small communities where energetic individuals often play many roles. However, the peer pressure and transparency that are also a characteristic of small communities also plays an important role in balancing potential conflicts of interest.

(b) Economic shocks

Exchange rates affected project expediture. The Project document assumes a R:USD rate of 10:1, but hte average exchange rate during the project was 8:1, and the lowest 1:5.8. Similarly, the global recession affected progress after 2008. So did the World Cup which is blamed for a R150m cut in the

grant to SANParks for off-reserve conservation (mainly purchases) and is a major cause of the ambiguity towards off-reserve conservation. The rising price of tourism opportuities in South Africa is said to be reducing the attractiveness of this tourism destination.

(c) Developing flower markets

Difficulties in developing certification and new markets for sustainable flower harvesting were also underestimated.

(d) Organizational instabilityand turnover

A risk not recognised in Project design was the loss of key individuals who initially drove the process of landscape conservation (notably Johan van der Merve in SANParks and Trevor Sandwith in CAPE). This had a significant impact on the Project. So did institutional instability, especially in Municipalities on the Agulhas Plain which switch regularly between political parties causing considerable disruption of policy, relationships and momentum. The same can be said of some of the small organizations (i.e. NGOs) participating in ABI, but flux in these is inevitable.

6.6.2 Threats to the sustainability and replication of ABI

At a local level, ABI has performed beyond expectations, though we note several threats that did affect project performance and were not identified. However, the real questions are in the future:

- Will the gains from ABI be consolidated locally, and will they be formalised institutionally?
- ABI is just beginning to reveal new challenges and opportunities. Will this 'experiment' be taken forward to develop this knowledge?
- Will the lessons from ABI be captured to benefit conservation in South Africa more broadly?
- Will the human capacity developed through implementing ABI be retained or squandered?
- Will the ABI model be replicated?

ABI faces serious risks including:

- Effort squandering failure to consolidate progress by giving ABI more time to evolve
- Failed institutionalization Failure to institutionalise the invaluable partnerships that have been tested and developed at micro, meso andmacro levels of organization
- Losing lessons failure to properly analyse, document and disemminate the lessons of ABU
- Losing scare capacity Loss of quality personnel with experience in stakeholder management that will become increasingly valuable

(a) Loss of high level support and policy ambiguity

The greatest risk to the gains made by ABI is the <u>declining high-level support</u> and <u>policy ambiguity</u> about off-reserve conservation. SANParks is ambigous about its future role, and CapeNature is insufficiently resources to fill this gap.

The loss of key individuals, coupled with SANParks' ambiguity about the Project and the end of funding creates a strong risk that the gains made by ABI will be neither sufficiently appreciated, documented nor consolidated. While local stakeholders strongly support ABI, it is questionable whether processes are in place to maintain this experiment and to continue to allow it to evolve. For example, the loss of the ABI Coordinator and PIU will be a serious blow to sustainability.

(b) Developing and institutionalizaing lessons learned

Similarly, no process is in place to take the <u>lessons learned</u> from ABI and to institutionalise them at micro, meso or macro levels, for example a Compact that consolidates the informal institutional rationalization that has been worked out at local level, or the capacity to assess the SMA and Conservancy experience and develop an enabling framework for collective landholder conservation. There is not even a sound process in place to evaluate and publish key aspects of the ABI experience. ABI provides an important opportunity to close the gap between theory and practice, but the mechanisms for doing so are not in place.

(c) Loss of personal capacity in stakeholder management

Related to this, ABI has developed the personal capacity of several managers to facilitate landscape and stakeholder conservation processes in South Africa's complex organizational and legal environment. The ABI team has developed strong skills in:

- Project management, especially GEF
- Environmental legislation and policy relevant to off-reserve Protected Areas and expansion
- Integration of conservation into Provincial, District and Local Government operational planning activites, including IDPs and SDFs
- Stakeholder management, relationship-building and the facilitation of multi-stakeholder forums
- Community participation and negotiations, especially with farming communities (who often have a complex and negative relationship with SANParks)
- Intergovernmenatl relationships and participation

This is a rare skill set in South Africa, but one that is increasingly sought after to manage the complexity associated with economic, climatic, demographic, geographic, and cultural complexity and change. However, there is no clarity on the future of these personnel, considerable risk of losing the capacity developed in ABI, and a critical risk that processes that are going well will not be supported to a position where they can be sustained.

(d) Non-completion of institutional rationalisation.

Overlapping, incomplete and unfunded mandates to support off-reserve conservation threaten the sustainability of ABI, and its wider replication. The ABI Coordinator has played a powerful role in bringing stakeholders together. However, sustaining this still depends on personal relationships until more formal arrangements are made or until informal precedents are entrenched through practice.

An opportunity to take stakeholder processes forward was to institutionalize this function in Municipalites because they are located at a far more appropriate scale to drive integration than Provincial or National line agencies. While this was not anticipated in the Project document, ABI invested considerable efforts in this direction with good initial results. However, more recently the reliability of Municipalities has suffered because of instability caused by party political issues.

(e) Payments for Environmental Services

Similarly, the next logical step for ABI is to test Payments-for-Environmental Services, to strengthen collective action, and to prioritise the public good aspects of off-reserve conservation. No plans are in place to do this.

(f) Organizational Inertia and the Evolution of New Approaches

Another, less obvious risk, is the capacity of government agencies to evolve sufficient rapidly to respond to rapidly changing economies, demographics, technology, climate, etc., in order to:

- Accept off-reserve conservation
- Develop the policy environment to support new models of landscape conservation,
- Develop systems to pay for public goods and environmental services,
- Faciliate new models of landscape conservation that are not driven by themselves,
- Incorporate new and sorely needed capabilities such as economic and institutional governance into their professional staffing complement,
- Resource and develop their capabilities and culture to facilitate stakeholder processes.

(g) Nuclear reactor

A potential and serious threat to biodiversity is the proposed location of a Pebble Bed Nuclear Reactor (PBNR) plant on the Agulhas Plain. The preliminary scoping work for site development is underway and the project and its partners have sought to engage positively with the developers through the EIA process in order to limit potential damage if and when the development does proceed. Despite the fact that South Africa urgently needs to address the issue of increased power generation capacity, it is by no means certain that the expensive and untested PBNR technology will be the route adopted. The process towards the establishment of the PBNRs has officially been indefinitely delayed.

7 BROADER IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

7.1 **R**EPLICATION

When ABI was initiated, a major issue was who the supporting agency/authority for off-reserve conservation should be; at this time, the mandate of the SANParks only included formal protected areas established on State land. ABI therefore represented a major change in orientation for SANParks. SAN Parks—recognizing the critical importance of the store of biodiversity outside State land and the limited funding available for acquiring land to incorporate into the PA estate—agreed to support the efforts of private landowners to establish private nature reserves on a pilot basis in the Agulhas Plain.

The MTE noted that ABI was not powerful enough to influence SANParks and national policies. Three years later, failure to address this weakness means that (1) the sustainability of ABI is threatened by the potential withdrawal of SANParks from the off-reserve role they tested in ABI and (b) the lessons generated by ABI are not being replicated.

A specific objective of ABI was to increase the capacity of SANParks and CapeNature for integrated extension services. The 2009 PIR notes SANParks received an off-reserve mandate (through a modification of the Act), that DEA has developed a draft Buffer zone policy for parks which gives SANParks a mandate to work off-reserve, and that South Africa National Parks (SANParks) has adopted an off reserve focus and is in the process of codifying it into their policy. The same report concluded that a new model for managing private Protected Areas had been developed and a lot of emphasis has been placed on the implementation there-of, and buy-in by SANParks and the Department of Environment Affairs (National). The hope was that ABI would change SANParks' paradigm, and that SANParks would take a leading role in off-reserve conservation. This has not occurred, with the result that the future of off-reserve conservation in South Africa is uncertain. SANPark's hesitation has to do largely with the anticipated costs of this mandate, and the fact that these are not specifically funded.

However, if the current complex and inconsistent framework for off-reserve conservation was replaced by well-crafted enabling legislation, the gains from off-reserve conservation would likely be higher, and the costs of supporting it remarkably small.

7.2 CONTRIBUTION TO GEF STRATEGIC TARGETS IN FOCAL AREA

The Agulhas Plain was classified amongst the most threatened landscapes in the CFR. By giving fynbos a sustainable use value, rehabilitating landscapes especially through alien clearance and other measures, consolidating, expanding and encouraging formal and informal conservation areas, and aligning institutions and landscape objectives towards conservation, the project is making a significant contributing towards conserving lowland fynbos that is of global significance. It is simultaneously testing a new conservation approach based on sustainable use and integrated landscape management.

7.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW PROTECTED AREAS

Agulhas National Park has expanded by 10,333 ha since the beginning of the project including purchase of Rietfontein (3,907 ha)(critical site for lowland limestone fynbos), Ratel Rivier (2,272 ha) (high priority freshwater ecosystems in the CFR), Waterford (4,053 ha) and Shubert Farm (101ha). This expansion is critical for the purposes of consolidating the park into a viable ecological unit. An additional 62,624 ha of private land is under conservation management.

7.4 HAS THE PROJECT RESULTED IN CHANGES IN POLICY, LEGISLATIVE OR REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT FOR PROTECTED AREAS?

The provincial ordinance guiding flower picking has been amended as a result of the project's activities to include the updated list of vulnerable species (list was reassessed and new species added), and a certification system is pending formal approval. The permit system for species to be harvested has been revised, and technical information garnered has enabled the species list for harvesting to be updated.

The ABI experience has informed:

- DEAT Policy on Buffer Zones for National Parks (2009)
- Draft SANParks Buffer Zones Policy (or Bioregional Landscape Linkage Program)
- The Department of Agriculture farm planning policy. Has changed is mapping scale from 1:40,000 to 1:10,000 and adopted participatory Area-Wide fine-scale planning piloted by ABI in Haasvlakte:
- The Western Cape Spatial Development Framework;
- The Integrated Development Plans of all four local authorities in the Overberg District, as well as the District Integrated Development Plan;
- Cape Nature specifications for "Adequate Enclosure", i.e. game fencing, an important change which makes fences more permeable and therefore allows movement of wildlife

However, more use could have been made of ABI to inform, improve, or experientially develop offreserve conservation policy and practice.

7.5 HAS THE PROJECT RAISED AWARENESS OR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PROTECTED AREAS IN PEOPLE BEYOND THE PROJECT TEAM?

<u>GEF/UNDP.</u> Several stakeholders suggested that ABI had a significant influence on allocation of UNDP funding. At the time that ABI was formulated, UNDP was reportedly skeptical of the concept of private protected areas as a biodiversity conservation tool (interviews). Judging by the subsequent expansion of UNDP investment into landscape conservation and economically-driven conservation in South Africa and beyond, the conceptualization and implementation of ABI and related projects like CAPE have influenced the way that UNDP has allocated substantial amounts of funding.

Department of Agriculture. A number of conservation compatible land use options exist on land surrounding formal protected areas, but have not traditionally been promoted through extension services. One of the greatest impacts of the Project is that the Department of Agriculture has been motivated to take the lead in integrating conservation and agricultural development to ensure that conservation activities are better received within the farming sector and integrated into farm planning. This is an important development, emphasized repeatedly by stakeholders including at the stakeholder workshop.

ABI has transformation the relationship between conservation and agriculture not only in ABI but in the Western Cape more broadly. When the Project Document was written agriculture was seen as a threat, portrayed negatively on paper, and in discussions at the time (interviews with stakeholders). The Department of Agriculture now champions landscape conservation, and has become a major player in the success of ABI. For example, ABI is housed with the Department of Agriculture in the "Integration Center" in Bredarsdorp, there is a formal MOU between Agriculture and SANParks, ABI is one of the first four examples in the Province where conservation objectives are built into fine scale landscape planning through LandCare, and when CapeNature did not have the capacity to implement the GIS system for BIMS (because of underfunding resulting from exchange rate fluctuations – see risks above) this service was provided by Agriculture. In 2009, a farming-tourism-biodiversity workshop was supported by ABI and attended by over 80 people.

Given the reluctance and limited finance and capacity of SANParks and CapeNature to take up the challenge of off-reserve conservation, and the importance of biodiversity to agricultural diversification, there is an argument to be made for developing Western Cape Agriculture to lead and mainstream off-reserve conservation.

7.6 HAS THE PROJECT RESULTED IN ANY CHANGES IN INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MANDATES CONCERNING PROTECTED AREAS?

At the ABI level, and in other sites, national, provincial and local conservation agencies are working together to move from a more traditional protected-area-based conservation strategy to one emphasizing integrated landscape management and broader ecological landscapes. ABI has piloted tools and methods to achieve this, including the stakeholder forum (ABIOC), integrated extension services, SMA legal arrangements, and partnerships with Municipalities and so on. Some progress has been made to institutionalize these arrangements at Provincial level, albeit informally. However, it is disappointing that more efforts have not been made to learn from and formalize institutional mandates, especially at national level. The ABI approach is an extremely valuable experiment in the integrated conservation of living landscapes. Preliminary results suggest that this new model can achieve more conservation, and greater social legitimacy, at lower cost, than conventional protected areas management on its own.

7.7 HAVE NEW FINANCIAL MECHANISMS FOR PROTECTED AREAS BEEN CREATED OR STRENGTHENED?

At a Provincial and National Level, no new funding mechanisms have been created or strengthened and landholders in protected landscapes are largely on their own financially and technically. CapeNature provides as much support as it can, but has stated that it will not create any new Stewardship arrangements because it lacks the resources to support them.

The Local Government Municipal Property Rates Act of 2004 regulates the application of property rates (including on rural lands), and provides exemptions where private landowners make a portion of their land available as a nature reserve under the Protected Areas Act. Landowners do not have to pay rates on the portion of their property that is subject to a stewardship contract, provided no commercial or agricultural activity takes place on that land parcel. Rebates have been implemented in the Overstrand but not Cape Agulhas. However, landholders discussed this at length in the stakeholder workshop. They agreed that these rebates are unlikely to incentivize conservation. Actual payments will be needed to change land use practices significantly.

Apart from limited support through the LandCare program, Extended Public Works Programmes are reluctant to invest in private land. This could provide useful incentives to landowners to clear alien invasive species that pose a fire hazard (under current law, land that is heavily infested may not be sold), and infrastructure development, such as hiking trails, key access roads, and other infrastructure. Investment is justified in terms of public goods, including biodiversity, water, reduced fire hazard, and the reduced cost and increased effectiveness of a landscape approach to these issues. At the time of writing, negotiations were underway between ABI and Working for Water to redress this lost opportunity.

The MTE stated that the project (working with FFI) had secured additional funding to allow it to test a range of economic solutions such as Payments for Environmental Services.. There has been no real progress on this issue, either in terms of the necessary technical or economic research, or in terms of collective action mechanisms through the local Municipalities. Yet, the economic case for local PES remains strong.

7.8 HAS THE PROJECT IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PROTECTED AREAS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES?

Relationships with local communities and the project are good. Several community members are employed by SANparks. The project provides considerable training in flower-picking and firefighting as well as conservation education. Progress is being made in local tourism development, although internal differentiation within communities is slowing progress.

7.9 HAS THE PROJECT TAKEN ANY MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE?

Climate modeling suggests that the Western Cape will suffer increased spatial and temporal perturbations in rainfall, and drier conditions generally. This may increase the risk of fire by a factor of 3-5. Since 2005, the area has been affected by two major fires and two floods.

Most activities in ABI contribute directly to climate change adaptation. Connecting and protecting natural landscapes conserves ecological processes. The growth of the bio-experience economy reduces the economic fluctuations associated with farming. Alien clearing, fire management and wetland rehabilitation all directly address climate change and habitat restoration.

7.10 HAS THE PROJECT ASSESSED THE CARBON BENEFITS OF THE PROTECTED AREAS WITH WHICH IT IS WORKING?

The fynbos ecosystem is not considered to be a significant carbon sink—although it is at major risk from climate change. Clearing woody species of invasive aliens may reduce in-situ carbon stocks, but the overall impact is not clear. Moreover, several project stakeholders are promoting renewable energy, and experiments are in place to use wood for wetland rehabilitation, energy supplies, and to test new financial mechanisms that use solar and wind energy.

7.11 DOES THE PROJECT HAVE A BUDGET FOR ACTIVITIES RELATED TO DISSEMINATION?

Dissemination budgets and awareness activities are included in a number of places. A short video on the project was prepared and showcased in a number of fora. In connection with the 3rd GEF Assembly which was held in Cape Town in late August 2006, the Project was featured in numerous magazines including (Africa Geographic, UND/GEF South Africa Projects Showcase and South African Airways-Sawabona). These magazines and publications were shared at the Assembly with nearly 2000 delegates from around the world. It is estimated that over 200 participants from the GEF Assembly, including delegations and experts from major donor countries and Ministers of Environment and Treasury have visited ABI project sites. Positive feedback and interest in the project from the delegates point to increased interest from the global community in drawing lessons from the project. SANBI (2006) featured ABI in a recent publication but more generally academic publication of biological and institutional results has not occurred.

ABI is generally getting more media coverage including: The Overberg Wanderer, Overberg News of February/March & June/July 2008, The Nuwejaars Wetland Special Management Area Executive summary, ABI Pamphlet for the World Parks +5 Year visit to the Agulhas area, COP 10 of the CBD conference brochure: article on the sustainable harvesting of Fynbos flora, Sustainable harvesting &

Early learning articles in the local news papers, Sustainable Flower Harvesting initiative profiled in the Shell Foundation-M&S Partnership publication, "Fresh", Exposure of sustainable harvesting initiative on electronic (Radio,TV) & printed media following the April media day. Awareness strategy developed and specific communication to focused groups such as Overberg farmers association, various business chambers and some tourism association.

An ABI Coffee table book was developed for sale to the public.

7.11.1 Cost effectiveness (of new conservation approach)

GEF/UNDP's investment in ABI has been cost effective, leveraging over \$20m in co-financing, and developing new, more cost-effective models for conservation. As a broad approach, it has changed the way things are done, and has been a powerful investment.

However, at a micro-level, ABI has generated lessons that might improve cost effectiveness of such Projects in the future:

- the data (i.e. conservation effectiveness) for calculating cost effectiveness on a per hectare basis is not available, e.g. measuring outputs (i.e. conservation) compared to inputs (i.e. management costs)
- Had Output 3 been formulated with a stronger economic perspective, this data is likely to have improved cost effectiveness
- ABI illustrated the high bureucratic costs of formalizing private land for conservation, suggesting that a new, better crafted approach needs to be developed.

The investment of Euro 2 million has gone a long way to securing the SMA for conservation. It is likely that biodiversity-based enterprises will grow slowly, though their future sustainability is not yet certain. A larger capital investment would have increased the likelihood of flipping the economic system towards biodiversity.

7.11.2 Contribution to upgrading approaches and skills at National level

SANParks has developed significant new skills in off -reserve conservation and stakeholder processes at local level, and some new appreciation of these issues at higher levels (SANParks).

However, this raises the operational question of how pilot projects like ABI affect national level capacity building, and how this can be enhanced? ABI build insufficient cross scale linkages between the center and field pilots to take full advantage of cross-scale capacity-building opportunities.
8 LESSONS LEARNED

The following important lessons were learned:

8.1 LESSONS RELATING TO A LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION APPROACH

- Off-reserve conservation is possible, and is potentially a highly effective form of conservation. A matrix of uses is likely to be more resilient and more sustainable ecologically, economically, socially.
- The future of landscape conservation lies in a complex matrix of formal and offreserve arrangements. This brings greater diversity and therefore more innovation to conservation, and therefore increased capacities of adaptation and resilience. It is risky to have all the conservation eggs in the basket of one or two state conservation agencies.
- It is the approach taken to working with landholders, far more than the goals set, that is critical for long-term success
- The current framework for off-reserve conservation in South Africa is expensive, bureaucratic and of questionable conservation added-value. There are significant opportunities for improvements in the crafting of these institutional frameworks and technical support.
- In South Africa there are significant technical gaps in land use economics and the governance of bio-landscapes. Adherence to a technical bio-centric approach and to outdated bureaucratic models is impeding progress
- Pragmatically, off-reserve conservation may provide greater returns on investment of scarce conservation dollars, though this still needs to be quantitatively assessed.
- Further, the ideology that conservation requires taking land out of economic production may well be outdated and inappropriate in a country where more than half the populace lives on less that \$2 a day.
- The improving terms-of-trade for a bio-experience economy suggests that a private and community protected areas approach is possible in many circumstances. Ecologically, they have proven important for recovering biodiversity and biodiversity processes, and the evidence that state protected areas are better at conservation goals is inconsistent. However, conservation driven by economic forces provides economic and social added-value, and this must be considered both a necessity and benefit of modern conservation.
- In South Africa there are strong underlying economic and social trends that support landscape conservation the growth of ecotourism, stagnation of agriculture, nature-based culture of South Africans

8.2 LESSONS RELATING TO INSTITUTIONAL RATIONALIZATION AND SCALE

The proposed changes in institutions with regards to attitudes, structures etc were probably not possible, feasible or realistic within the ABI timeframe (this is a quesiton posed by ABIOC). However, much greater progress may have occured with a stronger understanding of the process of change management and organizational rationalization:

- The theoretical understanding in support of institutional rationalization is weak in the biodiversity sector
- Similarly, theoretical understanding of governance, cross-scale linkages, and leadership at micro and macro levels, needs to be strengthened
- ABI demonstrated that institutional rationalization can be developed experientially from the bottom, especially if encouraged by an effective stakeholder engagement and if supported by local champions with different strengths. However, to be effectively institutionalized requires direct linkages with meso and especially macro-level champions.
- However, to be effective at securing their enabling environment and replicating themselves, field-level pilot projects need to be specifically designed to manage cross-scale linkages. ABI was not powerful enough to influence SANParks or national policy. Neither were national or provincial champions sufficiently invested in ABI that it was used to drive policy processes at this level.
- In pilot projects, care has to be taken to manage the conflict between the requirements for administrative hierarchy and developing a learning organization. For example, SANParks' hierarchical procedures may be necessary for administrative management, but they got seriously in the way of critical learning and stakeholder processes.
- In institutionalization rationalization processes, there is a strong propensity to replicate the bureaucratic status quo, rather than to seek innovative solutions to, in this case, landscape conservation based on broad goals. For example, stakeholders and landholders in particular thought that government leadership was more interested in fulfilling bureaucratic requirements than in developing genuine innovation. This applied both to institutional rationalization and land planning processes.

8.3 DESIGNING INNOVATIVE PROJECT AND STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES

- The way the Project was managed (including the SANParks PIU and relationships with UNDP), more than the way it was designed, has contributed to its effectiveness both in addressing its larger goals and in its development as a national and international example of landscape conservation.
- Stakeholder processes were critical to the success of ABI. ABI was successful in this because of its mental/stakeholder approach at least as much as its design:
 - It took a facilitative rather than a prescriptive approach, involving stakeholders as much as possible through forums and, particularly, implementation
 - Stakeholder relationships were built around tangible actions (not ultimately meaningless workshops)
 - "ABI started as a park programme, but is now all about relationships (and therefore much more like the private sector)" (comment at stakeholder workshop)
 - Successful stakeholder approaches are "more about attitudes" than anything else (comment at stakeholder workshop)
- The log-frame approach should be used to bring stakeholders together to craft a "development hypothesis" and Vision, and as the framework for annual peer-based performance review

• With pilot projects, it is not enough to identify external factors. They need to be monitored and influenced. Indicators and activities for this need to be incorporated into the log-frame.

8.4 COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

- Landholders rejected prescriptive stewardship models in favour of collective action models like Conservancies and the Special Management Area. This suggests that participatory and collective approaches need to be emphasized.
- Working with organized groups of landholders is much more effective than individuals less extension, less replication (e.g. formal legal applications), economies of scale, peer learning and regulation, etc.

8.5 **DEVELOPING NEW MODELS OF SUSTAINABLE USE**

The Flower Valley experience, which set out specifically to develop a sustainable use approach to wild fynbos conservation on private land yields, several important lessons:

- A tenacious combination of science, practice and long term commitment is essential to overcome complex and multi-dimensional challenges associated with sustainable use
- Good science (e.g. harvesting technology and Codes of Practice) is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for developing sustainabel use
- Developing new markets is much more difficult than normally assumed. (In this regard, the lesson of the wildlife sector is important market and product development has not been driven deliberately by government or NGOs, but by thousands of landholders competing and cooperating in the marketplace)
- Developing certification processes is complex, and works only under certain circumstances. Scale is important, and so is the involvement of stakeholders in the development of processes that will guide them.

8.6 Key Lessons

ABIOC posed the question: Would we have designed ABI differently if we knew then what we know now? How would it have differed? What do we know in hindsight that would have caused ABI to be more successful?

- Designing the Project with stronger recognition that economic process and governance are the means to achieving biodiversity ends, may have strengthened project design
- Many stakeholders, including landholders, recognise the value of biodiversity and are committed to its conservation. Stakeholders should have been involved much more in the design of the Project, and in an adaptive management process through regular peer-review.
- A bold goal might have been to devolve the management of on-reserve and off-reserve conservation on the Agulhas Plain to a single authority responsible primarily to local landholders and stakeholders, but also to Provincial and National Authorities
- ABI could have been designed specifically as an experiential learning approach to rationalise off-reserve conservation, including:
 - The roles and responsibilities of government agencies
 - Developing a new legal framework for off-reserve conservation at Provincial if not at National level. The current framework is weak, even prohibitive.

- ABI suffered from weak technical and advisory support and leadership from higher levels of authority. This should have been built into the Project, both by specifically funding such support from institutions (e.g. SANParks, universities, etc.) and by funding a high-level, active advisory board to support the project.
- Consultancies were in places useful, but tended to be expensive and lack sustainability. It might have been better to use these requirements to build a more sustainable support system, and in some cases to build capacities that South Africa needs economic skills, for example. This could have been done through a combination of retainers that linked consultants to the long-term success of the project, linkages to universities and other institutions, and linkages to the board mentioned above.
- To achieve the above, the design would require careful identification and management of cross-scale opportunities and threats
- The importance of resource/tourism economics, developing a "convincing economic model" and flipping towards a biodiversity economy, have emerged through ABI. A new project should design goals and activities specifically around this understanding.
- The Project should have been much more rigorous in collecting, managing and analysising data, and utilizing the power of data to drive social, economic and environmental process. In other words, the Project could have been designed more specifically as an experiment, utilizing an adaptive management process and action research methodologies to drive innovation.

9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 **PROJECT PERFORMANCE**

The project has made very good progress and this is in no small measure due to the Project Manager's skillful on-the-ground social mobilization and networking efforts. Managerially and financially the project has received exemplary support from the executing agency, SANPARKS, including from the regional manager. The project has displayed considerable flexibility and innovation in its approach to biodiversity conservation on the Agulhas Plain.

Most of the objective indicators will be largely met, completely met, or exceeded. The project has been granted a rating of **Satisfactory**, and would have been Highly Satisfactory but for some weaknesses in conceptualization, the log-frame, and low prioritization of outcomes 3 and 4. However, and this is where rating the project was complicated, **it has clearly gone way beyond the aspirations of the original project** in "conserving, restoring and delivering significant benefits" and in ensuring that "biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on the Agulhas Plain are significantly enhanced through effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement". In making this assessment, the TE must respond to two reservations expressed in the 2009 PIR.

First, delays in gazetting several of the new PAs, including the Nuwejaars Wetland SMA, may be important bureaucratically and in marking off targets, but social commitments to conservation are, in practice, judged to be more important than 'paper parks'. Even in areas not marked off on maps as protected environments, moreover, biodiversity is seldom at risk because of improving attitudes and knowledge of landholders, and their aspirations to use biodiversity sustainably to diversify their livelihoods.

Secondly, the TE is comfortable that the thorough approach towards completing and agreeing the Tourism Strategy for the Agulhas Plain is superior to ticking off achievements in a timelier manner using a consultancy document. These 'delays' represent explicit recognition of the importance of stakeholder processes, itself an indicator of progress.

9.2 **PROJECT** Importance

The Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative is very important for:

- protecting biodiversity within one of the world's premier biodiversity hotspots; and
- its creative approach to managing sustainable development and biodiversity protection within a high value production landscape with private land owners and local communities.
- demonstrating that biodiversity protection, income generation and job creation can be complimentary aims.

ABI is providing a good learning experience for policy makers within South Africa as a whole (even if they are not always taking advantage of this opportunity). It is generating lessons about resource economics, stakeholder processes, institutional rationalization, and cross-scale governance and learning, beyond the conceptualization of the Project document and, indeed, beyond theory and practice in South Africa more broadly. However, these lessons are not being fully analyzed and documented. They are only being absorbed superficially at higher levels of management. Policy is being developed deductively and largely from afar, without sufficient involvement of policy leaders

in experiential learning³⁷. The impact of ABI on policy and practice therefore remains far more cursory than is desirable.

9.3 **RISKS AND REPLICATION**

The biggest risks to ABI, and the new conservation model being developed by it are:

- An unclear organizational future, given that it was championed by SANParks which is unsure of its future role in off-reserve conservation
- The loss of the considerable experience built by ABI (specifically the ABI PIU) now that many things are in place to take it foward
- The absence of strategies to document the lessons learned
- The absence of strategies to formalize and institutionalise several approaches at local level that currently rely on personalities and personal relationships. This includes:
 - the institutional rationalization to support off-reserve conservation
 - the Agulhas National Park Forum
 - a new approach to off-reserve conservation by legally and technically empowering and supporting landholder collective action
- The absense of strategies and capacity to analyse key innovations arising out of ABI, and to develop a convincing case that translates these into positive institutional change at Provincial and National levels.

9.4 ISSUES OF PUBLIC GOODS, SCALE AND OFF-RESERVE CONSERVATION

Given sound policy and leadership, Parks have a powerful role to play as seeds for conservation landscapes large enough to ensure ecological resilience, and to benefit from numerous economies and ecologies of scale. Parks are also important engines of economic growth. Further investment in protected areas is often predicated on this attribute rather than on biodiversity. Two critical questions emerge. Who provides public functions associated with protected areas? How will critical issues of scale be managed? ABI demonstrates that both issues are vital, but need to be better understood and researched.

The unresolved question in South Africa is what public goods will Parks provide, and which agency will be responsible for this? Although SANParks now has a legal mandate for off-reserve conservation, it has not been provided the resources to support biodiversity conservation beyond the formal PAs that have hitherto been their mandate. Nor is their clarity on exactly what this requires and what the benefits will be. It is hoped that this changes for a number of reasons:

- This new approach, piloted within the ABI Project, could obviate the need for extensive and expensive acquisition of land for conservation.
- The majority of South Africa's National Parks and provincial parks are small. Their ecological resilience, economic impact, and viability are inextricably linked with the broader landscape, especially in the face of climate change and economic globalizaiton. New management philosphies and approaches are urgently needed.
- ABI has developed a foundation to test several new approaches. However, these lessons still need to mature. They also rely on committed personalities and need to be formally institutionalised.

³⁷ Well crafted policy is closely associated with high level policy-makers who are simultaneously actively involved with 'pet' pilot projects on the ground, thus making important cross-scale linkages.

• With carefully crafted policies, and a shift from prescriptive to facilitatory approaches, the benefits of collective off-reserve conservation are likely to be higher than expected, and the costs of supporting this a lot lower.

9.5 EXPERIMENTATION, REPLICATION AND POLICY

Project design failed to support institutionalization and replication of lessons, and sufficient analysis and dissemination of these. ABI is testing a remarkable number of new techniques and systems including technical and institutional models for alien control, fire management, land use planning, integrated landscape management, institutional rationalization, collective action (i.e. Nuwejaars SMA), and sustainable flower harvesting.

This innovation is being driven from the bottom. A critical concern is if the top will take advantage of this, and how to increase this probability. In this regard, if the innovations developed by ABI remain isolated this isolation is likely to render them politically unsustainable.

Lessons are that in pilot projects we need to:

- Ensure that the top are active participants in experiential learning, with funding and a mandate to translate these lessons into legislation, policy and practive more broadly³⁸
- Provide the bottom with capacity to reach across scale to create an enabling environment for replication and sustainability. This includes the capacity to build convincing arguments, and to take these messages upwards.

Similarly, creative projects like ABI need the capacity and power to manage external factors. Many risks to projects like ABI are external. These need to be identified in the Project document, and through the regular review processes. Risks and external factors need to be actively monitored, with specific indicators and MOV. Activities to manage risk must be built into Projects.

ABI remains a local experiment that may not have long term gains unless specific measures are taken to:

- Formalize the roles and goals they have negotiated over time (i.e. institutional rationalization)
- Develop and document the lessons learned
- Instigate an effective process of taking these lessons and procedures upwards so that they can be formalised and institutionalised.

In this regard, there are a number of powerful opportunities related to:

- 1. Technical (fire and clearing) and institutional (how to link public works programmes to private landholders) progress on alien control needs to be institutionalised in programmes like Working for Water
- 2. Analysing and publishing the Flower Valley experience in developing new sustainable use practices and certification

³⁸ Deductive learning is a process whereby new ideas are developed from a series of theoretical assumptions. Inductive learning is where new ideas are developed experientially. In South Africa, policy-making is largely deductive. Policy-making, however, is much more powerful when it involves both deductive (e.g. develop a development hypothesis, then test it through implementation) and inductive (experiential learning) processes. Thus, policy-makers who simultaneously involved themselves in field implementation of pilot initiatives are likely to be far more effective than those who do no.

- 3. Using the SMA model as a basis for completely changing the approach and legislation for offreserve conservation in the Western Cape (if not South Africa)
- 4. Formalizing the institutional rationalization to support conservation amongst a number of conservation and other agencies (Agriculture, municipalities) on the Agulhas Plain. At the very least this should formalise the current status quo in a MoU. Even better, it should be used to test a bold new model based on a single off-and on-reserve conservation authority accountable primarily to local stakeholders but also to national objectives
- 5. Defining national objectives and operationalization mechanisms for off-reserve conservation, including specific assistance to SANParks to work through this issue.

9.6 STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES: FACILITATIVE VERSUS PRESECRIPTIVE CONSERVATION

ABI had clear conservation goals, albeit somewhat theoretical. However the means of achieving these ends were largely prescriptive. Land was purchased to consolidate Agulhas National Park, and it was hoped that biodiversity corridors would be conserved using tools like land use planning, contract parks, extension, conservation education (see Purpose and Output 1 indicators)³⁹. The only landholder at the initial (2002?) stakeholder meetings stated: "How can you people sit there and tell us what to do on our land!?"

If the ABI Coordinator had not been told to "put away the book⁴⁰", and if he has not focused his efforts on building participatory stakeholder process (which, luckily, was his strength), ABI is likely to have failed. Only 4% of the budget was allocated to workshops and participatory processes. ABI's current momentum owes a great deal to social process that included:

- An approach based on participatory theory, including relationship building, open listening, honest communication, regular contact, etc.
- Building relationships around tangible actions, for example the SMA, support to the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau, alien-clearing, fire management with municipalities, etc.
- A conscious decision by the ABI Coordinator to involve stakeholders in decision-making and, where ever possible, to encourage and fund them to take on responsibilities. Having the Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau, to use one of many examples, take responsibility for implementing tourism research created buy-in and improved the probability of sustainability.

Several stakeholders at the TE workshop noted that ABI started as a Park project but (like the private sector) was now "all about relationships". They emphasized that the best way to create effective stakeholder processes was to involve them fully around tangible actions. They were less concerned that only 4% of the budget was allocated specifically to social process like workshops, than with the fact that the ABI Coordinator involved them in planning and implementing much of the budget. Thus, the effectiveness of stakeholder processes is less related to how much money is budgeted for activities like workshops and consultation, and more to the way tangible activities are implemented. The very high level of additional co-financing associated with ABI (

³⁹ This emphasis is repeated in chapter 3 of the forthcoming UNDP book.

⁴⁰ When the ABI Coordinator eagerly approached a senior official with the Project Document he was advised to put it away because stakeholders had not been involved in developing the document, and would resent being told what to do.

Table 18) was attributed directly to this approach.

ABI developed considerable capacity in participatory planning and implementation. While intangible, this had powerful tangible results. We have just mentioned co-financing to the tune of \$21m, which does not include a further R40-60 m for alien clearing through public works programmes. The high level of informal institutional rationalization and cooperation between SANParks, Cape Nature, Department of Agriculture, Municipalities, NGOs, the private sector and communities also greatly reduced transaction costs and increased the effectiveness and sustainability of the ABI spend.

Post ABI, how do we sustain this? How do we replicate it? Informatively, the SANParks Buffer Zone document does not recognize the importance of stakeholder processes and approaches. A prescriptive approach that identifies ends without specifying means is characteristic of many conservation agencies. A new approach based on "a flipped bureaucratic mentality" has been embraced by SANParks field managers associated with ABI. However, uptake by government organizations appears to be limited to the Western Cape Department of Agriculture⁴¹ which has been greatly influenced by, and has influenced greatly, the ABI experience.

9.7 CONSERVATION INDICATORS AND THREATS

The absence of effective affordable biodiversity monitoring in ABI, both as a measure of conservation effectiveness and as a way of testing different conservation models, was a serious oversight. Throughout the project, legally binding jurisdictional definitions have been used as a proxy for conservation success. It has not used measures of management effectiveness. This gives rise to the criticism that ABI's achievements might just be lines on a map (e.g.,

⁴¹ See Western Cape Department of Agriculture Strategic Plan 2011/11-2014/15, p39; also Western Cape Department of Agriculture Annual Performance Plan 2010/11, p36

Figure 3), and also that much genuine progress may not be mapped or recognized – e.g. sustainable flower harvesting on 30,000 hectares, conservation on properties that are not formally recognized by ABI. Recognizing this weaknesses, ABIOC, for example, posed the important question: Has ABI been successful in conserving species, ecosystems (patterns and processes)? Are there resource documents to assist in this assessment?

In this vein, the failure of ABI to 'cover' certain areas defined as being critical to key ecological processes is far less problematic than in looks on a map. For example, the area between De Mond and the Overberg Test Range is not marked as conserved on maps, yet is important for several ecological processes identified in the Project Document. In practice, however, the landholders in this area are strongly conservation-conscious, are actively taking conservation measures, and biodiversity is certainly not threatened. It is just that the ABI indicators do not accurately reflect conservation outcomes.

9.8 FLOWER VALLEY, SUSTAINABLE BEST PRACTICE AND PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES

Flower Valley now provides a leading example of how, technically, to develop codes of practice to support the sustainable use of a new product like fynbos harvesting. Flower Valley has also experimented with the development of new product markets for certified wild products and shown just how much tenacity, luck and hard work is required to achieve this. The lessons of both these experiences need to be captured and published⁴².

Flower Valley has worked with seven emerging picking businesses on some 30,000 hectares of private land. Flower Valley also developed and institutionalized environmental conservation at the level of Agulhas Plain, but also in national curricula. In short, Flower Valley has been an extremely good investment of Project finance.

However, given the effectiveness of landholder and stakeholder processes demonstrated by ABI, one wonders if Flower Valley might not have had a greater impact if it had set itself up to work with the larger industry, and specifically with the other flower packsheds on the Agulhas Plain, from the beginning. If these packsheds had been involved directly in the development of sustainable harvesting codes of conduct, would they have had more commitment to rolling them out? And might their participation have influenced the technical development of codes of conduct in a manner that increased the commercial relevance of these codes of conduct?

9.9 THE EMERGENCE OF CONSERVATION COLLECTIVES

On Agulhas Plain the emergence of collective landholder conservation associations has been dramatic. In addition to the Nuwejaars SMA and seven conservancies already in place, three additional farmer's associations are contemplating SMA status⁴³, and progress is limited by the ability to serve this demand.

Ironically, a major factor in this growth was the threat posed by the expansion of Agulhas National Park. The average length of tenure of landholders in the Agulhas Plain is over 70 years, and some farmers have been on the land for seven generations. When SANParks declared in the newspaper that "the entire area up to the mountain will be a Park!" this caused enormous resentment, and the landholders unified around this threat.

The innovation of Conservancies and SMAs is being driven by the landholders themselves, who clearly favour collective action and dislike prescriptive/authoritarian models (e.g. contract parks, stewardship arrangements). However, while legislation was in place that made this possible⁴⁴, the

⁴² Capture several of the key lessons from the Flower Valley sustainable harvesting program by writing at least three peer-review journal articles including:

[•] Developing the ethical and sustainable use of fynbos (an overview of where Flower Valley started, and the key processes it has supported in the development of this sustainable use experiment, taken largely from the 2009 Privett document and published in Conservation Biology or Oryx.

[•] Developing a certification programme from the ground up: lessons from sustainable fynbos in the Cape Florisitic Region

[•] Is sustainable fynbos harvesting viable? Lessons from a ten-year experiment in the Cape Floristic Region

⁴³ The Strandveld Farmer's Association have been provided R200,000 for 3 years by Overstrand Municipality to develop SMA-type bottom up collective conservation planning (13,473ha). Farmers between Bredarsdopt and de Hoop discussing Hard Dunes (Renosterveld) SMA (28,682+ha). De Mond SMA is in a very early stage of development (18,435ha).

⁴⁴ This includes, especially, the Protected Areas Act, 2003, but also Provincial and Municipal policies

legislation was confusing, and a significant challenge was to make it workable for landholders – given how hard stakeholders had to work to make it happen, and the considerable support willingly provided by SANParks and others, the conditions for collective conservation could not be said to be enabling or even replicative. Procedures are daunting and expensive⁴⁵ (

⁴⁵ Here, the excellent support provided to the SMA by SANParks (especially Mr Willem Lowe) for the contracting of planning and legal assistance must be mention. The process was long, compex (and of questionable value) but it did promote landholder participation.,

Table 26), appear to satisfy bureaucratic requirements rather than conservation effectiveness, and are a serious impediment to the spread of this model. Indeed, so potentially powerful is this model as a mechanism for holistic conservation, that it is worthy of critical analysis and implementation. We make only a few keys points here:

- The cost of working with individual landholders, including natural resource monitoring and regulation and the provision of extension, will always be prohibitive. The implication is that the currently approach to both natural resource regulation and stewardship is unworkable in practice.
- Internal checks-and-balances have more social legitimacy and operational effectiveness than external monitoring and regulation for ensuring conservation. For example, simply mentioning the inappropriateness to SMA objectives of developing a feedlot to a landholder already building this facility was sufficient to stop this negative activity.
- Collective action would be easily encouraged by providing government services like extension and public works programs such as "Working for Water" through them. This would also increase the efficacy and impact of these services,

The legislation and processes supporting the emergence of natural resource collectives like Conservancies and SMAs are clumsy, if not prohibitive. The mechanisms for facilitating and supporting such collectives are not in place. Developing these processes is **probably the greatest conservation opportunity in the Western Cape, if not South Africa**. The value of collective natural resource management is not a new idea, and its importance is growing (Table 34). The ideas that the SMA and ABI more generally are developing are not new, and some have been well tested and shown to be extraordinarily powerful (e.g. Table 34).

In brief, we note that collective natural resource management is highly effective but depends on:

- Fully empowering landholders with the rights and responsibilities to manage natural resources sustainably
- Developing mechanisms of collective action at the local level (e.g. SMA, Conservancies) to regulate resource use, and for economies of scale in landscape management, provision of services, etc.
- Building civil society to allow effective cross-scale civic engagement in the political and adminstrative processes. An example might be a Provincial or National representative association for SMAs and Conservancies.

9.10 PLANNING

Planning is a major commitment by government agencies. Plans and the planning process are complex, acronym laden and difficult to follow. ABI has helped with planning at several levels:

- At the level of the land use unit, ABI has facilitated the development of the <u>Agulhas Park</u> <u>Plan</u> and its broader acceptance by the community, as well as various plans including for the <u>Nuwejaars SMA</u>.
- Working with the Department of Agriculture, ABI has facilitated a system of "<u>Area Wide</u> <u>Planning</u>" using fine scale 1:10,000 mapping. This is an initiative that is said to be participtory with far greater involvement of landholders.
- At the level of the Municipality and District, ABI has made considerable efforts to ensure that biodiversity objectives are included in <u>Spatial Development Frameworks</u> (i.e. zones and

maps) and <u>Integrated Development Plans</u> (i.e. goals and lists of projects and priorities). The development of these plans, however, is generally outsourced to consultants.

• In addition, SANParks/SANBI have developed a <u>Draft Bioregional Plan</u> which is basically a fine scale map of vegetation conservation types and priorities.

However, there are questions of whether key decision-makers such as Municipalities or landholders are using these plans in anything like a consistent manner, or even understand them. The plans are often very technical and confusing. It is also unclear how the different scales of planning integrated, except for through social processes like ABI. Some interviewees mentioned an "obsession with planning" and questioned whether it was worthwhile. Also, it was surprising that so much planning had occurred, yet in the complete absence of economic data, cost benefit analysis and the like!

A full analysis of the efficacy of the planning process is well beyond the scope of the TE. However, the following observations may be pertinent. Much of the planning consists of improved mapping and is worthwhile, provided it is cost effective. However, the plans are complex, and goals and actions are obscured by technical and legal details. The plans would be much more readable and implementable in the following format:

- A 5-7 page "policy document" stating major goals, means, and zones
- An operation plan, perhaps in a log-frame format including priorities, activities, workplans, etc.
- Removal of all the legal, technical, etc. detail that currently clogs up plans into annexes.

The planning process (which is as or more important than the plans themselves) could also be improved as follows:

- Emphasise that even when consultants are used, the process of involving stakeholders in deciding their own goals and priorities is at least as important as the technical product
- Streamlining the links between different scales of planning. This will require iteration between bottom-up planning and the setting of a larger Vision at municipal or area level.
- Inclusion of economic analysis, including cost-benefit analysis, valuation of public goods, economies of scale, etc.

9.11 COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION

Integrated land management is characterized by multiple goals, complexity, uncertainty and adaptability. Attempts to integrate these goals amongst government planning and implementation authorities consumes an enormous amount of time, yet invariably do not succeed. This is because managing land is simply too complicated to be done at the scale of a district or a province (perhaps the lesson from central planning associated with the old Soviet Union). The only real alternative is coordination from the bottom, driven through a process of stakeholder demand, with the top focusing on facilitating collective decision-making and setting "big hairy goals".

The emerging literature on landscape governance emphasizes that there is considerable confusion about which issues should be planned at which level, with a strong tension that human affairs are better managed at small scale whereas ecosystems need to be managed at larger scales. The emerging question is how to build a system of institutions across scale. Following the principle of subsidiarity, Murphree's insight is that the vast majority of functions should be scaled down to the level of the landholder. They should then be scaled upwards through a process of upward delegation. This leaves ultimate authority in the hands of the citizenry, but also recognizes that some functions need to be scaled up for reasons of economies of scale and the internalization of costs and benefits. There is considerable congruence between this principle and the emergence of collective action described above. There would have been considerable synergy in applying this emerging theoretical work to the practical challenges of implementing ABI.

9.12 INSTITUTIONAL RATIONALIZATION

Institutional rationalization has been a constant challenge for ABI with jurisdictional overlap between SANParks and CapeNature, between conservation and agriculture, with municipal and district planning, and between local, provincial and National scales. At the local level, personal cooperation between these stakeholders, including regular retreats by key actors to discuss and reinforce their roles and responsibilities, has been reasonably effective. ABI initiated an attempt to formalize some of this progress, which was taken up by CAPE through a consultancy, but did not succeed. This matter is again the subject of a high-level consultancy initiated by DEAT.

However, as long as institutional rationalization is based on inter-agency bureaucratic negotiation, rather than on first principles, it is unlikely to be successful. A good way to start would be to ask the following questions:

- How do we maximise the benefits to landholders from biodiversity, and how do we empower them to manage biodiversity in a responsible and informed manner? This is likely to lead in the direction of collective action mentioned above.
- What are the key issues of scale we need to manage, e.g. public goods, economies of scale, fugitive resources that are not fully internalised at the level of the individual landholder? Without disempowering landholders or reducing their incentives for managing biodiversity sustainably, what institutions of scale do we need and how do we develop them?

9.13 ECONOMIC ARGUMENTS

Surveys⁴⁶ showed that biodiversity, and wild flowers in particular, provided 24-28% of farm income (wildflowers, thatch, tourism, firewood). 'Outside income' contributed a further 31-35%. Conventional farming, by contrast, provided only 42% of farm income in 2009 (livestock 16%, grain 6%, dairy 13%, wine 5%, vegetables 2%). Importantly, the top eight future opportunities indentified in these interviews with landholders concerned the biodiversity economy – namely tourism, fynbos production, charcoal, international awareness of fynbos, carbon trading, demand for lifestyle farms, national park and game farming. Despite this, "a convincing economic argument for bio-diversity conservation" had not yet been developed. This was a weakness of the Project. Important improvements might have been:

- Valuing public goods provided by landholders (especially wildlife/scenery and water supplies at the local level)
- Building institutions to enable/ensure that the benefiting public invested back into the production of the public goods from which they benefited (e.g. a tourism levy for businesses benefitting from scenery and wildlife; water charges for water uses, respectively)
- Developing an economic understanding of the biodiversity-experience economy.

Illustrating the biodiversity economy as an upside down triangle (Figure 8) was seen to be a potentially powerful argument by the stakeholder workshop. This is because this way of illustrating

⁴⁶ Notably Beatrice Conradie (2009) *Farming and Conservation in the Strandveld*, Brochure developed for farmers

the biodiversity economy emphasizes both the magnitude of the whole biodiversity economy, and the fact that it balances somewhat precariously on the effectiveness on land management. This provides a powerful argument for public investment in conservation at the level of the land unit, be this a state, private or community protected area.

Although it is the landholder who is deterministic of land use and sustainability, much of the economic added-value from biodiversity investments is off-land through the tourism sector and upstream/ downstream economic and employment multipliers. The implication is that investing in land-based conservation is essential for growing the larger economy. This argument is powerful, and can be used effectively to encourage public investment in biodiversity by demonstrating to the political process that allocates public funds the potential gains in the form of economic growth and employment.

Figure 8: Illustration of the structure of a bio-experience economy, and the importance of land conservation



9.14 Advisory Body and Consistent, Persisent Light-Touch Faciliation

Over time, ABI lost its higher level champions, technical support was reduced, and communication between ABI and policy-makers, ABI and similar initiatives, and ABI and new knowledge (e.g. economics and governance) weakened. Similarly, with the reduction of external technical support, the opportunities to talk outside the family were reduced, as was the role of the outsider in providing insights or non-internal points of view. ABI would have been strengthened with specific provision of the means for "consistent, persistent, light-touch facilitation". This, and the power of a facilitator to unleash internal potential, is an important function that adds enormous value and should be institutionalized in a government agency, high-level NGO or even a learning institutional like a university. ABIOC suggested that they would have benefited enormously from having an external advisory body to help resolve conflicts (which are extremely hard to resolve in-house) and to provide new ideas and technical advice.

9.15 EFFECTIVE USE OF THE LOG-FRAME APPROACH

"A common misuse of the log frame is to design the project first and "fill in" the logical framework matrix as an afterthought. This defeats the whole purpose of the logical framework and design

methodology⁴⁷". The Log-Frame is a powerful tool, but in the case of ABI was not used effectively. The Logical Framework Approach has several purposes.

- First, to involve stakeholders in building their own futures.
- Second, to take stakeholders through a series of analyses (e.g. stakeholder analysis, situation analysis, problem analysis, objectives analysis, alternatives analysis) to build an interdisciplinary hypothesis about the Project problem and its causes.
- Third, it provides a mechanism for adaptive management at the level of activity, goals, hypothesis and objectives

In the case of ABI, the logical framework approach was not used to build stakeholder commitment to a common set of goals and activities. Further, design flaws in the formulation of the objectives hierarchy and indicators (which have complicated evaluation and project management) would have been far less likely with wider scrutiny, wider participation and a well-facilitated process. For example, a log-frame process was critically important in formulating the development hypothesis on which the renowned CAMPFIRE programme was based. It demonstrated to a wide spectrum of participants that they had great commonality of goals. It also negotiated, defined and documented in a highly transparent and intellectual manner the roles and responsibilities of the participating agencies⁴⁸. This last step, for example, achieved in one step much of the institutional rationalization that ABI has been agonizing with over the years.

The development hypotheses, further, is an essential component of an adaptive management process. Adaptive management is a rigorous intellectual process of setting clear goals, developing an explanatory hypothesis for how these goals can be achieved, implementing a series of activities towards these goals, monitoring outcomes, and then critically reflecting on outcomes to modify and improve, respectively, activities, hypotheses and objectives. ABI has made considerable progress by way of trial-and-error, a process that has been enhanced by the insight and participation of many stakeholders. However, strictly speaking ABI has not practiced adaptive management because of the absence of a clear development hypothesis or model, and the absence of effective monitoring.

The log-frame is a powerful tool for adaptive management, insufficiently used by ABI. The ABI logframe has weaknesses in its conceptualization, and the ABI partners (including UNDP and the PIR) progressively defined (and achieved) bigger goals than defined in the log-frame. They reported activities against its activities and milestones, but they never consciously upgraded the log-frame to reflect conceptual or operational growth. Consequently many activities that were ultimately critical to the ABI process and not formally recorded in the PIR because, more than five years on, still reflects the original log-frame. This leads to several recommendations:

- <u>Train managers to use the log-frame:</u> Project managers and stakeholders expected to use log-frames for reporting and adaptive management need to be trained how to do so. They also need to be specifically authorised and encouraged to modify it adaptively.
- <u>Evaluations.</u> The use of consultants to conduct MTE's and TE's is important. But Evaluations are, by definition, an auditing function. They are not strictly a stakeholder peer

⁴⁷ LandCare South Africa (undated) Training Manual for Planning for Participatory Development, volume 2, p_{s}^{32}

⁴⁸ Hasan Moinuddin (1990) CAMPFIRE Programme Document, Hunyani Hills Hotel, Harare

performance assessment or learning processes (although this TE was stretched for this purpose) which, consequently, is often missing from Projects hence the next suggestion.

• <u>Facilitated annual peer performance review using the log-frame</u>. The log-frame provides an ideal mechanism for objective-orientated, participatory performance review by stakeholders of their own performance. Learning projects like ABI are greatly strengthened by an annual (even quarterly) facilitated review and planning exercised based on the log-frame49. Internal peer-review is essential, and provision of an external person to facilitate this process using the log-frame on an annual basis is highly recommended50.

⁴⁹ This process was use in the NORAD Luangwa Integrated Rural Development Project in Zambia. It provided the basis for rapid change management. Devolution coupled with peer planning and peer performance review motivated staff, clarified their roles, and created accountability to each other. This improved the average performance of the nine functional centers by an average of 400%, and cut costs from \$3m to \$1.2m ⁵⁰

10 WAY FORWARD

It is important to keep this important experiment in landscape management moving forward. Five key processes are identified:

CONVENE – maintain and strengthen stakeholder processes, using ABIOC and similar forums to facilitate integration. But broaden stakeholder forums to include the private sector, and private-sector-type processes.

COLLATE – greatly improve collection, collation, interpretation and presentation of data as a means of coordinating development and developing a Common Vision for ABI. This possible Vision is: a large, integratively managed landscape creating value to people and environment through sustainable use of biodiversity. Key data is to describe the biodiversity economy, including income and employment multipliers, employment, the value of public goods and services (water, wildlife, scenery), possibilities for economies of scale, monitoring of ecosystem health, etc.

CONCEPTUALISE – use improved data and experience to conceptualize how the system works, build a development hypothesis, build a VISION around this hypothesis, and agree the necessary actions. This may also need some high level technical facilitation and expertise to facilitate cross-scale learning processes.

CROSS-SCALE COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING – link ABI into learning and policy processes at Provincial and National level to develop a supportive enabling environment for ABI, and to enable ABI to contribute its lessons to national development and conservation/.

CAPITALIZE – obtain funding, both to maintain stakeholder processes, to improve data collection (relationship with a university?), and to provide tangible activities around which to build stakeholder processes. There are opportunities where capital investment would generate large added value in the form of public goods. Two important innovations might include: a discretionary capital fund to encourage stakeholder to identify and develop such opportunities; the development of collective action and fee-collection mechanisms to raise financing to deal strategically with issues of public goods and payment for environmental services.

ANNEX 1: ABI PROJECT RESULTS MATRIX

See attached file: ABI Project Results Framework 2010

ANNEX 2: AN EVALUATION OF THE BMU PROJECT "PROTECTION OF WETLANDS IN THE CAPE FLORISTIC REGION

See attached file: ABI TE 2010 Draft BC

ANNEX 3: SUGGESTIONS REGARDING SANPARKS AND OFF-RESERVE CONSERVATION

This is extra to the Terms of Reference and is still being developed

Name	Organization			
Martin Hollands	ABI Chief Technical Advisor, Flora and Fauna International			
Willem Lowe	SANParks			
Ingrid Coetzee	Consultant, EnAct International			
Sean Privett	Flower Valley, Grootbos			
Michael Lutzheyer	Grootbos, Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy			
Rodger Bailey	Conservation Coordinator, Flower Valley Conservation Trust			
Leslie Richardson	Director, Flower Valley Conservation Trust			
Marianna Afrikaner	Flower Valley Conservation Trust			
Angela Millar	CEO, Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau			
Haaniem Moosa	Center Manager, Red Door			
Hugo Geldenhuis	Agri-Promo			
Ettienne Fourie	Park Manager, Agulhas National Park			
Thys Aarends	Former Chair, Elim Overssers Council; SANParks			
Aliston Appel	Elim Community; SANParks			
Rory Allardice	Chair, ABIOC			
	Nuwejaars Wetlands Project Coordinator			
Mick d'Alton	Vice Chair, ABIOC			
	Founder Member and Executive Committee SMA			
Con Neethling	Member, Nuwejaars SMA			
Dirk Human	Chair, Nuwejaars SMA			
Hennis Germishuis	Cape Department of Agriculture, LandCare Manager			
Tjerk Hoekstra	Manager, Agulhas, CapeNature			
Fannie Bekker	CapeNature			
Chris Martens	CapeNature, Mentorship Program			
Mandy Barnett	Director, SANBI Fynbos Programme			
	CAPE Coordinator			
Caroline Peterson	CAPE, SANBI			
Paul Daphne	Managing Executive: Parks, SANParks			
Thamba Mabilane	Chief Financial Officer, SANParks			
Nik Sekhram	Principle Technical Advisor: Ecosystems and Biodiversity, UNDP			
Mpho Nenweli	Project Manager – Environment and Energy, UNDP South Africa			
Gary de Kock	Manager, Western Cape, SANParks			
Bertus Haywood	Cape Agulhas Municipality			
Attendees of ABIOC meeting not mentioned above (7 July 2010)				
Francois Kotze	Overberg District Municipality			
Leon Steyn	Overstrand Municipality			
Janice Albertyn	Bredarsdopr Farmers Association			

ANNEX 4:LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

ANNEX 5: INSIGHTS FROM THE ABI EXPERIENCE

The following comments reflect insights into natural resoruce governance, economics and project management that stem from, and are of direct relevance, to ABI. In many ways these are more important than what is needed in an evaluation, so they have been extracted to this annex so as to not to clog up the Terminal Evluation.

5.1 Some Theoretical Comments Related to Project Conceptualization

The quality of the Project Document and its annexes are exceptional and it was obviously subjected to a high standard of evaluation. The Project Document set sound biodiversity objectives, defined useful activities, and had a broad conceptualization of the means of achieving these ends. It had some idea of the importance of economic viability but did not adequately conceptualize these, except partly for Output 2. It also exhibited a generally weak understanding of participatory stakeholder processes and issues of cross-scale environmental administration and governance. In this chapter, therefore, we provide some general comments about some of the economic and governance issues that were not effectively conceptualized in the Project Document, and the importance of which has emerged or is still emerging.

5.2 **BIODIVERSITY**

The Project Document is strong at recognising threats and defining biodiversity processes and the team that developed it were obviously leaders in this field. If we need to criticise this, it is that ecological goals are too theoretical and unproven. One clear weakness is the failure to design a system for monitoring biodiversity directly rather than relying on cadastral jurisdiction as a proxy (i.e. assuming that designating an area as Protected was the same as achieving conservation when the validity of this assumption is actually a critical hypothesis that the Project should have assessed rather than assumed).

5.3 ECONOMICS

The Project Document should be congratulating on recognising the importance of <u>land use economics</u> as a mechanism for driving the formation of Protected Areas and for conserving biodiversity. The see list of root causes and management issues identified in Annex 9, p 108-112 are summarized in Table 32.

The economic approaches proposed in the Project Document tended to be intuitive, and in the case of output 2, somewhat effective. However, it is likely that Project design would have benefited from the incorporation of real technical expertise in this area. In particular, the Project Document would have been strengthened by:

- An understanding of sustainable use theory (Figure 9), how policies need to be changed to unlock the inherent comparative advantages of a bio-experience economy, and whether this approach was viable on the Agulhas Plain?
- An understanding of economics and the public good aspects of landscape conservation. Many of the conservation interventions developed through ABI (e.g biodiversity conservation; alien clearing and water; fire management; protected area) have public good goods aspects to them. However, the potential to develop new conceptual and institutitional models of Payment-for-Ecological Services is an opportunity that ABI did

not explicitly address despite providing considerable such payments in the form af public works (e.g. alien clearing) and donor support.

Table 32: Economic and Organization Issues identified by the Project Document

Institutional Issues:

- Conservation agencies in Agulhas Plain have a sectoral approach to conservation on the Plain and there is a weak coordination between stakeholders;
- Unclear agencies' mandates, weak agency co-operation apparatus for alien species control implies that existing IAS control efforts are unfocused—reducing their long-term efficacy and cost-effectiveness; Local government mandates for conservation management have yet to be clarified;
- Overlapping institutional responsibilities regarding fire management; limited co-ordination & communication; weak-accountability within landholding community for fire management in the area; Economic Issues:
- The total economic value of vulnerable ecological systems (underpinning livelihoods) are not accommodated in the cost/benefit calculus of land use;
- Awareness of alternative sustainable land uses (tourism/ sustainable flower harvesting) limited amongst landholders and capital markets;
- The economic/ financial benefits derived from invasive alien plant clearance (i.e. restoration of hydrological services, financial benefits derived from sale of timber) are poorly articulated to land holders, communities and regional planners;
- Local mechanisms to generate continued revenue for alien clearing ineffective; distribution/systems for products derived from IAS are locally absent;
- The economic values of wetlands are poorly understood by landowners and user communities;
- The marginal costs of ecosystem management to facilitate sustainable use are notrecovered; Profits accrue elsewhere in the value chain
- The total economic value of vulnerable ecological systems (underpinning livelihoods) are not accommodated in the cost/benefit calculus of land use

Figure 9: A conceptual depiction of biodiversity's comparative advantage and the impacts of policy failure



A strategy of deliberately addressing market failure has resulted in a transformation of semi-arid savannas from livestock back into wildlife. This includes devolving use rights for bio-resources to landholders, developing new collective institutions (e.g. conservancies, producer associations) to manage externalities associated with spatially and temporally fugitive resources and to take advantage of economies of scale, and removing false constraints to utilizing wild resources (e.g. promoting, not preventing use, provided it is sustainable). A similar strategy is reflected in output 2 of ABI (i.e. ecologically, socially and ethically sustainable harvesting of wild fynbos is demonstrated as a viable land use on the Agulhas Plain), and has been highly successful.

5.4 MARKET FAILURE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR "FLIPPING" THE BIO-EXPERIENCE ECONOMY.

A plausible hypothesis for an intervention like ABI is that the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services is caused by "market failure" the theoretical causes of which are summarized in

Table 1. This is a situation where prices are <u>not</u> right so that private means contradict the social ends of an efficient allocation of resources. It is reasonable to assume that on the Agulhas Plain the net value to society of biodiversity (including biodiversity, water, ecotourism support systems associated with bio-resources and so on) could well exceeds the net value of current land uses, but that these social costs and benefits are not reflected in the private costs and benefits that drive land use. This failure to put a correct 'price' on using the environment has resulted in an undersupply of environmental goods and services. Indeed, the hypothesis behind southern Africa's pioneering sustainable use movement has been that bio-businesses have a comparative advantage over conventional forms of land use (outside of areas highly suitable for rainfed agriculture) but that market failures have prevented this comparative advantage from being reflected in land use decisions Figure 9.

Table 33: Causes of market failure

- *Externalities* where a person does not bear all the costs or benefits of his or her action, for instance where the market price or cost of production excludes its social impact, cost or benefit.
- **Public goods** (a special form of externality) exist where a person cannot be excluded from its provision (i.e. non-excludability) and when one person's consumption of the good does not reduces its availability to anyone else (non-rival consumption). Both biodiversity preservation and climate-change protection are public goods, where no person or nation can be excluded from the public goods of sustainable ecosystems and climates or, more locally, from the general public enjoying seeing wildlife or fynbos on private land as they drive past.
- *Open access*, commonly known as the Tragedy of the Commons, is where property rights (ideally comprehensive, exclusive, transferable, secure) are poorly defined and everyone has the incentive to capture the benefits as quickly as possible before someone else gets them. Reinvestment in the resource is discouraged because the investor is not empowered to exclude other users from the gains resulting from this investment.
- *Hidden or incomplete information* causes market failures because costs and benefits are not properly reflected in market prices.
- **Regulatory costs or constraints or government intervention failure** distort prices by, for example, subsidizing agriculture (so it outcompetes with biodiversity-based businesses) or differentially placing constraints on bio-businesses that reduce their competitiveness relative to alternative forms of land use.

Outputs 3 and 4 (i.e., responsible tourism and sustainable livelihoods; increased local support for biodiversity conservation) grappled their way towards an incentive driven approach to landscape conservation. However they, and the associated activities and indicators, were poorly formulated (see MTE), and poorly conceptualized from an economic perspective. Had the project set out to "build a convincing economic argument / model for conservation as a land use" (two related strategies emerging from the MTE process) it might have begun to "flip" the economy into one based on sustainable use of biodiversity". This might have provided a stronger theoretical approach to achieving its goals in a more strategic and effective manner. Improved understanding of market failure might have resulted in better conceptualization of mechanisms for developing a bio-sustainable economy. This applies to the public goods aspects of ecotourism and large mammal reintroduction (i.e. landholders pay the full costs but tourists passing buy and spending their money in bed-and-breakfasts reap some of the benefits). It also applies to payment for ecosystem services including water, biodiversity, and fire.

Rehabilitating the bio-experience resource base by reintroducing large mammals that are locally extinct produces both:

- a private good (i.e. increase viability of ecotourism on private land)
- and a public good (i.e. a more attractive environment on that Agulhas Plain that benefits the many tourism operators in the area).

Most tourism businesses in ABI would benefit from scenery that includes wildlife. This presents a sound economic argument for collective action to fund and accelerate the process of restocking. An operational response could be to obtain a proportion of the public value added (e.g. through a property or tourism levy) through a collective action mechanism such as the Municipality or legally empowered associations (e.g. Tourism Bureaus) to invest in restocking.

Paying for environmental services like water follows a similar logic to that made for wildlifeecotourism. The producers of water are individual landholders (through alien clearing and wetland rehabilitation), but the beneficiaries are consumers across the Agulhas Plain. It follows that a collective mechanism is needed so that consumers (e.g. urban areas like Struisbaai, Bredarsdorp and Agulhas) pay a greater share of the real cost of producing water (e.g. through Municipal water charges), and these payments are targeted at improving water production. Research is also needed to address the information problem of knowing which land is producing water and therefore which landholders should be paid and how much.

A partial solution is the extended public works programs, for example the public funds directed at alien clearing. However, these prioritize state land and have employment (rather than PES) as their primary driving logic.

Agulhas Plain faces many collective action problems. The scale of the solution should reflect the scale at which the mis-match between private costs and public benefits occur. Thus, because biodiversity is a national or global good, it needs national/global mechanisms to value biodiversity and transfer payments from national/global beneficiaries to local producers.

Interestingly the collective action problem of wild fires is being actively addressed, especially through the BMU project. Municipalities are investing in fire fighting units, while public funds (from both BMU and LandCare) are being used proactively to reduce the threat of fire through alien clearing and the construction of fire breaks on private land.

5.5 CONSERVATION ADMINISTATION AND GOVERNANCE.

Implicit in ABI are many questions about Conservation Governance and Administration. This is a field of enquiry and theoretical progress that is beginning to emerge, and which could be of considerable benefit to ABI. For example:

- How do we achieve integrated land use, allocate resources to their highest value uses, create jobs and conserve biodiversity, at both the level of the farm and the collective?
- Can coordination be achieved in a top-down administrative manner, or does it need to be driven by market forces and bottom-up collective action?
- How do we get line ministries to work together, including resolving the problem that agriculture and conservation have traditionally seen each other as enemies.
- How do we negotiate inconsistencies in the mandates of National and Provincial conservation agencies, especially in a situation where policy is under-developed and often trumped by personality?
- At a different level, how do we negotiate the challenge of scale, including cross-scale learning, and the administrative challenges of working through heirarchical organizations?

• How also do we achieve multi-dimensional goals in a multi-stakeholder environment?

The Project Document pointed to weaknesses in agency mandates and sector approaches to conservation as a root cause of conservation failure (see Annex 9). It developed new approaches to these problems including the ABIOC stakeholder forum (which it formulated narrowly, but which later became a genuine stakeholder forum) and stretching SANParks into a new role on off-reserve management. The formulation and implementation of these approaches to conservation institutions and governance was intuitive rather than theoretically informed, even more so than the economics section. Project formulation would have benefited by being broadened beyond conservation technicians to include expertise in change management, organizational development, development administration, and so on.

The Project narrative recognizes these issues, but does not proactively build them into the implementation plan. However, conservation could not have happened without them, and the Project has informally (and sometimes formally) developed and capacitated new organizational arrangements linking conservation agencies, municipalities, agriculture departments, tourism agencies, private landowners and community associations. We do see some recognition of the importance of institutional governance in the purpose statement ("Biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on the Agulhas Plain are significantly enhanced through effective management and coordinated stakeholder involvement"). However, at the level of indicators neither "effective management" nor "coordinated stakeholder involvement" are conceptualized nor, presumably, prioritized. Institutions are also recognized in Output 1 ("public-private partnerships negotiated by a well-capacitated extension service"). However, this is interpreted extremely narrowly in the indicators as "plans" and "management agreements", and slightly more broadly as "stakeholder buy-in to monitoring systems" and "increased capacity for integrated extension services". Also, only the two conservation authorities, CapeNature and SANParks, are named.

5.6 FACILITATIVE RATHER THAN AUTHORITATIVE CONSERVATION INSTITUTIONS.

The ABI Project document tended to reinforce prescriptive conservation models. These were rejected by landholders, and the Project was 'rescued' by the inclusive and participatory management style adopted by the ABI PIU. A participatory approach to development was not really described in the Project Document. In retrospect, the "End of Project Situtation", may have suggested replacing the authoritative the highly regulatory conservation model (that is characterisitic of South Africa) with a more liberal, democratic, bottom-up and facilitative model in which the primacy of landholders as conservation actors is recognise. Participatory development models are well articulated. They underpin CBNRM. Their absorbtion by the Project (ultimately) was one of its strengths. This knowledge could and should have been included in Project formulation.

Table 34: Features of Effective Collective Conservation

The value of collective natural resource management is not a new idea. Elinor Ostrom was recently awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics for her schorship on the subject. The success of Southern Africa's Community-Based Natural Resource Management is predicated on the emerging principles of collective action.

In the developed world, the power of collective conservation is also emerging. For example, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, LandCare Directorate has been visiting Australia to learn hwo do develop a new participatory, bottom-up approach to extension and planning. However, one of the best examples, was Zimbabwe's Intensive Conservation Area Movement, the effectiveness of which is recognises so ubiquitously by landholders and conservationists that it has never been properly documented! It is described here very

briefly.

The Natural Resources Act, 1951, provided a strong legal environment for the formulation natural resource collectives, avoiding prohibitive bureucratic and planning costs like those faced by the Nuwejaars SMA. For example:

- Groups of landholders formed ICAs voluntarily, normally 20-50 properties in a catchment.
- ICAs were voluntary, and promulgated through exceedingly simple legal mechansims
- ICAs were effectively the primary implementing agency for natural resource monitoring and regulation.
- ICAs were civic authorities with national representation and legislated direct access to national leaders (i.e. Ministers).
- The success of ICAs was enhanced by their civic character, well crafted legislation, but not least by a government mentality that accepted the primacy of service, civic accountability and landholders
- ICAs received considerable legislative power and responsibility. This included the legal responsibility to oversee each-other's soil, woodland, water and wildlife conservation, and to take corrective action as necessary. Thus an ICA could require a member to undertake soil erosion measures, and if he failed to do so could undertake it on his behalf and send him the bill. ICAs set and monitored all wildlife quotas, and the wildlife agency dropped all of its own licensing requirements (and fees) which it never in any case had the capacity to police (CapeNature is currently in exactly this position of not being able to enforce its own reglatory requirements).
- The result was a regulatory framework designed by landholders, highly adapted to geographic context, and effectively enforced. The primary mechanism of enforcement was peer pressure, with recourse to legal action in the few cases whether this was necessary. Consequently, the system was socially legitimate, well targeted, effectively policed, and cost effective.
- Government maintained three roles. It provided a court for arbitration with a legal requirement that cases be resolved within 14 days. It provided technical support, Finally, it played an important but unassuming role in quality control role (e.g. over-flights to check on soil eroision) which it always did this in partnership with the ICAs.
- The system was so effective that the wildlife agency, for example, dropped all permiting and monitoring requirements on private land in the landmark Parks and Wildlife Act, 1975 and wildlife and habitat thrived. Between 1975 and 1997 DNPWLM had to step in to resolve a sitation only on one occassion!
- Most technical advice and support to farmers was provided through the ICA. Servicing groups rather than individuals is far more effective.
- Operationally, each ICA was serviced by a dedicated extension officer, whose role was to provide sideways, upward and across-agency technical linkages.

5.7 COMBINING TOP-DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP APPROACHES

The approach towards off-reserve biodiversity conservation in the ABI Project matrix tends towards top-down imposed conservation planning. It also recognizes the importance of bottom-up incentivedriven conservation, for example in developing the viability of sustainable fynbos harvesting. However, it does not unpack these ideological differences. South Africa has a history of central planning and hierarchical, top-down governance. This approach is also characteristic of many national and international conservation agencies. However, although top down planning is clearly problematic, a clear-cut shift towards discretionary landholder conservation may have been too bold in the short term, and the way ABI has muddled through this process at the local level has been effective so far.

Nevertheless, planning, administrative or regulatory restrictions on use directly undermine a conservation approach based on landholder incentives and responsibility. First, following the

principle of differential taxation or regulation, each and every regulation or restriction imposed on using wild resources that is not also imposed on agriculture or livestock reduces the ability of biodiversity-based businesses to compete with alternative forms of land use. Second, as Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom (2000) argues, bureaucratic centralization of responsibility for natural resources directly undermines processes of local responsibility. Yet central regulation invariably fails because administrators cannot deal with local complexity, nor can they fulfill their responsibilities for policing and monitoring. Recognizing weaknesses in top-down conservation, and understanding both the strengths and risks of free-market approaches, new models for collective action are being developed for conservation (e.g. Murphree, 2000). Although ABI is one of these, and although southern Africa has been a crucible of innovation in this regard, in both its formulation and evolution ABI could have been strengthened by being more tightly interwoven into cutting-edge thinking about natural resource governance and economics.

Table 35: Examples of Alternative Models to Support Institutional Rationalization

Institutional Rationalization

This poses interesting conceptual and practical questions about institutional rationalization.

- First, can institutional rationalization be driven from the bottom, and if so what meso and macro level interventions are required?
- Second, are their any examples from which ABI and South Africa more generally can learn?

ABI has provided a good example of institutional rationalization at the micro level. This process would be strengthened by effective facilitation resulting in clearly defined mandates that are formalized, for example in an MoU or Compact. However, real change would require that ABI provided sufficient positive results, and had the technical capacity to take this idea to Provincial level or National level, sell it, and then assist these levels to formalize new institutional arrangements progressively in agreements, policy and legislation.

Starting this change at a practical level in a site like ABI has considerable advantages over negotiating these changes in the Boardrooms of Cape Town and Pretoria without sufficient experiential learning. However, the bottom-up approach would also need to be strengthened by exposing the example to similar examples in South Africa and elsewhere (horizontal linkages) and to cross-scale challenges.

However, institutional rationalization has tended to look at modifying the systems that are currently in place, rather than at radical new solutions. Three ideas are provided:

- <u>Revise configuration of National and State Protected Areas.</u> The current system of National and Provincial Park agencies is radically revised. The country is broken up into a much larger number of autonomous protected area agencies. In any one geographic area, such at the Agulhas Plain, all state protected areas are managed by a single authority, with full authority to generate and keep revenues, and publically funded mandates for off-reserve conservation. Over-sight is provided by a central agency which monitors performance, including biodiversity conservation and the provision of public goods, and which specifically funds clearly defined public madnates.
- Bottom-up, collective regulation and coordination. The central-planning management culture of South Africa's state land and conservation agencies is replaced by a bottom-up, demand-driven culture. An excellent example of this was Zimbabwe's Intensive Conservation Areas movement. Groups of farmers (normally 30-50), usually at the catchment level, voluntarily formed ICAs. ICAs were elected, civic associations comprised of the landholders themselves. They had considerable powers of self-regulation. For example, they could request a member to take certain conservation measures, such as soil conservation. If he failed to do so, the ICA could implement this on his behalf and bill him. The landholder had access to a Natural Resource Court in cases where he disputed this action, and the Court was required by law to provide a ruling within 14 days. Each ICA had a secretary and a tiny state-provided budget for meetings. It was serviced by an agricultural extension officer, but had the moral authority to require support from other government agencies. Indeed, government action was coordinated primarily by landholders through their ICAs, creating a system of bottom up coordination and accountability. Collective, local regulation of natural resource use and abuse proved remarkable effective, tailored to local circumstances, with high levels of coordination and low transaction costs.

• Using Associations to Service and Monitor Sectors. It is highly unlikely that either SANParks or CapeNature will ever have the resources or capacity to service off-reserve conservation, including technical extension and the policing of agreements like Stewardship arrangements. An alternative is to develop legally empowered associations that monitor, regulate and provide technical information to their members. Instead of CapeNature and SANParks servicing a large number of individual landholders (which will always be beyond their capacity) they service landholders through their associations. A useful example was Zimbabwe's Crocodile Producer's Association, which regulated its members, undertook technical research and extension, and represented its members to the government or even inernationally at forums like CITES.

5.8 CROSS-SCALE LINKAGES.

Another emerging field of theory is the importance of scale, and cross-scale linkages in institutional design. A stronger understanding of governance and the importance of cross-scale linkages would have increases the sustainability and replicability of ABI. For example, by proactively facilitating SANParks' to build its capacity and commitment to off-reserve conservation at macro as well as micro-level, it would have increased the chances for the Project to codify its experience as national policy and best practice. In practical terms, the Project could have funded SANParks at macro-level to institutionalize ABI-type arrangements. In addition, it could have provided high level technical expertise to the Project with the capacity and mandate to facilitate these macro-processes.

Having made these comments, the TE recognizes that the Project was already multi-faceted and complex, and could have been undermined by trying to stretch it too far. On the one hand, better economic and institutional conceptualization may have simplified rather than complicated implementation. On the other, ABI potentially addresses a series of complex conservation challenges, and has organically evolved towards economics and institutional rationalization. Expecting to achieve all of these within the scope of a single project cycle was unrealistic. However, the goals of developing better environmental, economic and institutional models are so important that a sequenced, multi-phase Project approach would have been justified.

5.9 THE PROJECT AS AN EXPERIMENT IN ALTERNATIVE PROTECTED AREA APPROACHES.

ABI was initially conceived as a Protected Area project with considerable support from SANParks, but an important lost opportunity is that it has not changed the SANParks paradigm. This is partly due to unforeseen changes in leadership within SANParks and other conservation agencies (e.g. DEAT, SANBI, CAPE) and changes in the general economic outlook (forcing SANParks to focus on financial viability, and cutting South Africa's investment in Protected Area expansion). However, it is also a learning opportunity that could have been specifically built into the ABI Project by, for example,

- Proactively using ABI to test the role of state protected areas in landscape conservation and economic development
- Including an output to assess the effectiveness of alternative Protected Area .

5.9.1 THE ROLE OF STATE PROTECTED AREAS IN LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

From the perspective of South Africa and the public nature of state protected area, two important public functions emerge:

- What is the role of state protected areas as a beachhead for conservation in the larger landscape?
- What is the role of state protected areas as an engine for local economic growth?

The development of Agulhas National Park has raised many more questions than it has answered. At the level of a stage conservation agency, SANParks faces multiple competing objectives and operational questions:

- How does it balance the increasing requirement for financial self-sufficiency and new a revenue streams with state priorities of biodiversity conservation and Black Economic Empowerment (which trades off social goals at the cost of financial efficiency)?
- How does SANParks as a National agency address its private financial challenges without sacrificing the public good aspect of Protected Areas in terms of both the tourism economy and its multipliers, and the role of Protected Areas as a catayst for and component of conservation of the broader landscape?
- Can a small Protected Area like Agulhas conserve species and ecosystem processes if it does not engage with landholders are the broader landscape, given our increasing understanding of issues of connectivity and resilience in the face of climate change?
- Should the model of Protected Area tourism development remain one of government capital investment and management of tourism facilities, or should these be outsourced, including questions of efficiency, practicality, economic growth and multiplies, and whether it is right that government subsidised enterprises compete with private sector investments?

5.9.2 TESTING NEW MODELS FOR PROTECTED AREAS

Globally, there is increasing recognition of the importance of private and community protected areas. However, the IUCN Protected Area definitions and criteria privilege state jurisdictional control over performance effectiveness. Yet private and community owned protected areas can perform as well or better than state protected areas in conserving or recovering ecosystems, and certainly in terms of public goods like employment, equity and economic growth.

The fact that state protected areas are categories as IUCN I-IV, prioritizes them over private and community protected areas which are allocated the inferior categorization of V and VI. This effects the allocation of scarce conservation dollars. Thus, should we purchase land for protected areas at a cost of R5,714/ha⁵¹ (i.e. the average cost of Agulhas). Or would this money be better spent, for example, on landholder-driven conservation and flipping the economy from one that is predominantly based on conventional agriculture to a bio-experience economy? Measures might include restocking wildlife and developing systems to pay private landholders for the production of public goods such as environmental services like biodiversity, water, landscapes and carbon?

This raises a critical question: Do formal de jure arrangements like state protected areas and legal stewardship arrangements conserve more biodiversity more efficiently than de facto arrangements? Are the transaction costs of formal arrangements (i.e. Stewardship arrangements) viable compared to voluntary conservation (e.g. Conservancies)?

⁵¹ To consolidate Agulhas National Park approximately 21,000 hectares were purchased for R120m

To answer these important questions it is essential to monitor biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services directly rather, not using the proxy of jurisdictional definition (i.e. the assumption we need to test). An efficiency calculation can then be made:

<u>Conservation output (biodiversity, PES, socio-economic benefits)</u> Inputs (including public and private inputs and expenditures)

Note that we define the output from public protected areas as public goods. This assumes that protected areas must ensure effective ecological conservation, does not mean that they cannot also provide environmental services and economic and social benefits. Having better data would enable us to assess combinations of protected areas provide the optimal benefits and in which circumstances.

Table 36 illustrates a conceptual cost benefit analysis for the assessment of the efficacy of different protected area models. Efficacy is calculated by comparing outputs to inputs. However, this calculation is complicated because protected areas are associated with multiple outputs (environmental, economic, social/political) and multiple inputs (capital, recurrent; public, private). Further, many of these need to be evaluated in terms of both private and public costs and benefits using financial and economic analyses respectively. Nonetheless, a systematic analysis of the conservation models developed in association with ABI would quickly provide general guidance on which forms of state investment add most value in terms of (1) conservation outputs and (2) associated public goods (given that protected area sustainability needs to be ecological sustainable, economically viable and socio-politically acceptable). We also suggest that an analysis of the costs and benefits of different planning approaches would be useful.

Table 36: Suggestions for a Systematic Evaluation of the Efficancy of Protected Area Models

Description of Protected Area	Agulhas National Park National	De Hoop Provincial Nature Reserve	Nuwejaars Special Management Area	Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy		
Description of Protected Area	Trational	State	with title deed restrictions	formal restrictions, strong ethics & peer review		
OUTPUTS:						
State of biodiversity and ecosystem						
services						
• At start						
• At end						
Net gain						
Provision of economic and social						
benefits (including GDP added value,						
economic multipliers, employment,						
gender, etc.)						
At start						
• At end						
Net gain						
INPUTS:						
State/Conservation Inputs						
• State capital investment (\$/ha)	R2,800	R0				
• Net state recurrent costs (income less variable costs)						
Private Inputs						
Net income/costs						
• Opportunity costs (i.e. other land uses forgone)						
Cost Benefit Analysis of Land Use Planning						
• Type of land use plan						
Benefits attributable to land use plan						
Transaction costs associated with land use plan						

ABI WAS 'SAVED' BY UNINTENDED OUTCOMES

In the following three sections we note three innovations facilitated by ABI, none of which were envisaged byt eh Project Document, and all of which originated in the highly personal stakeholder approach that ABI adopted, but which was not really planned for.

5.10 Developing New Models for Conservation

ABI is a fascinating example of a situation where dedicated landholders and conservationists, with limited external support and guidance, have experientially developed a remarkable new model of landscape conservation including district-level integration, and the SMA model. Much of the progress has been built through personal trust and negotiation and still needs to be institutionalized, and many of the new ideas were practical and intuitive and still need to be analyzed and captured for wider consumption. In many ways, ABI has facilitated the evolution of a social movement towards an integrated conservation landscape. Stakeholders have generated new ideas and solutions to problems like alien clearing and off-reserve conservation, and there is much to be gained in spreading these ideas by analyzing and documenting them. With a few notable exceptions, ABI would have benefited from more support from the wider and higher conservation community. Ironically, it is they
that have the most to gain from the experiences generated by ABI. It is hoped that they find the time and humility to visit ABI, listen to the many dedicated stakeholders about their ideas and experiences, and use these ideas to benefit South African conservation.

The MTE noted that progress was highly satisfactory but further could be advance by:

- More imaginative partnerships with landholders,
- Continuing to develop a common vision amongst all landholders and eventually institutionalizing this vision,
- Investing in efforts to demonstrate that ecosystem conservation can pay, e.g. through financial/technical support to Nuwejaars Wetland SMA
- Experimentation with payments for environmental services (landholders suggest that even simply recognizing their contribution would be a considerable incentive)

Continued investment in stakeholder relationships, and especially the ability of ABI and UNDP to source Euro 2m from the BMU for the SMA, contributed to first three points, but no progress was made on PES.

5.11 STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES

In interviews, a consensus emerged that ABI's greatest achievement (not emphasized in the Project document) was bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders towards an integrated Vision of landscape conservation. This had an enormously positive impact on integration, cooperation and communication between government agencies, landholders, communities, stakeholder forums and businesses on the Agulhas Plain. We see stakeholder processes and collective action emerging not only in ABIOC, but in the Agulhas Park Forum, the emerging Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau, and in collective action by ratepayer associations to address environmental issues ranging from green housing to the pebble-bed nuclear reactor.

ABI, through the efforts of the ABI Coordinator and his relationship with Agriculture/Landcare has gone considerably further than the project log frame to create the relationships necessary for integrated landscape planning. As stated repeatedly, this is an enormous opportunity that is not fully recognized in the Project Document, holds the key to sustainability, but needs to be institutionalized.

The TE found a greatly improved relationship between Agulhas National Park and its neighbours and stakeholders compared to the fractious relationships reported by the MTE. The Agulhas National Park Forum is said to be effective. It comprises ratepayers, tourism operators, farmers and government agencies, with four working groups (tourism, culture, water and conservation, park infrastructure). As an indicator of progress in cross-sector and civic cooperation, the Chair of the Forum is from the Department of Agriculture, and the chairs of all the working groups are local citizens. Considerable progress has been made in reducing conflicts, and there is increasing cooperation on issues such as recognizing local names for features in the Park. Locally, the Forum is said to be portrayed as the model for SANParks (though was not specifically mentioned in interviews at SANParks, Pretoria). Capturing these lessons in a formal charter would be advantageous. Stakeholders are now talking about establishing a Marine Protected Area through an open process in which the local fishermen's association is participating.

An insightful decision by ABI PIU to "outsource" most of the resource management activities to the institutions and departments dealing with them, has been critical for securing sustainability for the activities both in staff and budget beyond the project. Thus:

- The Department of Agriculture has agreed to the long-term employment of extension staff and a new GIS Specialist position,
- Alien clearing Cape Nature and SANParks have gained considerable experience clearing aliens in protected areas, and the Department of Agriculture is implementing this on private land through Land Care (at a much smaller scale),
- The Overberg District Council (responsible for fire, disaster & rescue management in the area) has allocated one trained official and has committed to the long-term implementation of fire management
- The Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau is rapidly developing capacity and is sustainable beyond ABI.
- Wetland Rehabilitation has been contracted to South Africa National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI).

This considerable enhances the likelihood of long term sustainability of ABI functions and progress

5.12 ORGANIZATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RATIONALIZATION 52

At the level of ABI, the stakeholder processes described above have led to significant organizational cooperation and rationalization. For example, conservation agencies, Department of Agriculture, and municipalities are working together to integrate biodiversity objectives into economic development and planning. However, this rationalization has not been formalized, nor have the lessons from ABI really been scaled up to form a national approach. An important threat to the sustainability of the project, for example, is that the mandate and resources for off-reserve conservation have not been clarified, nor has a sound policy and enabling framework for off-reserve conservation been developed.

SANParks, for example, is seen to be stepping away from these responsibilities by many stakeholders, and by its own admission is struggling to define its off-reserve role, not least because this is seen as an un-funded mandate. CapeNature is willing but under-resourced for this function. Moreover, the justification for SANParks' draft buffer zone policy is argued primarily from the perspective of enabling parks to work better financially and ecologically, and might be said to be inward looking. It is difficult to manage the private priority of financial self-sufficiency with some public objectives. We still have to reach the point where parks are perceived as public goods that can and should be used to proactively improve the ecological, economic and social sustainability of the larger economy.

Moreover, ABI suggests that an economic conceptualization of landscape conservation might bring a new approach to institutional rationalization that is applicable in many areas (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Table 37: A new conceptualization of landscape conservation

For example, what if we start from the position that the many ecological goods and services on the Agulhas Plain have an economic comparative advantage that is not reflected in financial price signals and are therefore undersupplied? The solution then becomes the creation of new economic institutions that are designed to increasingly reflect the true value of biodiversity services, some at the level of individual businesses, and some at the scale of municipalities.

Government's role then shifts primarily to understanding these costs and benefits, designing effective policies and institutions to 'get prices right', and monitoring outcomes to ensure that they are achieved. It does less land

⁵² Strictly speaking, organizations are players like SANParks and Cape Nature, and institutions are the rules by which they operator, including land tenure, markets, laws, etc.

management, and less top down planning, and less regulation and policing. Instead, it facilitates the private sector to do what it is good at – innovate, get things done, make profits.

To do this it creates a level and dynamic economic playing field for biodiversity (e.g. avoiding differential taxation and regulation of the biodiversity sector, facilitating the emergence of new markets). It also establishes new policies and institutional arrangements that foster collective action. This created economies of scale, and uses the power of informed peer pressure to 'regulate' against environmental degradation. This is cheaper and more effective than direct government action, which redefines its role to provide an ultimate sanction.

ANNEX 6: COMMENTS BY STAKEHOLDERS (WHERE THERE ARE DISCREPENCIES WITH EVALUATION FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS)

The following comments were received and action taken as noted:

Comment	Response
Please include an overall rating of project progress towards objective, cumulative	Done
progress towards the four outcomes as well as progress on implementation in the	
Executive Summary, pages 10-18.	
The areas highlighted in turquoise like: pp 40-48 could be heavily summarized and	Extracted as
most elements included in a 'Think Piece' that we could relate to the ABI experience.	notes to
This would be very useful. Pp 55-56, page 57, page 71, page 73, and pages 119-120.	annex 6
Formatting requires some fixing, e.g. pp 31-32. I have corrected the typos etc that I	Done
have noticed.	
Ratings are always pretty artificial, but we are likely to prejudice the view of the	Done
project unless we stick to the categorization provided. On page 13 of the Executive	
Summary project is accorded a HS rating, but the report indicates that the project	(see also
outcomes are "largely met". This would indicate a S rating rather than HS. Further,	annex 7)
the criticism of the logframe and indicators, plus the tourism component militate	
against a HS rating. Cannot accord this unless all elements are met or exceeded, even	
if some are FAR exceeded! This is bureaucratic and narrow but we are currently	
obliged to do this. It would be useful to have the reviewer's thoughts on the	
limitations of the approach as this is an issue that could be usefully interrogated. The	
current approach is limited.	
Please stick to rating options provided by GEF/UNDP. E.g. on page 70 in Table 25,	As above
use HS or S. We cannot combine both.	
The point re Project Management not being included as an outcome is well taken.	As above
However, we cannot simply include it formally as an extra outcome. The comment	
made by the reviewer about its omission and the later comments about how well this	
element was addressed are sufficient and helpful.	
The language also requires to be standardized, particularly on two elements: "outputs"	Done
and "outcomes". The point above that Project Management is not included on page	
30 refers to an "output" but in the rating on pages 70-72 it refers to "outcomes and	
achievements". The project has four "outcomes". This confusion is reflected	
throughout the review.	
Also on page 105, should use GEF/UNDP not only UNDP. The funding comes from	Done
GEF via UNDP.	
The numbering under 6.9 on page 72 is very confusing, suddenly jumps to 7.9.1, 7.9.2	Done
etc	

ANNEX 7: A MORE NUANCED 'RATING' OF PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Project Evaluation requires that a single score is provided at Purpose and Output level. Intellectually, this is extremely difficult because several sets of non-additive variables are involved.

In the consultant's opinion, the Project exceeded what UNDP expected, and was better than very many projects I have looked at. But because the log-frame was weak, and project conceptualization missed important requirements, the Project needs administratively to be rated S rather than HS, even though it probably exceeded expectations, and even through (indeed, because) people on the ground worked their way around weaknesses in conceptualization and planning without changing the Log-Frame. My concern is about sending the wrong message to the people who will actually sustain this process: is it fair to rate them and their considerable innovation/adaptability S, although we continue to say in other correspondence like PIR and ToR that we are trying to promote adaptive management, because this is never really stated formally this in the log-frame, nor is provision made to facilitate local people using a mechanism like a log-frame. This sends the wrong message to the people on the ground who are in the ultimate analysis more important than the bureaucratic process.

However, it does suggest to UNDP/GEF that if they are going to evaluate their projects against logframes, considerably more effort needs to be put into the conceptual development of the log-frame in the Project Documents, and to training project stakeholders to use log-frames as the framework for adaptive management processes – to which, incidentally, the log-frame is ideally suited.

The lack of consistency between the project document, log-frame and informal intentions of the project make the life of a reviewer extremely difficult. What goals do we review against? Secondly, we need to give a single score to the cumulative effect of project conceptualization, implementation and results (three different processes) into a single rating. Collapses a 3x3 dimensional assessment into a single number might be administratively convenient, but it is intellectually questionable. One can speculate that the failure to recognize, manage and plan for such processes and complexity may well be the Achilles heel of Development Assistance.

This is an excellent project, despite the log-frame, and despite failure to build in cross-scale support, because people on the ground have made it work. Perhaps the most important indicator is that is has become a mini social movement – which in the final analysis is probably more important to sustainability than almost anything else!

Returning to the comments on the Summary Ratings Table: How does an Evaluator score a Project when the objectives/outcomes are not well articulated, and the indicators weak? If I use these indicators (which are terrible) the project looks bad, which it is not. And if the evaluator uses personal judgment to assess outcomes (in the absence of useable indicators) there is a possibility of bias. In this Annex, the consultant's judgment is given priority over administrative correctness.

As noted in the text several times, project conceptualization recognized economic issues to some extent, but almost entirely missed the importance of process/governance/cross-scale issues. In retrospect, these were the real heart (and success) of this project. Had these not been dealt with (ref, the initial relationships between ANP and stakeholders), the whole thing would have flopped. So by not following the log-frame, the project allowed itself to succeed!

With these caveats, a judgment of the success of the Project is provided below. It is not categorical because some of the issues cannot easily be categorized

<u>Purpose</u>. **S/HS** At the purpose level, ABI has been HS/S in developing new models for conservation landscapes, but weaker in developing socio-economic aspects of these and remiss in field-level monitoring.

- ++ There has been important unanticipated progress in stakeholder approaches and institutional rationalization at local level. Several stakeholders stated that ABI has moved agendas that were mainly "green" to include agendas that were developmental or "brown"; in other words, ABI has begun to mainstream biodiversity on the Agulhas Plain.
- However, weakness in Project design, and especially weaknesses in linking experiential learning at the micro scale (i.e. ABI) to macro-level processes and personnel, meant that many potential gains have been neither formalized nor scaled up.
- ++ The overall (and very positive) assessment is that stakeholders and landholders are buying into the Vision of "ABI as One Big Conservation Area" at all levels, and are responding to this on-the-ground, although operational practicalities still need to be adaptively developed and tested. **Conservation is becoming a social movement.**

<u>Outcome 1.</u> **S/HS** The anticipated results from output 1 (landscape level conservation management planning system) have been S/HS. Progress has exceeded expectations, especially the emergence of collective stakeholder action which was not envisaged by the Project Document.

<u>Outcome 2</u> HS (sustainable flower harvesting) was well conceptualized, implemented with passion and tenacity, and has made cutting-edge progress in harvesting, establishing standards, and developing markets, with some weaknesses in economics. This output is one the Project can be particularly proud of, and is rated **HS**. The one weakness was not involving a wider stakeholder group in the certification process

<u>Outcome 3</u> U (responsible tourism and sustainable livelihoods) was poorly conceptualized, not prioritized in implementation or budget allocation, and although some progress was made with recent, positive and potentially sustainable progress through the Agulhas tourism Bureau, this was an opportunity lost. Rating U.

<u>Outcome 4</u> MU/HS (increased local support for conservation through an awareness program) was also poorly conceptualized, not prioritized in implementation, but contributed in many small ways including some excellent programs (e.g. Ecoschools). At a conceptualization and task level, and particularly in regard to a stand-alone awareness activity, this is rated **MU**. However, in terms of the overall impact of ABI on local support for conservation, it is rated **HS** given that 48% of the area is under conservation management, an additional two SMAs are being initiated by landholders, and ratepayers and municipalities are increasingly prioritizing conservation.

It was noted by administrators that these comments necessarily affect the overall rating, and that the overall Project cannot be HS when outcome 3 is rated U. My response is that Outcome 3 represented only 7% of project budget, was greatly affected by external factors, was badly designed and that the overall Project's unintended positive outcomes far outweighed this. Further, we are now seeing investment by stakeholders in Output 3 type activities which will extend beyond project lifespan.

Table 38: Summary: Ratings of Project Outcomes and Achievements

Objective Statement	Rating
Purpose: Biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development on the Agulhas	HS – new models
Plain are significantly enhanced through effective management and coordinated	(not a formal goal
stakeholder involvement	of project)
• Landscape conservation (HS) 48% of the Agulhas Plain is now under some form of	HS – stakeholder
conservation management	involvement
• Park management and consolidation (S) has been effective, with state, provincial	S – socio-
municipal Protected Areas covering 30% of the area.	economic
• Off-reserve conservation is proceeding far more rapidly than expected (HS), is	development
developing new institutional models, and is formally conserving 19% of the area.	U - monitoring
• However, systematic monitoring of biodiversity outcomes is not in place (U)	
• Employment (S). Some 2.500 people are employed in the bio-experience economy.	
mainly tourism, expanding by 30% during the Project lifespan. There are an additional	Therefore
250 in expanded public works program, with ABI coordination bringing in considerable	perhaps S/HS
funding for this (e.g. R12m after 2006 fire, BMU project, etc.) 150 permanent jobs	overall because
created through sustainable flower harvesting, and likely to expand if new pack sheds are	of unanticipated
successful	results.
• Stakeholder coordination (HS) at ABI level is highly satisfactory, but reliant on personal	
relationships (MS).	
Unanticipated Outcome: Stakeholder Processes and Institutional Rationalization	
Stakeholder processes	HS – stakeholder
• ABIOC stakeholder forum (HS) established and working well. However, participation	processes
by private sector and civil society needs to be increased, and ABIOC needs to focus on	HS- local
strategic issues (not get bogged down in ABI task management)	(informal)
• Cape Agulhas Park Forum (HS) has resolved conflicts and is now working well	rationalization
• Cooperation between stakeholders (HS) facilitated by ABI has added considerable value	S-US – lack of
and, for example, was critical in obtain R12 post-2006 fire, BMU funding (Euro2m) and	institutional
rationalizing arrangements for alien clearing, fire management, landholder	rationalization
Institutional Rationalization:	and long-term
• The progress in developing systems for sustainable flower harvesting has been HS.	commitment
• At local level, coordination between conservation agencies, agriculture and	
municipalities is excellent but based on informal agreements and personal relationships	
(HS, but how sustainable is this?)	
• There has been S progress in affecting legislation/policy including DEAT's Buffer Zone	
Policy, Department of Agriculture's Area Wide Planning, and Municipalities' Spatial	
Development Frameworks.	
• Institutional rationalization amongst conservation agencies is US. Mandates and funding	
for off-reserve conservation remain unclear. Significant future risks include SANParks	
ambiguous position towards off-reserve conservation and CapeNature lacks the resources	
to support it.	
Note:	
• I hat the top down nature of Stewardship Arrangements is a disincentive to adoption by	
themselves (i.e. Conservency and SMA arrangements)	
That policy and institutional rationalization are made or made issues that should have	
• That policy and institutional rationalization are macro of meso issues that should have been noted as external factors at Project Purpose level, outside projects control but within	
its influence	
• The ABI PIII and local stakeholders have performed exceptionally well (HS) All S or	
US scores are associated with external factors. A design fault may be the omission	
activities and a senior champion at field level canable of managing these external factors	
Outcome 1: A Landscape Level conservation management and planning system is	S/HS
established by public private partnerships negotiated by a well capacitated extension	(noting risk of
service	prioritization of
• A total area of 169,699 ha (48% of Agulhas Plain) is in some form of protection (see	planning/legal
above).	compliance over
• 44% (2,749 out of 6,216 ha) of five prioritized vegetation types is jurisdictionally	conservation
protected compared to 0% at Project start (S). This prioritization seems biased (see map)	outcomes)

and needs to be reassessed.	1
• 86% of important ecosystem processes conserved compared to 18% at Project Start (HS)	
• 74,547ha of aliens have been cleared, 161% of initial targets (HS). ABI coordination of	
this output has accessed significant additional funding through extended public works	1
programs and the BMU project. There are questions about effectiveness of current alien	1
clearing approach, and ABI is developing new technical and institutional solutions	1
• A well capacitated and integrated conservation-agriculture extension service is in place	1
led by Department of Agriculture (HS). SANParks will no longer support off-reserve	
extension and CaneNature's resources to do so are limited (US). New mechanisms (e.g.	1
sector associations) may need to be developed to fill these gaps	1
• Systems for integrating landscape management are emerging through collective action at	
the lendholder level (e.g. Conservencies) and by linking form planning into municipal	
planning and zoning systems (S)	
• The South African planning and legal frameworks are complicated hard to follow and	
• The south African planning and legal frameworks are complicated, had to follow and time consuming. The office of a file planning and essentiated costs has not been	
annu associated costs has not been a significant risk that conservation is contured by	
convincingly demonstrated. There is a significant risk that conservation is captured by	
the ground compliance (the added value of which is not clear) at the expense of on-	
the-ground conservation outcomes	
• The absence of systematic monitoring system for biodiversity and socio-economic	
outcomes is a weakness of the project (US)	TT: 11
Outcome 2: Ecologically, socially and economically sustainable harvesting of wild	Highly
Tynbos is demonstrated as a viable land-use on Aguinas Plain.	Satisfactory
• Employment doubled to 150 families in pack sneds and sustainable narvesting on	
30,000na. This is supported by multi-faceted conservation/life-skills training and ethical	
labour management procedures (HS).	
• Preferential retail outlets developed in UK and South Africa increasing payments to $(1 - 1)^{-1}$	
Hower-pickers six-fold (R0.5 to R3.5 by $2007/8$) and turnover to R15m ($2007/8$) (S).	
• Potential doubling of the above through new sustainable/ethical business emerging out of	
Flower Valley (Better Flower Company)	
• Comprehensive research on sustainable use flower harvesting incorporated into Codes of	
Practice, adopted in CapelNature permiting processes, certification accepted in principle	
by Protea Producers South Africa (HS)	
• Financial and economic questions about the long term viability of fynbos harvesting, and	
removal of economic barriers to progress, madequatery addressed (US)	
• Sustainability at risk because of viability of development partners such as Cape Nature	
and FVC1	Manainalla
Agulhas Plain and contributes to sustainable livelihoods	Satisfactory
• This output was neglected by DIU avasarbated by poor formulation of output and failure	Satisfactory
of SANParks to adequately staff this position (US)	
• Developed Cape Agulhas Tourism Development Framework. Revision of Plan for	
Lighthouse / Southern Most Point Precinct. Market research and branding envisaged in	
the Project Document was not implemented except for the useful Agulhas Tourism Map	
(US).	
• Good work on a number of useful projects by mid-level personnel has been useful (S)	
• Staffing and conceptualization has gone nowhere near achieving this goal and lacked	
capacity to pioneer opportunities to 'flip' the region into a bio-experience economy, or to	
develop PES models (US).	
• Reformulation following MTE is building economic studies on tourism and willingness	
to pay for responsible tourism into a stakeholder process to develop a tourism strategy.	
Incomplete at time of TE, but appears adequately conceptualized and well supported (S)	
• Efficacy of tourism forums waxed and waned over Project lifespan, and ABI is now	
supporting the newly established Cape Agulhas Tourism Bureau which appears both	
stable and competent (S). Fragmented growth of tourism in the absence of a collective	
vision is threatening its potential on the Agulhas Plain and it is important that CATB	
resolves these issues.	
•	
• The number of companies rated as Fair Trade has increased from 1 to 5, with several	
• The number of companies rated as Fair Trade has increased from 1 to 5, with several leading examples recognized in national and international awards (S)	

challenging, but a number of positive examples have emerged (S)	
• Monitoring of tourism economics and employment uses results from key tourism entry	
points but remains inadequate (US)	
• Overall, rated marginally satisfactory because ABI has done a fair job on a poorly	
conceived project component with many external factors	
Outcome 4. Increased local support for biodiversity conservation in the Agulhas Plain	High-level goals
is generated through a broad-based conservation awareness program.	of mainstreaming
• At a task level this output was neglected by PIU, exacerbated by poor formulation of	biodiversity (HS)
output and failure of SANParks to adequately staff this position. Good work on a	
number of useful projects, the contribution of which to the larger vision was not always	Outcome 4 goal
clear (U)	of local support
• The indicator for "positive coverage" in the project document defines neither the target	through
audience nor the anticipated message. ABI has nevertheless developed adequate	awareness
promotional materials including books, newsletters, websites and press releases (S)	(Marginally
• The highly participatory nature in which ABT's has implemented all components has	(Marginally Unsatisfactory)
resulted in widespread buy-in to project objectives by conservation agencies, planning	Offsatisfactory)
highly satisfactory rating At a Dig Dicture level. A DI has made considerable progress in	
integrating concernation objectives into the mindsets and activities of municipalities	
rate payer associations landholders and educators many of which were predisposed	
towards conservation (HS)	
• Flower Valley integrated conservation into 18 Ecoschools and Junior Landcare and Kids	
in Parks camps support more than 1.000 individuals annually (HS)	
• Overall: At a task level, this output to generate broad-based conservation was poorly	
conceived, and given a low budget and implementation priority. It is therefore rated	
S/US.	
• However, in terms of the high-level goals of ensuring conservation is mainstreamed into	
the activities of farmers, municipalities, government agencies, etc., there has been a	
strong change for the better on the Agulhas Plain. At the high-level, therefore, this is	
rated HS.	
Outcome X: Project Management	S
• In terms of stakeholder management and directing ABI towards its high level (if	
informal) goals ABI is South Africa's exemplary example (HS)	
• Recruiting and managing staff, especially for outputs 3 and 4, has been weak (U)	
• Project management, including PIR, financial management, disbursement and reporting	
has been sound (S) with minor glitches.	
• However, in the final year of the Project, both ABI and ABIOC have shifted downwards	
from a managerial/visioning role into a task-management and administrative role (MS).	
• The performance of the ABI PIU was rated by the MTE as HS in terms of social	
entrepreneurship, but resulting from the previous comment, has dropped from HS to S	
• Oversight of Project from SANParks, UNDP and others has been adequate in terms of	
administrative matters (S), but extremely weak in terms of providing guidance on off-	
reserve management or capitalizing on ABI as a learning process that can be taken to	
scale (HU). I has lack of support has left both ABI PIU and ABUIC in an unenviable	
position	

In summary, the project has made very good progress towards meeting its objectives, and most of the objective indicators will be largely met, completely met, or exceeded. Key achievements include:

- The emergence of mainstreaming of biodiversity on the Agulhas Plains by farmers, NGOs, government agencies
- The consolidation of Agulhas National Park and assoicated management systems
- The investment in developing a sustainable flower harvest business in the area including the certification for sustainable harvesting for flower pickers;
- The manual clearance of 87,250 hectares of invasive and highly combustible alien species
- The stengthing of fire prevention measures on the Plain;

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• The testing and development of new models of off-reserve conservation and of linkages between state and private conservation. This development of stakeholder driven collective action is a new form of conservation approach. This includes the Nuwejaars Wetland Land Owners Association's (NWLOA) binding commitment to conservation management of their land, with breakthroughs in collective land management, constitution development, legal mechanims for including conservation objectives in title deed restrictions, and in testing the process of obtaining formal Protected Area status through Section S29(1)(b) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (NEMPAA 57/2003), SANParks and the Minister of Environment. However, the value of these legal and administrative processes needs to be questioned at a policy level.