

# **United Nations Environment Programme**

**UNEP**

## **Terminal Evaluation of the Project “Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity through Sound Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe”**

**Project Number: GF/4020-05-01 – GFL/2328-2714-4829**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity through Sound Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe* project (Project Number GFL/2328-2714-4829, PMS: GF/4020-05-01) was approved by GEF on 10 Mar 2005, began implementation on 18 Apr 2005, and, after a two-month extension, was completed in May 2008. UNEP acted as the implementation agency and ETE, based in Germany, were the NGO responsible for the overall project coordination and implementation. The project took place in three Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe (Babia Góra, Poland; Aggtelek, Hungary and Šumava, Czech Republic). The project received US\$941,000 from GEF and raised US\$568,237 of in-kind financing and US\$1,884,598 of cash co-financing, giving a total of US\$3,394,735. The project raised nearly 50 per cent more co-financing than foreseen.

The project's goal was to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity through the development and implementation of sustainable tourism practices in the three Biosphere Reserves. The project had four objectives:

- A. Support the development and implementation of Tourism Management Plans in relation to biodiversity objectives
- B. Create and strengthen an enabling environment for combining sustainable tourism development and biodiversity conservation
- C. Support international cooperation among the participating countries, especially with regard to trans-boundary cooperation, to enhance knowledge on tourism and biodiversity
- D. Facilitate a consultative process with key stakeholders (in the public and private sectors) to ensure their active participation and influence in the development of public policies for sustainable tourism development and management in vulnerable mountain and forest areas.

The project has achieved significant results and positive impacts for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. All 60 activities were successfully completed and the objectives met. A Tourism Management Plan has been produced, agreed and adopted in each of the three Biosphere Reserves. Work was undertaken on engaging the Ministry of Environment, and other Government departments, in each country to encourage them to adopt the recommendations resulting from the Plans. In Aggtelek and Šumava Biosphere Reserves, the Tourism Management Plan process also led to the formation of Tourism Associations.

To facilitate the development of the Tourism Management Plans, ETE, in partnership with the CPEAs, developed a methodology guide on *Sustainable Tourism Planning in Biosphere Reserves*. Additional research was also completed on a range of issues such as the abiotic, biotic and cultural diversity of Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve; land use changes over the last 300 years in Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve and the zonation of where activities should be allowed in the Šumava Biosphere Reserve.

There has been a significant amount of stakeholder engagement and consultation, trans-boundary cooperation and communication, training and education programmes all aimed at ensuring any tourism with the Biosphere Reserves is sustainable and considers the protection and conservation of biodiversity. Consultation with stakeholders helped generate local ownership for the Tourism Management Plans. With the support of local people, there is an increased change of implementation being sustainable in the longer term. There is now a common understanding and increased knowledge of sustainable tourism and acceptance of the need for tourism management amongst the local communities in and around the Biosphere

Reserves. The awareness and capacity of local stakeholders, especially within the business sector, has been raised significantly as a result of the project.

Culture and heritage are an important attraction for many visitors. In the three Biosphere Reserves, various traditional techniques have been declining. Many activities were completed to pressure local knowledge, skills and information relating to traditional practices. In Babia Góra, a flock master's wooden hut was re-built, and associated pasturage of sheep and cattle was re-introduced in the grounds of the Orava Ethnographic Park. In Aggtelek, financial grants were awarded for the renovation of buildings for tourism-related purposes. An extensive training programme for local nature guides was developed in all three Biosphere Reserves. At least 138 people took part in the various training courses.

All three Biosphere Reserves are trans-boundary in nature. Before the project, there was very little trans-boundary or international cooperation and exchange of information. Through local, regional and international workshops, the sharing and dissemination of project results and knowledge and discussions relating to activities, this cooperation has increased significantly. Trans-boundary nature trails have been established in Šumava and Babia Góra.

Sustainability was central to the project. There is a high probability that the positive impacts on the sustainable use of biodiversity will continue in the Biosphere Reserves. Several mechanisms were established to ensure activities were sustainable. Many of the methodologies developed and the activities completed are either replicable or, at the very least, adaptable to other areas within the three countries involved or in other parts of Europe.

Monitoring and evaluation was carried out throughout the project. Any delays or obstacles during activity implementation were dealt with through adaptive management. The LSC and ETE also held quarterly meetings to monitor implementation and six-monthly progress reports and the annual Project Implementation Reviews were supplied to UNEP/GEF as required. Continued monitoring and evaluation is crucial to ensure that adaptive management can be implemented and the Tourism Management Plans and other activities modified accordingly to ensure the positive impacts of the various initiatives continue.

### **Summary of lessons learned**

- Multi-country projects require additional management. Projects involving more than one country require more intensive management than single country projects with the same budget.
- The budget can be affected by currency devaluation or converting to local currencies. Over the three year project, it was estimated that nearly 20 per cent of the budget was lost through currency conversions and devaluation of the US Dollar.
- Politically-focused projects take significantly longer and are generally less predictable. Indicators and time management for such activities should be developed with caution.
- Engaging with private sectors takes significantly longer. It takes time to develop trust and respect and different approaches may be required.
- The total number of activities completed during multi-country projects needs to be carefully considered. If there are too many, it results in additional management issues and increased problems surrounding monitoring and evaluation.
- Gathering baseline data either before or during the project is invaluable. In this project, it allowed the methodology for developing the Tourism Management Plans to be adapted according to local circumstances.

- Requirement for quick win activities to initially engage stakeholders. To demonstrate the project and convince local communities, small, quick win activities are important.
- Difficult to assess increased understanding and awareness. The project was successful at engaging with stakeholders but hard to quantify and measure understanding.

### Summary of recommendations

- UNEP/GEF to encourage the use of the UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development in other UNEP/GEF funded projects
- UNEP/GEF to encourage those submitting future applicants budget some funding for loss of value in currency conversion or devaluation
- UNEP/GEF to facilitate the exchange of experiences between projects
- Dissemination of relevant case studies by national organisations involved, the GEF secretariat and other international organisations
- UNEP/GEF could amend their reporting requirements to request additional information and reporting of co-financing and leveraging successes achieved
- UNEP/GEF could require all projects involving stakeholder engagement to develop a communication and involvement plans before project approval
- UNEP/GEF to ensure monitoring and evaluation plan and implementation approaches in place before the project is approved
- CPEAs and ETE to maintain and enhance communication channels established
- All three Biosphere Reserves, and the associated CPEAs, to ensure the monitoring systems are integrated into a regional management organisation as soon as possible.

Table 1 shows a summary of the Evaluator’s project ratings. Considering the evidence, the project is above average and given an S for Satisfactory based on the UNEP rating guidelines. The full ratings table with the Evaluator’s summary comments can be found in Section 5.

**Table 1:** Summary of the Evaluator’s project ratings

Criterion	Evaluator Rating
<b>A. Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating)</b>	S
<b>Sub criteria (below)</b>	
A. 1. Effectiveness	S
A. 2. Relevance	HS
A. 3. Efficiency	MS
<b>B. Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)</b>	ML
B. 1. Financial	ML
B. 2. Socio Political	Locally – L Nationally – MU
B. 3. Institutional framework and governance	ML
B. 4. Ecological	ML
<b>C. Achievement of outputs and activities</b>	S
<b>D. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)</b>	S
D. 1. M&E Design	S
D. 2. M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)	S
D. 3. Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	MS
<b>E. Catalytic Role</b>	S
<b>F. Preparation and readiness</b>	MS
<b>G. Country ownership / drivenness</b>	S
<b>H. Stakeholders involvement</b>	HS

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Evaluator Rating</b>
<b>I. Financial planning</b>	S
<b>J. Implementation approach</b>	MS
<b>K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping</b>	S
<b>Overall rating</b>	S

## **2. INTRODCUTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **2.1. Project development**

The *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Through Sound Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe* project was approved by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF) on 10 March 2005. At the outset the project was meant to run from April 2005 until March 2008. However, due to various delays relating to some activities starting later or taking longer than planned for a number of different reasons, the project was extended until May 2008.

Through the production of innovative Tourism Management Plans, awareness-raising and capacity building, the aim of the UNEP/GEF funded project was to create the right conditions for the implementation of sustainable tourism development and the long term protection of internationally important mountain ecosystems in selected Biosphere Reserves (BR) of Central and Eastern Europe.

### **2.2. Project description**

Ecotourism in the regions concerned is still at relatively modest levels. However, recently, tourism has been increasing in the three countries involved, especially in sensitive areas. This was partly as a result of the countries' recent integration into the European Union and the opening up of borders. Whilst this provides opportunities for the area and the local communities, it also creates challenges for the sustainable use of biodiversity. Before the project, there was a lack of integrated tourism management within and between the countries. At a country level, the National Parks have received attention but the Biosphere Reserves have not been considered with the same level of importance by their respective Governments. Other major threats facing the reserves were:

- Lack of environmental awareness and appreciation that conservation needs should be valued alongside any economic benefits
- Loss of traditional and cultural values and a decline in traditional skills
- Lack of sustainable infrastructure development
- Increased visitation to sensitive areas.

To reduce the risk of the threats, to manage tourism development whilst realising the opportunities it can bring, and to conserve the important biodiversity of the areas, cooperative integrated management was essential. This enabled and secured the protection of trans-boundary ecological corridors. As all three Biosphere Reserves are also cross-border protected areas cooperation was paramount. The Lower Carpathian Mountain Range, where the Reserves are located, provides important habitats that do not respect international political boundaries. To ensure their long-term conservation, trans-boundary cooperation is essential.

The project was implemented in three different Biosphere Reserves located in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Each Biosphere Reserve, as designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) programme on 'Man and the Biosphere' consists of a National Park (NP) and a Protected Landscape Area (PLA). Before the project, it was generally agreed that the management of the three Biosphere Reserves was insufficient due to lack of knowledge or the existence of appropriate, targeted management plans.

#### **1. Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, Poland.**

Babia Góra was declared a Biosphere Reserve in 1976. Approximately 6,000 people live in four villages within the Biosphere Reserve. The core zone of the National Park

is not inhabited by humans but about 20 people live within the buffer zone. The population is generally young with approximately 40 per cent being under 14 years old. There is also high unemployment in the Reserve estimated to be at more than 20 per cent. The number of tourists visiting the area has doubled in 12 years from 40,000 in 1991 to nearly 80,000 in 2003. It is thought that about 80 per cent of the visitors are Polish and 15 per cent are Slovakian. Agricultural production has never been competitive in the area but, as a result of the increasing tourism numbers, agro-tourism has become well established. However, of the three Biosphere Reserves in the project, Babia Góra was the one with the lowest status of tourism development at the outset. The development of new facilities that had already occurred has led to a decline in the traditional style of buildings and the associated skill base.

## **2. Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, Hungary**

The 20,000 hectare Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve was designated in 1979. The National Park was established in 1985. One of the key attractions of the area is the underground cave systems. In 1995 these were declared a World Heritage Site (WHS). In 2000 the underground water system of the Baradla Cave and catchment was also declared a Ramsar site (a wetland of international importance as designated by the Ramsar Convention 1971).

Within the Biosphere Reserve there are two villages with a total population of about 1,000 people. However, the population here is aging and there is high unemployment. Forestry, agriculture, livestock-raising and, more recently, tourism are the principle employers. The National Park itself is actually the largest employer in the region but many of the jobs require certain qualifications. Each year 200,000 tourists visit the area.

Before the project commenced, a Tourism Management Plan existed for Aggtelek National Park that covered tourism history, nature conservation and restraints and the harmonisation of tourism, amongst other things. However, it was produced in 1998 and had a ten year scope. Since the Plan's formulation, it was decided that ten years was too long and the plan needed to be revised. One of the main problems for Aggtelek, and for Šumava, is that there has historically been a lack of integration of biodiversity, as well as of the local communities, into tourism planning and implementation. However, the Biosphere Reserve already had strong and effective nature conservation laws and legislation but lacks trans-boundary cooperation with the adjacent Slovensky Kras Biosphere Reserve in the Slovak Republic.

## **3. Šumava Biosphere Reserve Czech Republic.**

In 1963 the Šumava Protected Landscape Area was declared and it became a Biosphere Reserve in 1990. It now covers over 167,000 hectares. In 1991, 68,500 hectares were declared a National Park ensuring the highest conservation status under Czech law. One of the main ecological features within the park is the 3,000 bogs hosting unique ecosystems. It also includes a substantial part of the northeast-facing part of the Bohemian Forest, the most extensive continuous forest of Central Europe. Approximately 1,500 people live within the National Park and an additional 20,000 in the buffer zone. Of the three Biosphere Reserves in the project, Šumava has the highest number of visitors receiving nearly two million each year. However, 95 per cent of these are Czech with foreign visitors equating to just five per cent of the overall total.



The Czech Republic did not have a pre-existing official strategy on how to deal with tourism within Protected Areas. In addition to that, the Czech legislative system for nature protection does not even recognise the existence of Biosphere Reserves.

In each of the Biosphere Reserves, a Country Project Executing Agency (CPEA) was responsible for implementing the project. The CPEAs are regional non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the field of ecology, environmental conservation and tourism development. In collaboration with local, regional and national partners and stakeholders, the CPEAs helped develop the appropriate actions to ensure implementation of the project's activities.

The three National Parks within the Biosphere Reserves were the Country Main Partners (CMP) of the CPEAs. Staff from the three National Parks provided additional knowledge and expertise on environmental issues, regional spatial management and regional tourism development.

As the project involved completing activities in three different countries a separate organisation, Ökologischer Tourismus in Europe e.V (Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE)), an NGO based in Germany, was tasked with overall project coordination, management and implementation. Table 2 shows the partner organisations involved.

**Table 2.** Partner organisations

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Role in the project</b>	<b>Country</b>
Šumava National Park	Country Main Partner	Czech Republic
Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology – Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic	Country Project Executing Agency	Czech Republic
Aggtelek National Park	Country Main Partner	Hungary
Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development	Country Project Executing Agency	Hungary
Babia Góra National Park	Country Main Partner	Poland
Friends of Babia Góra	Country Project Executing Agency	Poland
CEEweb for Biodiversity	Dissemination	Hungary
Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE)	Overall project implementation	Germany

### **2.3. Project aims and objectives**

The aim of the project was to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity through the development and implementation of sustainable tourism practices in the three Biosphere Reserves.

The project consisted of four objectives as follows:

- A. Support the development and implementation of Tourism Management Plans in relation to biodiversity objectives
- B. Create and strengthen an enabling environment for combining sustainable tourism development and biodiversity conservation
- C. Support international cooperation among the participating countries, especially with regard to trans-boundary cooperation, to enhance knowledge on tourism and biodiversity
- D. Facilitate a consultative process with key stakeholders (in the public and private sectors) to ensure their active participation and influence in the development of public policies for

sustainable tourism development and management in vulnerable mountain and forest areas.

The project objectives are consistent with Operational Programme 3: Forest Ecosystems and Operational Programme 4: Mountain Ecosystems. The project meets GEF Strategic Priority *Biodiversity BD-2: Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors* and it also contributes to GEF Strategic Priority *Biodiversity BD-4: Generation and Dissemination of Best Practices for Addressing Current and Emerging Biodiversity Issues*.

The total budget for the project, as agreed at the proposal stage, was US\$2,591,100 with US\$941,900 being funded by GEF, US\$1,181,700 in cash contributions from various donors and US\$467,500 in kind contributions.

### **3. EVALUATION SCOPE, OBJECTIVES AND METHODS**

The scope of this Evaluation is limited to the activities undertaken as part of the *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity through Sound Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe* project. The objective of the Evaluation, as set out in the Terms of Reference (ToR) (see Annex 1), is to examine the extent and magnitude of any project impacts to date and determine the likelihood of future impacts. The evaluation has also assessed project performance and the implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results. The evaluation focused on the following key questions, drawn from the evaluation Terms of Reference:

1. To what extent has the project strengthened institutional and management frameworks to ensure biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism development
2. Determine how the project has facilitated the exchange of information, experiences on lessons learned and best practices in order to improve the management of existing and potential conflicts between tourism and biodiversity objectives
3. To what extent is the private and business sector committed to contribute financially to the conservation of biodiversity to ensure the economic sustainability for successful implementation of sustainable tourism in the Biosphere Reserves
4. How has the project incorporated future developments to ensure long-term sustainability of the project activities
5. How has the project created awareness and capacity and encouraged local communities and citizens' active participation in the project activities to ensure commitment of local inhabitants to biodiversity conservation and follow-up of project activities.

The Evaluation was conducted as an in depth desk study, using a participatory approach by conducting interviews and gathering data directly from individuals involved in the project (see Annex 2 for a full list of people interviewed and Annex 3 for the documents reviewed). The findings of the Evaluation are based on the following:

1. A desk review of project documents including, but not limited to:
  - (a) The project documents, outputs, monitoring reports (such as progress and financial reports to UNEP and GEF annual Project Implementation Review reports) and relevant correspondence
  - (b) Project Country Reports

- (c) Other project-related material produced by the project staff or partners.
  - (d) Relevant material published on the project web-site
2. Interviews with project management and technical support including
    - Members of the:
      - Country Advisory Committees (CACs) for each of the three participating countries
      - Local Steering Committees (LSC): for each of the three sites
      - International Advisory Committee (IAC)
  3. Interviews and Telephone interviews with intended users for the project outputs and other stakeholders involved with this project, including in the participating countries (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic).
  4. Interviews with the UNEP/GEF project task manager and Fund Management Officer, and other relevant staff in UNEP dealing with Biodiversity related activities as necessary.
  5. Field visits to various project staff and the project sites
  6. Evaluator's vetting of the third and final Tracking Tool for Reporting Progress at Protected Area Sites: Data Sheet completed for this project

### **3.1. Limitations of the Evaluation**

The project officially came to an end in May 2008. However, by this time, some of the case studies were still to be completed. As a result, they have not been reviewed as part of this Evaluation report. These include the case studies on tourism management planning, trans-boundary cooperation and an additional request from the Conference on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat for a report on the Applicability of the UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development.

## **4. PROJECT PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT**

### **4.1. Attainment of objectives and planned results**

The main project objectives were achieved as a result of delivering on the project activities. The outcomes were consistent with the focal areas/operation programme strategies stipulated by UNEP/GEF. The indicators agreed at the outset to measure achievement of the objectives have been reached. The tracking tools show that there have been modest improvements in management effectiveness in all three Biosphere Reserves. Indirectly, a total of 380,000 hectares of Biosphere Reserve land was positively affected by the project.

#### **4.1.1. Objective A**

Tourism Management Plans (TMP) (Objective A) for each of the three Biosphere Reserves were produced and adopted. These were based on biodiversity and the zoning of tourism activities according to their environmental impacts. During the development of these, and subsequently, various discussions were held by all countries, at the local level, on continuing to improve sustainable tourism practices and cooperation. It was hoped that these discussions would also be continued at national levels. The national governments do not appear to have been reticent to accepting the recommendations proposed and resulting from the project but political processes are notoriously slow and complex. Sustainable development and biodiversity conservation may not always be priorities for the Government. The legislative framework of a country is subject to complex political processes and to change national

policy requires a concerted approach. Within a democracy, there are frequent changes in political power and this has knock on effects for other political institutions, departments and decisions. This appears to have been the case in Poland where one of the reasons suggested as to why changes in the legislative framework were not achieved was as a result of change in the people holding the executive positions and the additional time needed to be invested in informing each new person.

The Country Advisory Committee (CAC) and, to a lesser extent, the Ministry of Environment in each of the three countries actually showed considerable interest and support for the project. They also evaluated the Tourism Management Plan methodologies stating they were useful instruments and citing that the Plans themselves were good examples for the countries. Especially in Hungary, the Ministry of Environment engaged quite a lot in supporting and promoting the project and paid additional attention to the issue of biodiversity conservation through tourism with reference to the UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development. This is despite the fact that within Hungary, the project did not have activities that directly targeted the national legislative framework.

The Ministry of Environment in the Czech Republic have suggested they would be able to adopt some of the changes proposed but there has been no documented improvement in the legislative frameworks of the countries involved as was hoped for during the planning stage. It may be that the Ministry of Environment were resistant to some of the recommendations due to the fragmented way tourism is dealt with by government departments. The National Ministry of Regional Development in the Czech Republic is responsible for tourism but is more focused on economics than sustainable development so did not fully engage with the project.

The project concentrated on delivery at the local level rather than an emphasis on political lobbying. Positive examples and case studies have been produced, including a list of recommendations for adoption or implementation of the Tourism Management Plan process in other areas. However, the fact that national legislation was not amended during the three years does not mean the project has had little impact.

At the completion stage of the project, it was actually felt that changes in legislation were perhaps not actually necessary and may have been beyond the scope of a three-year project. It may be that the vagueness in the legislation of the Biosphere Reserve itself proved to be an advantage as it makes situations more open for discussion amongst potential partners.

The lack of uptake at the national level should not affect the sustainability of the project or the outcomes. One of the strengths of the project, and one of the reasons it has been successful, is that delivery of all the activities has been at the local level. Additional case studies in each country, and greater links between countries, may encourage and convince the various governments to adopt and implement the recommendations. Further activities connected with sustainable tourism development and conservation, with evidence of the social and economic benefits, may also encourage the need to move in this direction.

It is hoped that the outcomes of the project, in light of the commitment of the CAC members, will be used nationally and have an impact on legalisation in the future. For NGOs, providing input towards initiatives aimed at improving legislation is an ongoing task. The CPEAs will persevere with trying to influence the legislative framework. The project has started initiatives to bring forward Biosphere Reserve management, tourism management and

regional cooperation and, hopefully, these will be increasingly noticed and appreciated. For example, the Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development (EISD), the CPEA for the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, have stated that they will take the necessary approach when required. However, it is not just down to the CPEAs to influence legislation. Other NGOs and initiatives will work together towards more sustainable tourism legislation ensuring that stakeholders can use their local knowledge for income generation whilst safeguarding natural resources and the environment. Lobbying via the Carpathian Convention process may help to convince the respective national governments that the recommendations should be adopted. The Carpathian Convention (2003) provides the framework for cooperation and multi-sectoral policy coordination and for joint strategies for sustainable development across seven countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic and Ukraine).

Despite a lack of obvious legislative changes at a national level, various documents produced throughout the course of the project, such as the Tourism Management Plan Guidelines, do have the potential to be used in other Protected Areas within the countries. At the conclusion of the project, this process was still ongoing so there is currently no evidence on the uptake. However, in Hungary, the Ministry of Environment has already requested additional copies of the booklet produced at the end of the project disseminating all the outcomes. As of June 2008, two of the Biosphere Reserves, Aggtelek and Šumava, have integrated the Tourism Management Plans into Regional Development Plans ready for imminent implementation. As evidence of the implementation of the Tourism Management Plans, monitoring systems have also been established.

#### **4.1.2. Objective B**

Objective B was concerned with creating and strengthening an enabling environment for sustainable tourism development and biodiversity conservation among stakeholders. This involved the preparation of guidelines, strategies, action plans and regulations for sustainable tourism development. There has been considerable progress and this objective has been achieved even beyond what was expected or planned especially in the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve and the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve. This has helped to ensure the sustainable use of biodiversity within the Reserves. The impacts were not as immediate in Šumava Biosphere Reserve because the community already sat back from engagement with the National Park and the conservation of biodiversity. Tourism was also already more established here than in other areas.

Training and workshops were key activities implementing this objective and more events than planned were carried out and more participants took part than initially anticipated in all three Biosphere Reserves. The awareness and capacity of local stakeholders, especially within the business sector, has been raised significantly. However, increased understanding and commitment of stakeholders is particularly difficult to measure, especially in the short term. The real success of the project and this objective will become evident in the longer term.

#### **4.1.3. Objective C**

Before the project was initiated, there was little trans-boundary or international cooperation and exchange of information between the Biosphere Reserves and their neighbouring areas. Through local, regional and international workshops, the sharing and dissemination of project results and knowledge and discussions relating to activities, this cooperation has significantly increased (Objective C). There has been effective communication between ETE and the three participating Biosphere Reserves as well as to and from stakeholders, NGOs and other

interested groups. The results have been widely disseminated and, as a result, the project areas are now not only recognised within their region or country but also internationally. Trans-boundary cooperation has increased significantly in all three Biosphere Reserves. The development of tourism products, training, workshops and events has been done in close cooperation with partners, including those in other adjacent countries. In many cases these projects will continue. The project partners had stands at a number of international tourism events to promote, not only their areas, but the project and the impacts it has had and will continue to have. Despite the objective being very successfully achieved, the project is still missing a link to other tourism-related GEF projects.

#### **4.1.4. Objective D**

Throughout the project, stakeholders were consulted to ensure their active participation and to ensure sustainable tourism development and management (Objective D). Monitoring systems have been established in all three Biosphere Reserves. New indicators on sustainable tourism have been agreed and these will continue to measure impacts after the project has been completed. At the time of this Evaluation, only the Šumava Biosphere Reserve had integrated the monitoring system into a regional management organisation. In the Babia Góra and Aggtelek Biosphere Reserves this process is still ongoing.

In the Czech Republic, two further objectives, specific to the country, were the promotion of the Biosphere Reserve concept in the Šumava Mountains territory and the launching of nationwide discussion about the most appropriate institutional model for Biosphere Reserve management. Both of these were achieved in line with the wider objectives of the project as a whole.

The project's outcomes were consistent with Operation Programme 3: Forest Ecosystems and Operational Programme 4: Mountain Ecosystems. Activities have been completed that enhance biodiversity conservation and support linkage and the sharing of best practice between different Reserves. This cooperation also supports the joint management of the mountain and lowland landscapes in the three countries.

The project met GEF Strategic Priority *Biodiversity BD-2* by demonstrating biodiversity gains alongside benefits for local communities through sustainable tourism development, and contributed to GEF Strategic Priority *Biodiversity BD-4* through the sharing of information and experiences between the Biosphere Reserves which should contribute to the enhanced conservation of the mountainous landscapes.

#### **4.2. Achievement of outputs and activities**

A total of 60 different activities were designed, implemented and completed during the course of the project. All activities were aimed at improving conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity through the development and implementation of sustainable tourism practices in the three Biosphere Reserves. In reality, the activities completed could be grouped into three main categories: collecting knowledge, training and capacity building and promotion of the area. Seven of the activities were led and implemented by ETE. The other 53 were designed and implemented by the various country partners (see Annex 5 for a list of the activities undertaken in each of the three Biosphere Reserves).

Due to some unrealistic expectations about the time needed to prepare and initiate certain actions and some aspects starting later or taking longer than anticipated, the completion of some activities was delayed. For example, ensuring stakeholder involvement took longer than

initially planned. Some of the delays were also a result of the pre-existing organisational structure of the institutions and partners involved, especially in Poland. The country partners and CPEAs had to accommodate the time delays. The Šumava Biosphere Reserve developed very detailed road maps and adjusted their working time accordingly which helped to achieve the milestones and complete the activities. In addition, the system of education and training that was developed for the Šumava Biosphere Reserve was also delayed. This may have had an adverse impact on the quality of the strategy of sustainable tourism development produced.

In Aggtelek, there were delays in setting the indicators of sustainable tourism, in developing guidelines on sound tourism for local stakeholders and in the development of the marketing plan. This may have had an adverse effect on the development of the Tourism Management Plan as the results should have contributed towards that aspect of the project. Through adaptive management the internal problems were resolved. The establishment of the Tourism Association was delayed quite considerably which did cause some additional problems. However, the establishment of this organisation was neither the aim of the project or included within the activities. Now that it is in operation though, it is, and will continue to be, essential for implementing the Tourism Management Plan with the stakeholders. Another of the activities that was delayed in Aggtelek was the production of a brochure on maintaining traditional buildings and a small grants scheme for renovation. However, the delays were overcome and had no impact on the quality of the product.

In the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, the Tourism Management Plan produced may have been of slightly higher quality had there not been delays in monitoring tourism activities and the impact on biodiversity and elaborating the sustainable tourism packages on offer. However, the Jagiellonski University in Poland is going to publish the methodology used and the actual Tourism Management Plan on their website. The University is well respected and informs decision makers in the Government. They are going to host a seminar for policy makers during 2009.

Despite the delays and other setbacks, by the end of the project, all activities were successfully implemented. It has also been suggested that in some cases, these delays and changes allowed for improvement and greater quality outputs. In Aggtelek, the grant scheme to help people restore traditional buildings received additional funds and could be expanded to assist a greater number of people.

Objective A and B relate more to specific outcomes and tangible products. Objective C and D are more process-focused and are required to ensure the other activities are implemented effectively. As a result, this section of the Evaluation now focuses more heavily on the activities completed for Objective A and B. The outcomes from Objectives C and D are described throughout the rest of the Evaluation in the subsequent sections.

Each of the four project objectives were sub-divided into various outcomes. As a large number of activities were completed, this section of the Evaluation is broken down by objective and outcomes. The numbers in brackets indicate which objective and outcome the activities contributed towards. Annex 6 lists all the objectives, outcomes and activities components that were designed and completed.

#### **4.2.1. A.1: Development of new tourism management systems in relation to biodiversity objectives**

A Tourism Management Plan is a written, approved document that should describe the possible threats and opportunities of tourism development within the Biosphere Reserves. The development and elaboration of the Tourism Management Plans was one of the most crucial but also difficult tasks of the programme. To facilitate the development of the Tourism Management Plans, ETE, in partnership with the CPEAs, developed a methodology guide on *Sustainable Tourism Management Planning in Biosphere Reserves*. The document defines the principles required in eight steps and encouraged the CPEAs to share their own experiences. This process and document proved to be very useful and essential in ensuring Objective A was achieved. The process encouraged the engagement of local experts, it set the scene and tone for the project and what was required, including the focus on biodiversity conservation, and it also increased awareness of the project for the various CPEAs. It was useful to have a common framework for all partners and it served as a platform to discuss similarities and differences between the different Biosphere Reserves. As a result of the methodology, the three Tourism Management Plans developed are all based on the same principles. Ultimately, having an agreed methodology resulted in a higher quality of final product. However, having reviewed the document, it appears that it is very theoretical and lacking on specific examples to implement the various stages.

The three Tourism Management Plans have been finalised and adopted locally in each Biosphere Reserve. In 2007, the Project Implementation Review (PIR) reported that the delay in developing the Tourism Management Plans experienced in 2006 had been rectified and sped up by the design of the communication strategy and road maps.

Guidelines have also been produced to integrate the findings into development plans. The implementation of these Plans will be essential to ensure the sustainable use of biodiversity as well as the sustainable development of tourism. The Plans have been developed in such a way as to ensure that local people and nature conservation receive some of the benefits from tourism activities and that any negative impacts are minimised.

Additional research was undertaken, in the form of separate activities, that was essential background information for developing the Tourism Management Plan. For example, in Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, where tourism development was less well developed initially, considerable research, including on economics, was completed before the Plans could be drafted. Information on the abiotic, biotic and cultural diversity of the area was also collated and presented in one integrated document (A.1.3). The information was widely available in print, on CD and on the National Park's website. This baseline information has proved vital not only in the preparation of the Plan but also for its successful implementation. The research was also conducted in such a way, with agreed methodologies, that ensure it could be repeated elsewhere.

Understanding how land use has changed over time is important for a number of reasons. In Aggtelek, the historical land use in the region was reconstructed through studying historical maps from a range of different time periods covering the last 300 years (A.1.4). The results can be used for conservation (planning habitat restoration), tourism (preparing literature on the area) and government (education and local history understanding) purposes.

When preparing the Tourism Management Plans, the ecological and tourism carrying capacity of the area had to be established (A.1.4). In Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, different groups of



users were questioned and sensitive natural areas were identified and the interaction between tourism and the environment was mapped. The number of visitors to Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve has not reached the limit of social carrying capacity yet. It was also found that that participation of local people in tourism actually increases the social carrying capacity providing a further incentive to ensure communities are engaged.

If tourism is to be sustainable, the types of activities offered and their location, need to be carefully planned and considered. As a result, in Šumava, newly emerging activities were evaluated and the potential for other activities were identified (A.1.5). The analysis also included zonation of the Biosphere Reserve that indicated where various activities are to be allowed or prohibited. The work was supported by a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis giving added credibility to the results.

The development of the Tourism Management Plans for Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve (A.1) had extensive stakeholder involvement at various stages of the process. The results of activities relating to gathering baseline data and understanding the ecological carrying capacity all contributed to the Tourism Management Plan. The Strategic Plan has been adopted by the CAC, the Local Steering Committee (LSC), the Northern Hungarian Regional Development Agency and the Directorate of the Aggtelek National Park.

Before the project started, there was no integrated tourism management strategy for Babia Góra. There was also strong pressure for large-scale tourism investment which was often supported by locals. Following field research, stakeholder consultation and using the guidelines developed by ETE, a clear vision for tourism development in the region was created (A.1.1). The Tourism Management Plan includes strategic goals on creating partnerships, limiting the negative impacts from tourism and creating a brand of tourism products. The Plan also includes 74 detailed tasks to achieve the stated goals. To underline the applicability of the approach, the Polish Government is studying the methodology to assess its suitability for applying to other Protected Areas. However, long-term implementation of the Plan may be limited if financial and organisational aid is not provided.

Following a literature review, a survey of visitors, field surveys, round table discussions and consultation with local stakeholders, a Strategy of Tourism Development for Šumava was developed (A.1.1). The methodology produced by ETE was used as general guidance and adapted to local circumstances. The document is more of a strategic document than a management plan. Within Czech legislation, Biosphere Reserves are not legally recognised within the nature protection system and there are no fixed physical borders. As a result, the Biosphere Reserves are considered to be general concept. The area covered by the Šumava Biosphere Reserve is considerably larger than the other two Reserves in the project. The Reserve also covers the two different political administrations of South Bohemia and Pilsner. In this case, a Strategy perhaps fits better than a concrete management plan would when it comes to implementation. The Regional Development Agency will be responsible for implementing the document and for adapting it accordingly. They are particularly pleased with the Strategy as it is a living document and can be evolved to the needs of the region and the people. The Strategic document has been accepted by the South Bohemia Administration and forms the basis of sustainable tourism development in the region. It has also been accepted by the Association of Municipalities in Pilsner and more informally adopted. It may be that the strategy becomes a framework from which smaller, more numerous, location specific management plans are produced to cover the range of interests within the 100km length of the Šumava mountain range.

In the Aggtelek and Šumava Biosphere Reserves, the Tourism Management Plan process led to the formation of Tourism Associations. These organisations helped to provide a link with the stakeholders and with the wider area beyond the Biosphere Reserve. The Associations are important for the project but specifically for the success of designing and implementing the strategy of sustainable tourism development in the Reserves. In Aggtelek, the Tourism Association, mostly made up of local accommodation providers, were active participants in the development of the Tourism Management Plan. They now need to follow the guidance. In Šumava, a Memorandum of Understanding has been developed by the Regional Development Agency Šumava (SRDA) and the National Park to deal with tourism management issues. In Babia Góra, one of the main objectives in the Tourism Management Plan is the need to establish a Tourism Association. However, this is dependent on leadership and future funding.

#### **4.2.2. A.2: Preparation of Guidelines**

ETE completed a background Feasibility Study on the institutional and management frameworks in the three Biosphere Reserves (A.2.1). The report identified opportunities and challenges for an improved visibility of the Biosphere Reserve as a basis for sound tourism development through an analysis of the government system in each, the level of resources and community support and a regional socio-economic profile. The report proved to be a useful pre-requisite for the development of the Tourism Management Plans (A.1). It was also used at the World Congress for Biosphere Reserves in 2008. Prior to that, it was reviewed by UNESCO-Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE) who focus on science and culture actions in Member States and develop initiatives in favour of Central Europe and the Mediterranean basin. At a country level, the document serves as the basis for discussion on the improvement of the status of Biosphere Reserves.

As Biosphere Reserves are not recognised as a legal category of Protected Area in the Czech Republic, an attempt was made to apply the concept to Šumava through designing a management system proposal (A.2.2). One of the suggestions was that the Biosphere Concept, if it is to be implemented fully, is too complex for one institution alone. As a result, it was proposed that the Šumava National Park and Protected Area Administration and the Regional Development Agency Šumava will share the responsibility and a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted by the CPEA. It was also important as a basis for discussion to prepare the Šumava Tourism Management Plan.

The legal basis of the Babia Góra National Park and Biosphere Reserve were reviewed and suggestions made on how to improve the legal system with regards to the sustainable development of tourism (A.2.3). International documents such as the European Community (EC) Habitats Directive and the EC Birds Directives were studied as was Polish law.

Policies and legal frameworks in Hungary and the Czech Republic were also reviewed. This was initially delayed as it depended on the completion of the Feasibility Study but was still completed on time.

#### **4.2.3. A.3: Development of biodiversity-friendly tourism activities**

ETE, in collaboration with the country partners, developed criteria for sustainable tourism (A.3.1) based on existing publications from internationally known organisations, such as UNEP and United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), but also taking into account local circumstances in each of the three Biosphere Reserves. This may mean that the criteria are not applicable in other areas. The criteria were clustered into four groups:

community well-being, protection of natural and cultural environment, product quality and tourist satisfaction and management and monitoring. The criteria can also be used, by the CPEA, as a checklist to monitor and evaluate the outcome of the activities.

The CPEA for Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve produced a code of ethics for tourists (in Hungarian, English and Slovakian) on how they should behave in order to minimise their impact on the natural environment (A.3). Materials were also produced for local people and visitors on what is meant by 'sustainable development'. These materials could become invaluable if tourism is to be developed sustainably especially as it includes examples from areas outside the project boundaries. The project was initially delayed due to the first contractor withdrawing from the project. However, this does not appear to have had any adverse effect on the overall outcome.

Certification and labelling signifies that a product or service has reached some pre-determined quality standard. However, the process of local and regional certification and labelling had mixed success and uptake across the three Biosphere Reserves. In Aggtelek, a regional labelling scheme was developed (A.3.3) to cover accommodation, handicrafts, agricultural products and tourism services. Sets of criteria were formulated for each section. However, a regional Destination Management Organisation (DMO) is required to implement the actual trade-mark system. This DMO has now been established, since the project finished, so it is hoped the scheme can be fully implemented and the certification awarded to those that qualify.

A regional certification scheme for products and services of the Šumava Biosphere Reserve was developed following a comprehensive review of existing systems and consultation with local stakeholders (A.3.3). The activity actually forms part of a broader scheme being implemented in a number of Protected Areas across the Czech Republic. Criteria were discussed and agreed and a pilot phase for products was launched. It proved very effective and one of the key mechanisms of the project. It created incentives for local stakeholders to engage with sustainable tourism. Visitors relate the products and services to the Biosphere Reserve and National Park which improves the providers' image amongst the locals as well as benefiting the project. In total, 40 producers and 130 local products have met the criteria required for certification. When the scheme was extended to services, there were additional complications and the criteria had to be reviewed. The process has been a useful one but it could be a couple of years before the certification brand becomes more widely accepted.

In Babia Góra, no certification label was produced but criteria were agreed upon. This too created an incentive and in the first year eight facilities took part and in the second year there were seven participants. Certification, as part of this project, was not a prime activity in the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve due to the pre-existing state of tourism development in the region. However, after the first round of eight facilities taking part, there was considerable additional interest in the criteria of the award and what it means to run sustainable tourism accommodation. In Aggtelek, the process of developing local certification and labelling was interesting for all groups involved. However, due to the lack of an existing competent Tourism Association or DMO at the time, the scheme was adopted but not introduced and put into practice. However, a DMO has now been established and is starting to use the Tourism Management Plan and marketing the labelling scheme.

ETE took responsibility for developing some guidelines on what interpretative trails are and the principles required for their design, construction and maintenance (A.3.2). The aim

behind the document was to assist the country partners with their trail design and construction to ensure that any negative impacts on the environment are minimised and that visitors benefit from their experiences. All three Biosphere Reserves have planned and constructed new trails.

The Šumava Biosphere Reserve is situated along the state border with Germany and Austria and has trans-boundary partners in the Biosphere Reserve Bavarian Forest in Germany and the Austrian region Mühlviertel. To develop cross-border tourist trails the existing system was evaluated. Following this, one new border crossing was opened and improvements were made at pre-existing crossings (A.3.4). In total, 16 tri-lingual information boards were installed. The guidelines developed by ETE were used during the process. As a result of the increased cross-border communication and cooperation, the project has also initiated the concept of a cross-border international World Heritage Site application.

In Poland, tourist trails were already connected with ones on the Slovak side of the border except for a 278m stretch where two paths ran parallel to one another. As part of the project, it was decided to close one of these and install new information boards (A.3.4). Fortunately, both countries signed up to the Schengen Agreement during the project which negated the need for a new border crossing. Generally, all trails within the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve are well maintained and this does limit any negative impacts caused by tourists wandering off the paths.

In addition to synchronising the trans-boundary trails, an additional nine kilometres of trail were reconstructed and five kilometres of bicycle lane were repaired in Babia Góra (A.3.4). Before the project was initiated, there was no integrated management of the whole trail network. The National Park administration managed trails inside the Park boundaries whilst trails through the forest areas were not subject to a management regime. As a result of the project, the Forest District will repair and renovate trails outside the National Parks. The project also encouraged a partnership to develop between the National Park and the Forest District who are two groups with usually conflicting interests.

To encourage tourists to visit the area and to minimise their impact on the environment a number of activities relating to the development of sustainable products were completed. Agriculture is an important component within the Biosphere Reserves especially in Aggtelek. However, before the project there were no organic produce supplies. At the outset, there was an initial target of five but, by completion, this had been exceeded with at least 11 suppliers providing organic produce (one in Aggtelek and ten in Šumava). However, the target of getting three wood suppliers, across the project area, to achieve the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification was not achieved.

The tradition of pasturing in Babia Góra is declining. A flock master's wooden hut was re-built, and associated pasturage of sheep and cattle was re-introduced, in the grounds of the Orava Ethnographic Park (A.3.5). The grazing has improved the condition of the meadows and pastures in the museum grounds.

One of the most characteristic features of the settlements involved in the project are the traditional buildings. A database containing over 3000 photos and 180 other files of information about traditional architecture within the Gömör-Torna Karst region of the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve was produced (A.3.4).

In Šumava Biosphere Reserve, a grant scheme was developed to act as an incentive for local people to develop new, small scale tourism activities (A.3.5). A number of different products were successfully developed including equipping eight venues to host events, two new permanent exhibitions (on geology and glass-making) and several new trails. Importantly, special attention was given to those activities aimed at enhancing awareness of both locals and tourists to preserving cultural traditions.

In Aggtelek, a number of new sustainable products were developed and offered to attract tourists to the area (A.3.3). These included candle making, visiting a collection of hand tools and being shown around a traditional house.

To encourage visitors to stay longer in the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, two-week sustainable tourism packages were developed (A.3.3). It was initially hard to convince businesses to accept other products into their offer but through constant engagement, the outcome was achieved. The packages have been designed so they are dynamic and other components can be inserted if required.

Also in Babia Góra, a shuttle bus service was established to connect two different parts of the Biosphere Reserve (A.3.5). The bus line helps to promote a part of the region that has not been a target area for tourists previously and distributes tourist traffic more equally. To ensure tourists are aware of the service, leaflets were printed including a map and timetable. The community of Lipnica Wielka will finance the bus in 2009. Despite the bus service, some visitors will obviously still drive in the Biosphere Reserve. The construction of barriers, parking lots and resting places controlled tourism-related traffic within Babia Góra (A.3.5). Before the new regulations were implemented, local stakeholders were consulted.

On the northern slopes of Babia Góra mountain was a shelter that had been there for over 100 years. This was re-built and equipped with more modern tourist facilities including 20 beds and a restaurant (A.3.5). It also incorporated advanced environmental technologies relating to waste water management and energy saving designs.

#### **4.2.4. A.4: Identification of indicators and analysis models**

In Hungary and Poland, surveys and analysis of tourism activities with the aim of proposing a future monitoring system were carried out. Before the project, there was no monitoring of tourist activities and tourist trade in Babia Góra. Indicators and monitoring methods were developed and agreed upon (A.4.1).

In Aggetelek, indicators were developed to monitor the impacts of tourism on the area (A.4.1). In order to do this, a number of indexes were developed such as a nature conservation-tourism-social index, a tourist satisfaction index, a seasonal traffic load index and changes in biological diversity. Baseline scores had to be established to be able to monitor any changes as a result of the project and other activities. In some cases, the baseline scores were already relatively high. For example, 84.5% of local people felt positively about the impact of tourism on the region. The methodology used to develop the indicators is transferable to other areas (A.4.2).

#### **4.2.5. B.1: Teaching programmes, methods and materials for integrated training courses**

If local people are to be involved and engaged in sustainable tourism they have to have some knowledge and skills to offer. An important aspect of this project was capacity building and

awareness raising. ETE developed the training scheme *Sustainable Tourism Training the Trainers Programme* (B.1.1). Communicating the principles of sustainable tourism development to local people and stakeholders can be notoriously difficult. The scheme provided the basis for a seminar to teach trainers from the Biosphere Reserves who then returned to their own regions and implemented local teaching programmes using the materials provided to them. Ten trainees from the three Biosphere Reserves took part along with two project team members from each country. Some of the feedback received suggests that the initial seminars were perhaps too theoretical without enough practical application experience. However, evaluation of the training found that knowledge amongst the participants increased significantly.

To support the development of the Tourism Management Plan in Šumava, a series of round table discussions, training lectures and excursions were held to inform and involve local people (B.1.2). The round table discussions appear to have been particularly useful in resolving conflict arising during the Tourism Management Plan formulation. It has also been suggested that acceptance of the final Tourism Management Plan, among local people, was easier to achieve as they had been involved throughout its development.

In addition to training on sustainable tourism, a number of more specific, locally-focused training courses were run. In the original proposal, the title of the training activity for Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve was *Training courses on organic farming, bee keeping, catering and handicrafts* (B.1.3). However, they were fortunate enough to receive separate funding for this aspect just before the project was given approval by UNEP/GEF. As a result, it was proposed that the training should be broadened out to new topics. The CPEA conducted a survey to identify any local training requirements. Using the funding from the project, local guides were trained (26 people) and training was provided on the maintenance and management of traditional orchards (60 people), and on making small businesses more viable (11 people).

An extensive programme of training for locals to become nature guides was developed in Babia Góra. 52 trainees participated in a total of 154 hours of lectures and 15 excursions (B.1.4). Trainees also had the possibility to take the official state exam that all mountain guides in Poland must pass before being allowed to guide groups. The National Park Administration will maintain a list of those guides that passed the state exam on their website to promote the services.

In the Šumava Biosphere Reserve, two courses were run on training local people to be nature guides (B.1.4). An initial survey showed there would be a high interest and in total 60 people took part in a four-day course of lectures and subsequent workshops learning about a range of nature and tourism-related issues. Following the project, an employee in the Šumava National Park, is now responsible for the coordination and promotion of the guides so the service should continue. The CPEA feel that training the guides was one of the most useful outputs of the project. It was practical, visible, covered a broad geographic and, most importantly for this project, it is sustainable. The scheme is also going to be distributed nationally.

Overall, at least 138 local people took part in training to become nature guides. The agreed Objective Verifiable Indicator (OVI) measuring the success of this activity required at least five nature guides per Biosphere Reserve to be trained. Each has far exceeded this total.

#### **4.2.6. B.2: Promotion and marketing on the importance of biodiversity**

Promotion of the Biosphere Reserve and the results of the project were an important component and essential for increasing awareness (B.2). In Aggtelek, booklets, brochures and posters were produced to promote the region. This activity received a considerable cash contribution (US\$40,000). Because of the importance of border relations, all information was produced in both Hungarian and Slovakian. However, before the project, there were no travel agencies representing the region so external promotion was previously limited.

To encourage agro-tourism facilities to make their businesses more sustainable and entice other entrepreneurs to offer such services in Babia Góra, an annual competition was established (B.2.1). Operators were judged on the quality of their tourism service and on their environmental protection practices. Criteria were established and an independent judging panel selected. It is hoped that, in the future, the range of buildings that can enter the competition will be expanded.

If local people are to benefit from sustainable tourism development they have to be able to make the best use of the resources and market them accordingly. A strategic Marketing Plan was developed for Aggtelek (B.2), taking into account the Tourism Management Plan.

It was important to publicise not only the project but also the area to achieve the widest benefits possible. The EISD, the CPEA for Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, developed a website (B.2.1) that contained information on the project's activities and events in the area. It is essential this website is maintained in the future to ensure continued dissemination of the project outcomes. Babia Góra National Park already had a website. A subpage was established to promote and publicise the project (B.2). Information was published in Polish, English and Slovak. The website ensures that information about the project activities will be available after the project has been completed.

The CPEA for Babia Góra, and other partners involved, also promoted the region as an attractive tourism destination with sustainable tourism products at five international tourist fairs (B.2.2). In total, over 10,000 publicity materials were distributed.

Having special events is a fantastic way to promote an area, region or project. Each year, there are two interregional events in Babia Góra; a shepherd festival and a tourist hike. Through the project these were also used to promote sustainable tourism development and strengthen regional identity (B.2.2).

The Gömör-Torna Summer Festival, in Hungary, has been an annual event since 2001. This is a cross-boundary event promoting cultural traditions. Through the UNEP/GEF project, the Festival was expanded, criteria were developed for partners involved and the overall quality of the event was improved (B.2.2). The number of visitors increased significantly from 7,600 in 2006 to nearly 10,000 in 2007. However, the cross-border bus service that was launched in 2007 was not a success. The area covered was too large.

Two new visitor centres were established in Babia Góra (B.2.3). Before the project, there was very limited space for educational activities. The new centres provide somewhere for tourists to get information and for locals to disseminate material about their own tourism products and services. Due to administrative delays with regards to construction permits one centre was still under construction at the official end of the project. However, the second one has subsequently been completed.

#### **4.2.7. B.3: Revitalisation of cultural and traditional heritage**

For many tourists, the cultural and traditional heritage of an area is an attraction that entices them to visit. As a result it is important traditional handicrafts and buildings are maintained. For example, in Babia Góra, the Orava Ethnographic Park museum organised training in traditional crafts (B.3.1). Most of the participants were young and some have started to sell their own products following the training.

In Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve an activity to preserve local knowledge and traditional management of orchards was undertaken (B.3.2). In total, 33.27 hectares of orchard have been maintained in seven different plots. Researchers identified 41 different varieties of fruit growing in the region. Following fencing of the plots, 110 specimens of 38 local varieties have been planted. A fruit dryer, based on plans and drawings of a similar one in Slovakia, was made and installed. By the time the Technical Report was written for the activity, over 900 people had visited the fruit dryer. An activity to popularise traditional fruit varieties was not initially planned. However, during the course of the project it was realised that both the locals and visitors had very limited knowledge about the different varieties of fruit available. As a result, an exhibition was organised to increase their awareness. It is hoped that next year, by using Global Positioning Systems (GPS), it will be possible to have Geographic Information System (GIS) maps of the varieties and species.

To demonstrate the local tradition of pasturing sheep and making cheese, a living museum has been developed in Babia Góra (B.3.3). Visitors can witness the entire process from milking through to actually buying the cheese. The quality of the cheese is ensured as it is produced according to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) (a preventative approach to food safety that identifies hazards and reduces risks throughout as a means of prevention rather than finished product inspection) and European Union (EU) standards. This project is one that is now fully self-sufficient and will continue without further financial subsidies.

A database of natural and cultural attractions and services within the Aggtelek Karst area has been developed and made accessible at 11 information points across the Biosphere Reserve (B.3.4). The main attraction of the area is the cave system so it is particularly beneficial, for sustainable tourism development, to make visitors aware of other, perhaps more isolated, attractions so that the impacts are dispersed and that tourists are exposed to what else the area has to offer.

Information was also gathered and collated in a database on objects of cultural heritage from the Šumava Biosphere Reserve (B.3.2). It is important that any of the databases created through the project are maintained and expanded so that their usefulness continues.

To promote the use of traditional architecture in Babia Góra, a catalogue of house construction plans with traditional elements and styles was compiled (B.3.2). The only real way to measure the success of this activity will be in the long term through seeing an increase in the number of houses built in the traditional style. One of the recommendations is that Nowy Targ District, as an institution responsible for giving building permission in Orava Region, could encourage the use of the catalogue and a focus on traditional architectural elements in planning approvals.

Despite the attraction of architectural heritage to visitors, there has been a tendency for local people to opt for more modern houses. Traditional buildings in the Gömör-Torna Karst region of the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve are disappearing as a result of local people



modifying their properties. As a result, the local knowledge of maintaining traditional buildings is also declining. In Aggtelek, the CPEA developed a booklet with recommendations and advice on renovating old buildings (B.3.2). Financial contributions were provided in the form of small grants for the renovation of buildings for tourism-related and/or community purposes (B.3.3) and each recipient received this guide to assist them. The start of this activity was delayed. As a result, an additional US\$6,800 was transferred from two other activities (surveying traditional architecture and developing restoration plans) where there was underspend. Eleven buildings were restored and the National Park Directorate also renovated an old barn for tourism purposes. However, it appears that most of the applications were from people who were not originally local to the area. The barn that has been renovated is to be used by student groups and as a meeting point for organised tour groups. Visitors have the opportunity to take part in traditional handicrafts such as felt, candle, paper and wooden toy making inside the restored barn.

The traditional wooden huts in Babia Góra are also gradually disappearing. To preserve a traditionally designed building, criteria were developed to select a property and then the chosen one was developed and is now being used for agrotourism accommodation (B.3.3). The house owner also underwent training to prepare them for running the business. Visitors are given a chance to watch the farmer at work and also to learn how to ride horses.

#### **4.2.8. C: Support international cooperation among the participating countries**

As will be further described in later sections of this Evaluation, the international cooperation of all three participating countries has significantly improved as a result of the project. At the start there were no cross-border ecotourism businesses or operations in the three Biosphere Reserves. After the three year project, there were at least eight with three at Aggtelek and five at Šumava. The expanded Gömör-Torna Festival in Hungary and the cross-border trails that have been developed are evidence of greater trans-boundary collaboration. Case studies on bilateral consultation and information exchange are also nearing completion.

Over the three years regular project team meetings and bilateral project team meetings were held. The project team attended international conferences, workshops and seminars. The International Advisory Committee (IAC) met three times and contributed significantly to the evaluation of project results and dissemination and exchange of experiences at the international level. In their final report, they concluded that considerable and successful efforts have been made to involve and interlink at a local, national and international level. The IAC members also committed themselves to support the dissemination of project results.

The Central and East Europe Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB) has provided the platform for electronic-based communication and the website is being maintained which includes links to all relevant documents. The project is also being promoted within the CADSES (Central Europe, Adriatic, Danubian, South-Eastern European Space) Carpathian Project. In addition to that, CEEWEB and ETE are cooperating in the project '*Protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians in a transnational framework*'.

Within the Babia Góra region, there were many organisations all working independently of each other on nature and cultural heritage, social and economic development. A Communication Strategy was developed and meetings and workshops were organised to encourage closer working and the exchange of information between decision makers, government representatives and NGOs (C.3.2). It was discovered that many of the

discrepancies between the rules of nature conservation and sustainable tourism development actually resulted from an absence of dialogue. The National Park is now using the communication network and the Tourism Management Plan to inform its conservation plan.

#### **4.2.9. D: Facilitate a consultative process with key stakeholders**

Stakeholder involvement in the Biosphere Reserves has increased significantly as a result of this project. Various techniques and approaches have been used to engage local people and this will be described more fully in section 4.7.

Many of the other activities and processes within this objective relate to management and monitoring and evaluation of the project. As a result of their importance to the project, these aspects have been given their own focused sub-headings so will not be discussed or elaborated on in this section.

### **4.3. Cost-effectiveness**

#### **4.3.1. Efficiency**

UNEP/GEF, when interviewed, stated the project had been cost effective. It was a medium sized project with less than US\$1million funding from GEF covering three different Biosphere Reserves. The contacts in Šumava and Aggtelek also felt the project was cost-effective.

However, ETE felt that, as much more time was spent on the project than initially planned, the project was not really cost-effective. They were also concerned about project management costs. In the initial budget, US\$230,000 was allocated for project management costs. Following the application, it was discovered that these costs should only be ten per cent of the overall budget (US\$98,000). ETE had to provide additional funding in-kind and as cash donations to make up the shortfall. In response to this, UNEP/GEF reported that they now do less financing of project management work and NGOs need to be more aware of this.

The computer application Microsoft Project was bought at a cost of €800 for the programme and €1,000 to install. The programme was not really flexible enough for what was required and the project team were resistant to using it. However, it was useful for ETE and their own work planning for the project.

There was some flexibility in the budget as not all costs were specifically detailed. This enabled the project staff to react to new demands or to differences in currency conversion between US Dollars and the local currencies. The opportunity to re-group money was also important to three of the activities in the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve that dealt with the built heritage. A survey of traditional architectural heritage was cheaper than budgeted for as the experts worked voluntarily. The brochure produced on maintaining and restoring traditional buildings was also cheaper than initially allowed for due to tendering the contract. As a result, the money saved on these two activities was re-located to providing grants for actually renovating and using traditional buildings for accommodation, workshops and a museum. This allowed almost double the amount of restoration work planned to be completed.

#### **4.3.2. Contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing**

A number of aspects of the project were delayed, as already reported. It appears that these did not have significant financial implications on the Biosphere Reserves but they did impact on project management costs. These were budgeted for through the additional in-kind donations, especially those from ETE. By relying on the in-kind financing, it restricted the ability of

ETE to call on the partners to deliver on time and apply pressure. However, it was also good as it generated greater commitment and involvement in the project.

The in-kind financing, despite being much higher than was initially expected, was very useful for the project. The only issue that could have arisen was that the partners did not report all the in-kind contributions that were actually received.

The project was successful at leveraging additional resources (especially through the in-kind financing). There are also other examples where significant leveraging has occurred beyond what was expected. For example, in the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve the project provided US\$8,000 for a trail. This was matched by the State Forest Administration (Nowy Targ) and then they added another US\$91,100 for the project. The Babia Góra National Park initially committed to investing US\$106,000 in visitor centres but actually contributed an additional US\$250,000 to the project overall. In Hungary, the Ministry of Environment co-funded the Tourism Management Plan with US\$30,000 but then added another US\$24,000 to the work. In the Czech Republic, the CPEA, the Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology, originally calculated they would not provide any funding for the eco-labelling scheme but they did contribute US\$25,000.

#### **4.3.3. Use of scientific and technical information and knowledge**

In all three Biosphere Reserves various research projects and scientific surveys were conducted during the course of the project. Many of the documents produced are in the national language. However, at meetings, the results and approaches were shared as the partners reported on their activities. The relevant outcomes and techniques were then used where appropriate and especially in the development of the Tourism Management Plans. In some cases through, for example an eco-physiographic study in Babia Góra and an analysis of land use in Aggtelek, were too location specific for the results to be shared. However, the findings of all the various research and studies were fully incorporated within the respective documents produced. For example, in Šumava, feedback on the first educational courses for local guides was used to amend and improve the quality for subsequent training and events.

In some cases, pre-existing methodologies from previous projects were used. For example, in Aggtelek, the EISD had already completed some work on mapping historical land use. Again in Aggtelek, findings of previous research on traditional fruit types and orchards in the region were applied improving the advice given for restoring traditional management in certain areas of the Biosphere Reserve.

#### **4.4. Financial planning**

This Evaluation has not attempted to conduct a financial audit of the project. A third party conducted an audit of the project's financial records at the end of the project, as required.

GEF provided US\$941,900 towards the project. In total, the project also received US\$568,237 of in-kind financing and US\$1,884,598 cash donations, giving a total of US\$2,452,835 in co-financing and an overall budget of US\$3,394,735. Annex 8 shows the sources of co-financing as anticipated when the project was originally approved in 2005 and as received by May 2008, the last occasion when financial figures were available. In the original budget it was expected that US\$467,500 of in-kind financing would be provided along with US\$1,181,700 in cash. However, the project raised nearly 50 per cent more co-financing than originally foreseen and should be congratulated on this achievement equating to an additional US\$803,635. Annex 9 shows the expenditure of GEF funds, broken down

according to UNEP reporting requirements. The project's budget was affected by the decline in the US Dollar relative to other currencies during this period.

ETE provided overall financial control but the CPEAs in the relative countries were responsible for project implementation.

There were no major issues with disbursement. There was overspending in some areas but underspent in others. There were no major budget re-allocations amongst the various components. There was quite a significant overspend on official business travel. US\$10,500 was budgeted for this but a total of US\$16,082 was actually spent. There was also a US\$4,000 overspend on the project evaluation. However, there were also considerable underspends on some of the activities. For example, US\$3,434 less was spent on the promotion and marketing on the importance of biodiversity (B.2) than originally budgeted for and the identification of measurable indicators (A.4) also cost less than planned (US\$2,632).

As far as the Evaluation could determine, there were no irregularities in the disbursement and spending of project funds, and overall the expenditure of project funds was very close to that predicted in the revised budget and was within the GEF limit.

The budget was initially planned and produced in 2003 but the project was not started until 2005. During that time the exchange rate from US Dollars to local currency and prices within each country changed. As a result of the devaluation of the US Dollar and costs incurred in converting the funding to local currencies, a portion of the budget was lost at the outset. This was compensated for by leveraged funding and increased in-kind contributions from partners, NGOs and National Parks. The profile and importance of the project contributed to raising additional funds from Government departments and National agencies.

ETE felt that the overall project financial planning was problematic, challenging and time consuming but it was very effective. The strict guidelines were applied and adhered to and there were good links with the UNEP financial department. Representatives from Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve suggested that the financial planning was very effective due to the lump-sum planning and flexibility during implementation. More could have been spent but they feel they did the best they could with the available resources.

Not having a management structure within the Šumava Biosphere Reserve had no effect on financial planning. The Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology acted as the CPEA in the Czech Republic. They were responsible for the overall project coordination and all the financial issues. The management of the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve is incorporated into the management of the Aggtelek National Park Directorate who were fully devoted to the project.

ETE required that the Tourism Management Plan for Babia Góra was produced in Polish, English and Slovakian. Translating the Plan into Slovakian had not been budgeted for so this caused the CPEA additional financial pressure.

If the project had not received GEF funding then none of the work in Babia Góra would have been undertaken or achieved. In Šumava, it is unlikely that any of the project activities could have been done although some of the work could possibly have been done in the future. However, it would have lacked the coordination that was so crucial to this project. In Aggtelek, a portion of work could have been achieved through another project but this would not have covered the development and implementation of the Tourism Management Plans (a

principle objective of this project). For example, some land use history mapping may have been undertaken as a result of the strong relationship between recent land use and conservation management needs. Some work may also have been done on surveying existing services and buildings and on conducting research into the ecological and tourist carrying capacity of the region as some experts may have done the work anyway. During the course of the project the scope of the Gömör-Torna Festival was broadened. The GEF funding perhaps accelerated this process and eased the way for new groups and settlements to be involved. However, for the majority of activities completed as part of the project, such as the indicator and monitoring system, the brochure on restoring traditional buildings and the guidelines on sound tourism for stakeholders, they would not have happened without GEF funding. In one case, the renovation work on traditional buildings, the funding was critical as such an approach is not currently eligible for any other national or EU-funded scheme. The project also helped to generate additional funds that would not have been secured otherwise.

## **4.5. Impact**

### **4.5.1. Immediate impact**

There have been many significant and immediate impacts resulting from the project. There is now a common understanding and increased knowledge of sustainable tourism and acceptance of the need for tourism management. The project has also created a pool of ideas and resources on projects that can be implemented to achieve sustainable tourism development. The project has facilitated the exchange of ideas, interests and opinions on tourism development and biodiversity conservation between different stakeholders. It has also highlighted, to many of the stakeholders, that they share a common goal. There have been, and will continue to be, economic benefits and achievements in biodiversity conservation. Through local cooperation between stakeholders and the capacity building that has been achieved, sustainable tourism products have been developed in each of the three Biosphere Reserves. Overall, there is also greater awareness and involvement of the private sector in nature conservation through, for example, the eco-labelling schemes.

In Aggtelek the capacity of the stakeholders was developed in many different fields. Representatives of many settlements also started thinking about the ways their villages could be integrated into the programme of the Gömör-Torna Festival. This also led to the development of a series of new tourism products.

Through product development and marketing, long term financial and livelihood benefits will be derived for the local communities. Immediate impacts have been observed with an increase in visitor numbers and an increase in the number of local people being involved in tourism. Many of the activities are also sustainable so will continue without external financial support such as the living museum in Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve alone.

In the Šumava Biosphere Reserve impacts directly resulting from the project include an increase in the number of local people offering sustainable produce, products and services; an increase in the number, and improvement in the quality, of local guides; improvements in small-scale tourism infrastructure such as cross-border tourist trails and a greater appreciation of the potential the Biosphere Reserve has for newly emerging tourism activities.

In Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, there has been a significant increase in the cooperation between the forestry sector and the conservation sector, especially with regards to the maintenance of nature trails. As a result, sustainable practices have been introduced into forestry helping to increase the benefits for biodiversity.

It was hoped that the project would bring livelihood benefits to the local communities. One of these was an increase in employment. The partners have stated that this indicator (of five per cent above the baseline) is not actually measurable due to the lack of comprehensive baseline data. However, it is thought that approximately 30 new jobs have been created in the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve.

The project has also had impacts beyond the project area. For central and Eastern Europe, the project has helped increase awareness of the need for tourism management, especially in Protected Areas, and of the importance of high quality but sustainable tourism products. The activities completed have increased the tools available to others and provided best practice examples on stakeholder involvement with appropriate case studies. There is now greater awareness of the importance and effectiveness of local and regional trans-boundary cooperation.

#### **4.5.2. Longer-term impacts**

The project has also resulted in a number of potential longer term impacts. One of the most important is that, hopefully, the Biosphere Reserves will be implemented more effectively with additional improvements in environmental performance and quality of the tourism sector. Mechanisms have also been established that should ensure that the activities continue to have a positive impact.

The UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development have been very important for this project. Hopefully, their applicability will be recognised by other applicants for GEF-funding. The work on the Tourism Management Plans has also highlighted the need for Destination Management Organisations or at least regional cooperation in the provision of tourism products and services.

#### **4.5.3. Ensuring future impacts**

To enhance future impacts, it may be advisable to conduct a follow-up project that investigates the impacts and the successes and failures using a scientific methodology and approach. Indicators of sustainable tourism development have been designed and agreed in each Biosphere Reserve. These should be monitored in a few years time to assess continued impacts. Additional and continued funding support to the institutions working to implement and continue the positive outcomes of the project would be another way to ensure impacts are sustained.

In the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, huge investments from external companies and additional competitors could also potentially threaten the success of the project. When a member of the CPEA for Aggtelek was interviewed as part of this Evaluation, they also suggested that one of the threats for the project was private ownership and the development of facilities by external companies and organisations.

In Aggtelek, the National Park has been acting as a quasi tour operator which some consider to be a burden on their other responsibilities. However, it appears that the National Park want to continue in this role. There are concerns that as soon as tourism is not based on the grass-root approach, the potential positive changes generated by the project will cease to be realised and this could undermine the persistence of benefits. To realise the longer term impacts of the project in the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve the key players are members of the Tourism Association, stakeholders involved and the National Park Management. One of the central

roles of the National Park is tourism. This needs to be re-allocated to the Tourism Association on a step-by-step approach.

The Tourism Management Plan provides a useful, tangible tool to try to secure additional financial and economic resources. There should also be continued and enforced international recognition and pressure on national governments to encourage them to provide both financial and political support for the project. There are many different partners that should be involved to realise the longer term impacts. These include the National Parks, any future Biosphere Reserve institutions or Destination Management Organisation, the local communities, regional governments, national governments and the Ministry of Environment and NGOs. Lack of leadership within the Biosphere Reserves and a lack or decrease in political and financial support, either regionally or nationally, could limit the continued success of the project and affect the positive impacts.

#### **4.6. Sustainability**

Sustainability was central to this project principally the sustainable use of biodiversity through the development of sustainable tourism. As a result, several mechanisms were established, throughout the course of the project, to also ensure that the activities and programmes were sustainable. For example, the CPEAs integrated project activities into regular local processes (consultations, training), the Local Steering Committees discussed the financial sustainability of specific activities through the adoption of the Tourism Management Plans and the Country Advisory Committees discussed the use of the methodologies produced for other Protected Areas in their respective countries. The International Advisory Committee suggested that the project results should be further disseminated to the UNEP/CBD Secretariat as the project provides a model for the implementation of the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development. ETE, the organisation responsible for the overall project implementation, are also going to use all the material produced in English for future projects and initiatives. The International Advisory Committee suggested that, as up-take nationally is also critically important, stakeholders should also consider materials produced in national languages during the project. UNEP have agreed to try to get the Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility (GEFSEC) to incorporate the lessons learned from this, and other completed GEF-funded projects, into future project review criteria.

There is a high probability that the outcomes and impacts will continue in all three Biosphere Reserves now that the project funding has ended. The Tourism Management Plans ensure the continuation of activities initiated as part of the project through the commitment of local communities, stakeholders and National Park staff. In two of the Biosphere Reserves new organisations have been established. The Aggtelek Destination Management Organisation and the Šumava Regional Development Organisation will work to maximise the sustainability of the project. In Poland, no specific organisation was created but the Local Steering Committee is continuing and the Chair of that group is also the Director of the National Park. In the Tourism Management Plan, the foundation of a Destination Management Organisation was one of the top priority goals. This has subsequently happened since the project officially ended in May 2008.

In each of the Biosphere Reserves some follow-up work has already been initiated or planned. Collectively, there has been an analysis of the success factors of sustainable development and sustainable tourism. Indicators were established and monitoring against these will continue. There is also continuing monitoring of ecological benefits by the National Parks, NGOs and

quasi-government bodies. It is hoped that any ecological benefits will be sustained in the long term.

In Poland, there are plans underway to establish a trans-boundary Biosphere Reserve with Slovakia. In Hungary, the Development Agency will take up the Tourism Management Plan and examine Aggtelek. The project staff in Aggtelek also consciously made preparatory steps to develop specific follow-up actions with the emphasis being placed on the stakeholders to implement the plans put in place through the project. The National Park and EISD are continuing to be involved. For example, through a local partner, in Gömör, a study tour to Őrség for 12 stakeholders was organised.

In Šumava Biosphere Reserve, a project has already been planned with the Bavarian Project on the German side of the border. The Tourism Management Plan created will serve as a base for a project on common destination management. The National Park has also submitted an application for a project to continue training local guides. A database on cultural heritage is also planned as part of the project applied for by the Regioskop Consortium. The consortium is composed of two Academic Institutions and one business organisation and was established as a permanent institutional structure to continue the idea of a regional database.

There should be sufficient funding to maintain the Biosphere Reserves in the future through a variety of sources including their own monies. All three Reserves are trans-boundary in nature. This is currently a high priority for Europe who are choosing to focus efforts on these areas by providing some additional resources. It is also anticipated that national governments will step in and provide some funding. Although, in Poland, that does appear to depend on who is coordinating the plan.

There are a series of EU funding streams that are available for rural development and another that covers tourism-related activities and investments. One of the partners involved in the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, Gemer Environment and Landscape Development Association (GKTE), has already launched a project with the aim of facilitating stakeholders to develop their own project ideas and to assist them with the application and subsequent implementation. GKTE has also launched a follow-up project investigating the preservation of traditional local vegetable types which is similar to the orchard activity funded through the UNEP/GEF project.

The probability of the outcomes and impacts continuing in the Biosphere Reserves beyond the project is high due to the commitment of all those involved. The tangible outcomes provide a good base for successful continuation. Having one large project with many activities, instead of just having separate activities, provided the chance to have a clear overview and control and allowed the facilitation of stakeholders to all work towards sustainability. However, the partners are institutions with other influences on their time and resources so some of the activities may have to be amended and transformed. Funding may ultimately be the fact that limits continued stakeholder involvement. When money is available it is easier to involve people in the process.

If anything was to undermine the sustainability of the project and outcomes, it would appear to be any national, regional or even local political decisions taken that would influence tourism development in the regions. If there was a change in national policies that reduced the importance of nature conservation, that too could undermine the project. The economic



success of unsustainable activities within the Biosphere Reserves may also undermine the persistence of benefits to the local communities and to biodiversity conservation.

#### **4.7. Stakeholder participation / public awareness**

##### **4.7.1. Identification and engagement of stakeholders**

Consultation with stakeholders and local people seems to have been one of the important elements during the development of the Tourism Management Plans. It helped generate local ownership for the plans. As a result of taking ownership, there is a high likelihood that stakeholders will continue to be involved to ensure the continued success of their own and other related aspects of the project.

To identify and engage with stakeholders from the outset, a number of mechanisms were implemented in all three Biosphere Reserves. As part of the project in Babia Góra, open meetings were held with discussions concentrating on what unites and alienates certain individuals, organisations and partners. Personal, face-to-face meetings were also used to identify and engage stakeholders in the Šumava Biosphere Reserve.

Communication and involvement plans were developed and initiated along with stakeholder mapping and other outreach activities. However, Babia Góra was the only Biosphere Reserve to produce a written plan in time to be implemented and followed. Road maps including lists of stakeholders were produced in all three Biosphere Reserves. This included information on aspects of the project including methodologies, outputs and allocated timelines and areas of responsibility. The mechanisms were relatively successful although they perhaps could have been more effective if they had been completed earlier in the project. The process was the most effective in the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve as they were able to complete all the mechanisms quickly.

The establishment of Local Steering Committees in each of the three Biosphere Reserves was an effective approach. They did not involve a large number of stakeholders but it provided an opportunity for core stakeholders and organisations to be fully involved in decisions and implementation.

As a result of the Tourism Management Plan methodology, all three CPEAs ran a number of workshops for inputting to, and commenting on, the various documents. To accompany the workshops, the stakeholders were also able to attend training sessions on a variety of topics including sustainable tourism and nature conservation to ensure that any decisions they made were informed ones.

In the Šumava Biosphere Reserve, stakeholders and local people were crucial for the project's success and played a triple role as sources of knowledge, partners in formulating documents and information and as promoters of the project. In Aggtelek, it was fundamental that stakeholders were consulted as they will be the ones primarily implementing the plan. With the support of local people, there is an increased chance of the implementation being sustainable in the long term. To ensure local communities in the western part of the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve are still engaged and informed about sustainable tourism and development, a newsletter is regularly produced by EISD and GKTE in partnership. This ensures that the local people still feel valued and involved in any decisions and implementation of the activities. This is important for retaining commitment.

One of the components of the project was to improve the management of existing and potential conflicts between tourism and biodiversity objectives in the Biosphere Reserves. In Poland, there was some pre-existing conflict between the communities on how to develop tourism but not with regards to the Biosphere Reserve. The project played the role of facilitator to overcome the conflicts and reach agreement on how tourism should be developed. There is now greater understanding amongst the local communities but it perhaps too early to conclude that all conflict has been resolved. The high attendance at meetings shows that positive steps have been made. In Šumava, the project helped create greater understanding of, and appreciation for, the National Park by the local communities. Before the project, there was some conflict between those that wanted tourism development and those concerned with nature conservation. There is still some underlying resentment although the atmosphere has started to change. This is particularly hard to measure. The project has increased regional cooperation, awareness and engagement with local people. This should be an effective way to resolve any conflicts that do arise in the future.

However, if people are uninterested or reticent to the idea, it is difficult to make passive people active even with dedicated projects aimed at stakeholder participation. However, funding does help if people can realise that there are also support systems to assist them. Within the Aggtelek Karst region, as is the case in many places, there were people who, even given the opportunity, will not act or change. According to those involved in the area, many of the active local stakeholders are not actually native to the region. It is thought that these are the ones who really appreciate the cultural and natural heritage of the area. The locals, perhaps, take this for granted and do not realise that it is special to others. This is a particular weakness which makes the acceptance of any activities more difficult among the more passive but native stakeholders.

Despite the CPEAs hoping the stakeholder engagement will continue, it is not necessarily guaranteed. The continuation of stakeholder involvement and the integration of environmental management into tourism businesses will require evaluation beyond the timeframe of this project. One of the main ways of ensuring that local communities continue to be engaged is if they have an opportunity to continue profiting from any activities, products or services.

There may also be external factors, beyond the stakeholders control, that may limit their continued involvement. For example, if there is a change in area administration or other changes in leadership. During the project, the head of the Šumava National Park changed. This created unforeseen challenges and had an adverse effect on the project at the time. However, the project managed to engage with the new leader and increased understanding and capacity for what was being achieved.

Whilst stakeholder engagement and participation was central to the success of project activities, many, if not most, of the partners are not policy makers so do not have influence on the political institutions.

Financial support and private sector involvement was, and still is, critical if the project is to continue to have positive impacts in the long term. Private sector involvement contributed to the establishment of communication strategies for each project area.

Whilst many of the other activities developed are sustainable, there is always a need for external financial support even if it is in the form of maintaining accommodation or other

tourism services. Throughout the project, various activities have been completed to encourage and engage the private sector. For example, a branding scheme in Šumava for tourism products and services and festivals in Aggtelek. These activities have resulted in a huge increase in the involvement of, and voluntary contributions from, the business sector.

Ultimately, the long term sustainability of the project will be heavily influenced by the continuation of private sector involvement. The IAC reported that, although several attempts were made to ensure the private sector's contribution to the conservation of biodiversity, the enhancement of the financial contribution was not fully achieved as initially planned. The CPEAs can continue to work on this aspect. It is also hoped that, as the labelling and certification schemes become more well known, there will be greater participation from the private sector. They will see that there are financial incentives from being engaged and associated with the project.

#### **4.7.2. Degree and effectiveness of collaboration/interactions between partners**

##### ***International partners***

The CPEAs in the different participating countries all had something in common. They were all working on the same UNEP/GEF-funded project. Despite any other differences in their region, country or Biosphere Reserve, they were still all working towards the same vision and goal. This required international cooperation and communication (Objective C). The process was facilitated by ETE.

There does appear to have been considerable communication between the various partners and organisations with regular meetings held. The collaborations have led to the formation of some long term relationships and shared approaches. Potential risks to all Biosphere Reserves were also identified with suggestions made by each as to how to reduce their impact. The results were shared between the different country partners and trans-boundary colleagues through constant personal communication, the exchange of project documents, the publication of materials in multiple languages and regular meetings.

As the project meetings took place on all three sites at various times during the three year project, the CPEAs were able to show what was being delivered in their area. It also gave all partners the opportunity to provide advice based on their own experiences and to exchange ideas. For example, in Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, the Forest District and the National Park did not communicate effectively before the project and they actually had conflicting interests for the land. One of the activities related to maintaining walking trails. A partnership between the two groups developed and resulted in a positive outcome for the trails and for future collaboration. The experiences gained with managing this situation was shared with the other partners.

However, during the course of the project, it was sometimes difficult to ensure full international cooperation. Despite the considerable advances made, there were some minor disagreements and problems relating to the travelling required and over a few communication issues. As all the activities were separate, these problems did not have a long term impact on the project.

##### ***Trans-boundary cooperation***

All three of the Biosphere Reserves in the project are trans-boundary. Many of the activities planned and implemented involved trying to increase and stabilise communication between

organisations working on either side of the national borders. Trans-boundary partners were also involved in the Local Steering Committees.

Trans-boundary issues were considered throughout the project and a number of approaches were adopted to increase cooperation and communication. These included joint activities, invitations to the trans-boundary partners and stakeholders to join the various project activities and the provision of interpretation where possible. This latter approach was particularly successful in Aggtelek. Partners in the adjoining areas were also invited to any events that were held in the Biosphere Reserve whether that was a cultural event or the opening of new visitor facilities. This helped create a real sense of shared ownership for the project. One of the main visible impacts resulting from increased cooperation across borders and boundaries for Aggtelek is the widened geographical scope of the Gömör-Torna Festival. In some instances, printed material was produced in two or more languages and specific publications were also produced on trans-boundary issues.

Within the three Biosphere Reserves, the increased trans-boundary cooperation has had some impressive results. In the Babia Góra and Šumava Biosphere Reserves, there has been joint trans-boundary trail network planning, monitoring and maintenance. This has led to an improvement in the overall visitor experience and the sharing of tourism benefits between the regions. Joint applications have also been formulated and submitted for projects on tourism, regional development and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Another of the outcomes of increased cooperation across borders has been better communication between the Šumava National Park in the Czech Republic and the Bavarian Forest in Germany. A joint cross-border tourist infrastructure project has been initiated.

In Hungary, regular contact was made with the cross-border partner, Gemer Youth Association (GIT). They were kept informed of the progress made with the activities in Aggtelek and they both tried to find the best ways to duplicate any applicable actions on the Slovakian side of the border. The Gemer Youth Association act as an umbrella organisation for a number of stakeholders in the Slovak Karst region. They are able to mobilise people and organisations effectively and working in partnership with them proved successful to both sides.

As a result of the trans-boundary working now evident between Hungary and Slovakia, separate applications can be submitted for funds in the respective countries but also for specific trans-boundary programmes. Tourism destination management and nature conservation are two of the priorities for this work.

There have also been wider, political developments. The cross-border cooperation has had a big impact in Aggtelek as the project has led to the coalescence to two parts of the same region that were artificially separated after World War II. Before the project started, there was already good cooperation between the two National Parks on the issues of nature conservation. However, as the Tourism Management Plan will be developed into a trans-boundary plan there will be additional benefits for biodiversity as a result of sustainable tourism and visitor management.

Hopefully the trans-boundary communication will continue especially as there are now many joint projects in operation such as the nature trails. The project was important for initiating

the process in at least two of the Biosphere Reserves but the achievements have the potential to be expanded through, for example, the involvement of a greater number of stakeholders.

#### ***Within the project***

In Aggtelek, there were already good relationships between stakeholders and EISD as a result of previous activities and engagement. There was also good collaboration between EISD and the National Park especially given the large financial scale of the project, the heterogeneity of the activities and the time pressures that had to be dealt with. All partnerships were built on good personal contacts.

However, not all partnerships work out or run particularly effectively. In Šumava, one of the partners that the CPEA had most difficulty with was actually the National Park. They are a strong player in the region so tended to take a blocking stance due to their power and legal strength. However, the Directorate of the National Park changed during the project. The one in post when the project was approved was totally focused on conservation. His replacement was more accepting of the area's tourism potential.

A number of positive outcomes were achieved by partners within the same country and Biosphere Reserve sharing their ideas and experiences. For example, The Galyaság Village Association, in Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, has a strong background in traditional building which was shared and applied in other areas during the restoration phase of project.

With regards to nature conservation, one of the key outcomes from the increased cooperation is that land use history has been researched in both Hungary and Slovakia. It helps provide additional background information to influence nature conservation planning and management schemes.

#### **4.7.3. Degree and effectiveness of public awareness activities**

Since the project started, all three Biosphere Reserves now have greater participation and involvement from the local populations. This is partly as a result of concerted efforts at stakeholder engagement but also through increasing awareness of biodiversity and tourism-related issues in the area. The slightly eclectic nature of the project was also important as it helped raise the interest of the public and local communities. A number of different public awareness activities have been implemented in all three Biosphere Reserves. During the course of the project, the high attendance at these events was maintained showing commitment and a greater appreciation and understanding of the project.

The training events in local handicrafts and traditional architecture were well attended by local people. By providing training on local handicrafts, people gained skills and made products that can be sold providing additional income. However, the benefits of the training may not be immediately obvious in sales figures as the training was not as intensive as that for local nature guides so benefits may manifest themselves over a longer timeframe. In the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, one of the positive effects of this training has been the continuity and sharing of knowledge and skills between the generations. Grandfathers were able to share and pass on their expertise to their grandchildren. This has led to a greater appreciation for traditional crafts and an increased sense of local pride and prestige. In Aggtelek, almost all the training courses held built on local knowledge. The main aim was to help the local people use their own knowledge for economic benefit and also to safeguard the area's cultural and natural heritage. The training has also resulted in ideas, incentives and motivation for local people and especially the younger generations.

Based on the feedback received in Aggtelek on the training courses that were run, the CPEA discovered some information gaps among the stakeholders' knowledge about nature conservation. For example, on the training course for local guides, a member of the National Park staff explained the reasoning for closing some areas to the public. The participants reported that this information was new to them. They did know some areas were off limits but the reasons had never been explained and, as a result, the ban was not generally accepted or respected by the local communities.

Before the project, the local communities in and around the Šumava Biosphere Reserve were opposed to the National Park. However, as the project has not just come from a nature conservation perspective but also incorporated sustainable development and socio-economics, this opposition has been changed to a more positive one. This has been demonstrated by the number of people who have bought in to the certification scheme and who trained up as local guides for the area (as reported in section 4.2). The training of local guides has been particularly sustainable. In all three Biosphere Reserves, the training resulted in employment for the guides.

Feedback from the participants and stakeholders involved in the public awareness activities suggest that they were an effective mechanism to increase understanding and appreciation of biodiversity conservation. There was general agreement that tourism should be developed in a way that does not adversely affect natural resources. However, no amount of information will convince all people not to invest in unsustainable tourism developments.

The internet is now an indispensable awareness raising tool. It is unknown if the stakeholders made enough use of it to justify the time and money expended on providing materials. To gain a better appreciation of how the internet is being used, resources should be allocated to monitoring the use and evaluating the opinions and feedback of users especially with regards to content and ease of use.

Representatives from the three project sites were also present at Reisepavillon, the International Fair of Alternative Travel, in Stuttgart 2008. None of the partners found attendance at the event to be particularly effective in raising public awareness. One of the objectives of the project was to gain additional interest from the international level but, in hindsight, it was felt more could have been achieved by spending the money on other forms of promotional material such as articles in the media and establishing personal contacts with tour operators and travel agencies.

Despite all the positive, anecdotal evidence, it is notoriously difficult to actually quantify and measure increased understanding of visitors and local people. It is hoped that changes in public opinion in relation to nature protection and, more specifically, to the National Park, will be one way of measuring the success of increased understanding. For local people, it is hoped that a greater number will have an awareness of and appreciate for the Biosphere Reserve concept. It is possible to record the reactions of visitors and the attendance at events, commitment to the activities and examples of involvement by local people. The CPEAs and National Parks in all three Biosphere Reserves are committed to continue monitoring factors such as attendance, commitment and examples of involvement.

#### **4.8. Country ownership**

At a national level, the issue of ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ensuring sustainable tourism development is important and highly relevant. However,

there has been little commitment by the Governments for uptake of some of the outputs of the project. In Poland, there is little evidence to date of any real commitment to continue the work outside the Biosphere Reserve or to implement the ideas more widely. In Hungary and the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Environment in each country, is keen to adopt and utilise the UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development in other selected Protected Areas. However, there is currently little commitment beyond that to implement any of the other ideas or methodologies. This is despite all CPEAs and ETE devoting considerable time to promoting the project regional, nationally and internationally. Information about sustainable tourism development and biodiversity conservation has been produced in a variety of media that are available to all through the websites.

In Šumava, one of the activities involved designing a management system for Biosphere Reserves (in the Czech Republic) with the aim of practically applying the Biosphere Reserve concept with in Šumava. Internationally, Biosphere Reserves are recognised as a promising way of conserving biodiversity as the concept presumes the local population are engaged in management. However, as mentioned in the introduction, at the start of the project, Biosphere Reserves are not considered a legal category of Protected Area under Czech environmental legislation. As part of the activity, the institutional models of the six Biosphere Reserves throughout the Czech Republic were analysed. Following this, a suggestion was made for an institutional framework and different ways to promote the concept. However, it was decided that the concept of a Biosphere Reserve, as an agenda, was too complex for just one institution. It was proposed that, for Šumava, the National Park and the Regional Development Agency Šumava should share the responsibility for realising the Biosphere Reserve Concept. This output launched a discussion within the Czech Man and the Biosphere (MaB) Committee about what is the most appropriate institutional setting for Biosphere Reserve concept implementation. The work could have a far reaching impact on the six Biosphere Reserves within the Czech Republic.

During the implementation of the project, the Polish Government changed three times. Following an election in 2007, a new Polish Government was elected. As this was two years into the project, it is hard to assess any changes resulting from the activities and there has not really been time to influence any new policies. However, time has been spent informing new officials about the project and its outputs.

Towards the end of the project, it became clear that country ownership of the project, especially at national level, was one of the weaker aspects of the project. The CPEAs pressed hard for acceptance and adaptation of the various recommendations at a national level. However, factors beyond the control of either ETE or the three CPEAs limited greater uptake.

#### **4.9. Implementation Approach**

The implementation mechanisms outlined in the original document and plan appear to have been closely adhered to for the majority of activities. It will always be necessary to adapt project activities during the course of a project. How adaptations are made impact on how successful they are.

During the project, there were some examples where the scheme was adjusted through adaptive management to match the real situation and to incorporate additional research and findings. Monitoring and Evaluation sheets were created for each activity. They were the basis for reporting on progress with implementation. The partners adapted to changes during the project by constantly referring to the monitoring and evaluation sheets and adjusting the

timeframe accordingly. At regular meetings with ETE and the other partners, any adjustments were discussed and approved. A total of 12 project team meetings were held where progress with implementing each of the activities was discussed in detail.

The combination of CPEAs and Country Main Partners proved to be a useful mechanism. There was good and close cooperation and the sharing of responsibilities throughout the project. The consultation process meant considerable stakeholder involvement and, as a mechanism, this also proved to be very useful.

Bilateral meetings between the CPEAs and ETE were organised to address any specific problems and delays. Two meetings were held in each Biosphere Reserve. Quarterly financial reports were produced reflecting the spending behaviour of all project partners. These were heavily discussed between ETE and the CPEAs.

The IAC and CAC appear to have been very helpful during the course of the project. The IAC shared the project interim outcomes and provided feedback and ideas. The IAC had a positive impact on the project through the flow of information and enhanced promotion of the achievements.

It has been suggested that the CAC for the Šumava Biosphere Reserve was not particularly effective except for one individual who remained a principal supporter throughout the project. Most of the CAC members were also engaged in other projects which took up some of their time and focus. In Aggtelek, the CAC meetings were combined with the LSC and staff meetings which proved to be very effective. It ensured help at the national level and also strengthened the local acceptance of the project. The staff members were able to report directly and the results could be discussed and any problems resolved together.

ETE had no complaints about the supervision from UNEP. They reported that the administration had been good and financial support was always timely. Both the administration office in Nairobi and the financial support office in Washington were patient when the quarterly and half-yearly reports were late from ETE.

There were some minor changes between the original document and what was actually implemented. For example, in Aggtelek, some of the reasons cited for these changes include the long time that passed between submitting the application and the actual start date of the project, changes in exchange rates and the devaluation of the US Dollar. As a result, more regular local staff meetings had to be held to agree on the updated and amended workplans. The budget also had to be amended and additional funding sourced.

As part of the project in Poland, one of the activities involved the development of a network of Polish-Slovak cross-border trails. However, negotiations with the state police and other organisations took longer than anticipated. The National Park built the trail as soon as the legal procedures were finalised.

In Šumava, one of the activities was to conduct a series of training and education events. However, there were pre-existing tensions between the National Park and the local communities. As a result, long and repeated discussions had to take place regarding the training topics. The cautiousness of the project team proved adequate as the results were positive. However, a more proactive approach may have yielded even better results.



In a couple of instances, contractors withdrew from the projects. The partners needed patience to persevere and find new ones. For example, when developing printed materials on a code of ethics for tourists visiting the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, the initial contractor withdrew. This caused considerable time delays but the activity was still successfully achieved.

The delays and obstacles incurred throughout the project did not affect the activities in such a way that any had to be changed, cancelled or reformulated. Instead, the solutions included increased management effort, communication and coaching to achieve the outputs.

For some of the activities, the outcomes have far exceeded what was initially proposed. For example, the number of people attending training events and the number of certified products. For others, such as the Tourism Management Plans, the planned level of achievement was not fully realised. This was mainly a result of political and institutional factors which are hard to influence during a three year project. In this instance, adaptive management meant accepting the limitations and barriers but still persevering with investigating ways to achieve all the objectives. This was done through constant communication at a range of levels from local to national.

Due to underspend in two of the activities in the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, and the budget being flexible enough, money was transferred to the grant scheme for restoring traditional buildings allowing more work to be completed.

As with any project of this scale there are likely to be administrative, operational and/or technical problems and constraints at some point. How these are dealt with and overcome can have a significant impact on a project. As a result of having to convert from US Dollars to Euros and other currencies some of the budget was lost. The project partners were able to complete the same amount of work for less money and significantly more co-financing was allocated to the project.

The geographical location of the Biosphere Reserves in relation to ETE meant more time and money had to be expended in travelling to the various meetings than expected. To minimise any difficulties, meetings were carefully planned, on a long-term basis and in cooperation with all partners. All partners showed flexibility with travelling and made considerable efforts when hosting meetings.

During the application phase, there were some misunderstandings regarding the cost and budget allowance for project management and agreeing the Objective Verifiable Indicators (OVI). Some of the OVIs were always unrealistic but had to be included so as not to risk the project being rejected at the application stage. At the inception and the Mid-Term Evaluation, as well as for the Terminal Report, the OVI were discussed and OVI sheets developed to gather data on the achievement of each indicator.

Throughout the course of the project, the management in Babia Góra changed twice. Extra effort had to be expended in bringing the new staff up to speed with the project and explaining what was required in the way of reporting.

In general, there were only relatively minor changes made to what was originally planned. Most of the changes that were made related to timings or the budget. As a result, adaptive

management for this project mainly meant monitoring the implementation to check the progress and achievement of the activities and making any adjustments accordingly.

#### **4.10. Replicability**

The Technical Reports produced for each activity provide detailed descriptions of the design, approaches, implementation and lessons learnt. The Reports themselves may not be applicable elsewhere but they could provide ideas of the types of activities that may be suitable for a project concentrating on sustainable tourism development and for identifying any potential barriers that may be encountered. However, the methodologies that have been produced throughout the course of the project are highly applicable to other Protected Areas in the countries involved. The methodologies will also be highly applicable to other Biosphere Reserves and Protected Areas in Central and Eastern Europe as the problems encountered in Biosphere Reserves are similar as well as the structure and institutions for nature conservation. However, their application would be most suited in regions with similar features such as being remote or with small villages where traditional knowledge is crucial. For example, the region of Órség in South West Hungary, on the Slovakian border, has similar features. The National Park in Órség have already made contact with the staff at Aggtelek.

The methodologies and approaches used in the project have been developed and implemented by three different Biosphere Reserves that also have different political and socio-economic conditions and state of tourism development. They have been applicable in each area with only minor adjustments required to incorporate local circumstances. The methodologies have also been presented to a range of audiences at a number of different events. Considerable interest was shown in the documents at the national and international level.

The Tourism Management Plans were developed using guidance provided by ETE but agreed on by the three CPEAs. As a result, the documentation is clear and replicable elsewhere. The Tourism Management Plans, whilst being produced for specific Biosphere Reserves, are replicable for other destinations if local circumstances are considered and stakeholders consulted. There also needs to be consideration of the tourism management and nature conservation needs of the area. The Tourism Management Planning Methodology was also tested by the UNWTO in Thailand and Indonesia.

As a result of the project, the Ministry of Environment, in the Czech Republic, is using the Tourism Management Plan methodology developed as part of the project and looking at implementing it in other areas of the country. The Ministry of Regional Development is also going to do a Tourism Management Plan for the other regions and would like to use the Šumava Tourism Management Plan as a case study.

In Hungary, the Ministry of Environment has shown a strong interest in the UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development. They are investigating implementing the Guidelines in other areas of the country. The Government in Poland have had similar thoughts but they are not as far developed.

To support other projects in Central and Eastern Europe and more widely, ETE and the project partners, are producing a case study combining the methodology for formulating the Tourism Management Plans with experiences and issues encountered during the process.

#### **4.11. Assessment of monitoring and evaluation systems**

The project had a fully budgeted monitoring and evaluation plan by the time required. In May 2005, an Inception Workshop was held. It was attended by representatives from UNEP, ETE and each of the Biosphere Reserves. At the meeting, the annual workplan was agreed along with measurable indicators. ETE were responsible for the day-to-day monitoring of implementation progress.

##### **4.11.1. Monitoring and evaluation design**

The monitoring plan consisted of two parts. The first monitored project progress according to a number of indicators relating to planning, inputs and outputs. The results could not be used for adaptive management as it was outcome orientated and not process-focused and it specifically related to the sustainability of Protected Areas. The WWF Tracking Tool for Protected Areas, consisting of 30 questions, was used and completed by the CPEAs three times over the three-year project. The tracking tool showed that, after the project, there had been modest improvements in the management effectiveness of all three Biosphere Reserves. The GEF recognise that multi-country projects, such as this one, will be at different starting points and have to consider local circumstances. As a result, a tracking tool was completed in each country.

The second part of the monitoring and evaluation plan was process-focused so the results could be used for adaptive management. The project logical framework consisted of specific OVI and means of verification (MOV) for each objective, outcome and activity (see Annex 7 for a list of the OVI). Many of the indicators to measure implementation can be considered to be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) targets.

##### **4.11.2. Monitoring and evaluation plan implementation**

ETE employed someone four months after the project initially started to focus on monitoring and evaluation. ETE also allocated resources to establish and produce detailed Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) sheets for each activity. In all three Biosphere Reserves, there was sufficient baseline data available at the start of the project to be incorporated into the monitoring and evaluation plan. However, UNEP/GEF report that, in their opinion, the monitoring and evaluation was not perhaps properly planned. GEF policy on this aspect has changed since this project started. Monitoring and evaluation plans must be in place before the project starts and they now form part of the proposal evaluation process.

The monitoring and evaluation plan was properly implemented and all the project partners were constantly informed about the progress of implementation. The results generated were used as feedback for the CPEAs and for adaptive management during the implementation phase of the project. They were also checked when the half-yearly reports were produced and reviewed. The M&E sheets also proved useful for report-writing. The Mid-Term Evaluation revealed some barriers to project implementation. These were then discussed and solutions proposed.

The M&E sheets were good for tracking activities. However, it took 18 months to develop them all which was too long considering the project itself only lasted three years. There were also too many activities on which to complete the M&E.

There appear to have been some misunderstanding about what was expected between Babia Góra and ETE in terms of reporting. According to ETE, this was principally due to a lack of continuity with Babia Góra project staff and lack of experience with regard to project

management. However, ETE report this situation was quickly resolved through re-engaging and explaining the reasons for what was required and it had no long term negative influence on the project implementation. The Polish felt that what was being asked of them was beyond what had originally been set out and agreed in the application in terms of having to provide reports and documents in both Polish and English.

The Friends of Babia Góra NGO, the CPEA for Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, also report that they were required by ETE to provide activity reports, financial reports and monitoring and evaluation sheets quarterly whilst UNEP/GEF just require biannual reporting. UNEP/GEF also reported that they felt the amount, and even detail, of reporting ETE requested was excessive and beyond what was officially required by UNEP. However, they also appreciated that it was ETE who had overall responsibility for project management and if they felt that more detailed, frequent reporting was required to keep the project on track then they were quite within their right to request that.

It has also been suggested that, sometimes, ETE did not listen or accept that the CPEAs may know and understand the local situation better and that the local views and solutions for particular activities were just as valuable as the overall perspective.

The three Tourism Management Plans each have a section on adaptive management. This provides a tool for adjusting the plans as and when any future results are available. The monitoring and evaluation of activities should continue into the future. It is hoped that these results will then be incorporated into the management plans when they are updated in five to ten years time.

In the lessons learnt section of the Terminal Report, it was suggested that indicators should have been discussed and agreed during project inception with the various CPEAs. The OVI had been agreed between ETE and GEF during the project application stage and for a certain part do not reflect realities in the three Biosphere Reserves and the probability of achievement. It is suggested that some of the OVI are not clearly formulated. The less clear and unrealistic OVI were discussed with the project team, the IAC and GEF during the project at the Mid-Term Evaluation stage. Solutions were identified to provide input that enables the evaluation of these OVI. However, some of the OVI only generally relate to the project implementation. For each of the activities, specific objectives and outcomes were identified and achieved.

The LSC and ETE held quarterly meetings to monitor implementation. The project was also required to provide six-monthly progress reports (including a financial report) to UNEP/GEF and an annual Project Implementation Review (PIR). Copies of reports and workplans reviewed as part of this Evaluation, produced by the project partners and project managers, were informative and comprehensive. The three PIRs reviewed (for 2006, 2007 and 2008) are also comprehensive with what appears to be an accurate assessment of the situation.

One of the risks identified in the original project document was the low capacity of government bodies to implement such projects and the time it may take to convince government and administrative bodies. In the respective countries, the Ministries of the Environment were committed to the project but it was believed that other Ministries, such as Economy and Regional Development, may have lower capacity to deal with such projects. The CPEAs, through various activities, aimed to enhance the capacities of governmental organisations.

Another of the risks identified concerned foreign investment in tourism infrastructure. Through ensuring that local stakeholders were aware of what was meant by sustainable tourism development, it was hoped that the risk would be minimised. These two risks are probably still important but they have probably been reduced as a result of the project.

The annual PIRs for 2006, 2007 and 2008 present a Risk Factor table. Most of the risk assessments reviewed appear to be reasonable with many of the internal and external risks rated as low or medium. However, in the 2006 PIR, a Risk Mitigation Plan was implemented to deal with two medium-risk conditions. Specific actions were identified to deal with the lack of management capacity in the Polish CPEA and in the delay in expertise contribution by UNESCO-MAB. In the 2007 PIR, it was reported that the Risk Mitigation Plan had been fulfilled and the issues no longer posed a threat to the project delivery. This Evaluation agrees with the 2008 PIR that the overall risk assessment of the project should be rated as 'medium'.

#### **4.11.3. Budgeting and funding for monitoring and evaluation activities**

In the initial budget, US\$34,200 was allocated for project monitoring and US\$21,600 for project evaluation. In total, US\$55,800 was budgeted for monitoring and evaluation over the three years. According to the final audited budget, US\$56,618 was actually spent on monitoring and evaluation. There was an underspend on project monitoring (of US\$3,412) and an overspend on project evaluation (US\$4,230). The extra budget required was compensated for by the CPEAs.

#### **4.12. Preparation and readiness**

The roles and responsibilities of each partner were discussed and agreed at the Inception Workshop in May 2005.

Most of the objectives and components were clearly expressed at the start of project implementation, with measurable outcomes. That has a positive impact on the project as the targets were always there to be worked towards. However, for some it was not possible to collect quantitative data and the evaluation was based on qualitative data and experiences. For example, details on the number of jobs created as a result of the various tourism-related activities. Some of the OVI were not SMART targets in terms of being unrealistic in the timescales such as OVI9 relating to "an average of ten per cent private and business sector financial contribution to the conservation of biodiversity is realised." The project resulted in a significant increase in private investment but this target does not specifically measure what was achieved. Some of the activities did not have realistic timescales in the workplan especially those relating to engaging stakeholders or those with a political focus. The difficulties with the OVI had no impact on the outputs of the project as all project components were operated within clearly defined sub-activities which had defined outputs or indicators that were easier to evaluate and measure.

The lack of management structures and, in some cases, dedicated staff in the Biosphere Reserves did not hinder the project. The situation was known before the project started and it had been designed accordingly. CPEAs, National Park administration and other stakeholders strived to manage and implement the project in a joint, coordinated manner.

During the design of the project, the lessons learnt from other existing projects were incorporated into the plan. For example, recommendations and ideas from the Tourism Management in the Special Nature Reserves project in Zasavica, Serbia; the international

workshop on Tourism in Mountain Areas and the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2002 and the project on Sustainable Regional Development in Gömör-szölös, North-Borsod, Hungary, 1995-1997 were all incorporated.

The UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development were a principal component in the project. However, other existing scientific and technical information was also incorporated or influenced project activities such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Protected Area Management Tool, the UNEP Principles on Sustainable Tourism, UNWTO indicators, Natura 2000 Directive from the EU and the Aarhus Convention on free access to information.

#### **4.13. UNEP supervision and backstopping**

UNEP dealt with ETE as they were the Project Executing Agency. ETE reported that communication with and between UNEP/GEF was good and that various staff at UNEP were particularly helpful. UNEP provided strong support in project development and implementation.

Once the project had been approved by UNEP-GEF their involvement was reduced. The project did not face any major threats to implementation that would have required significant intervention. UNEP had no direct contact with the CPEAs in the three countries except during the Mid-Term Evaluation meeting.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND RATINGS**

The overall rating given to the project is Satisfactory (Table 3 presents the Evaluator's ratings of the project). All three Biosphere Reserves have designed, reviewed and adopted Tourism Management Plans that consider local circumstances and biodiversity conservation. There has been a significant amount of stakeholder engagement, trans-boundary cooperation and communication, training and education programmes all aimed at ensuring any tourism within the Biosphere Reserves is sustainable and considers the protection and conservation of biodiversity. One of the most positive outcomes of the project was the enabling of partnerships and networks and the breaking down of barriers between those involved in nature conservation and tourism within an area. Through all the activities and objectives that have been completed, there has been considerable promotion of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity through tourism.

Awareness raising and capacity building systems have been developed and implemented to hopefully ensure long-term sustainable impacts from tourism development. Implementation of the Tourism Management Plans can not be realised without involvement of local communities and tourism has provided a way for the local communities living in or around the Biosphere Reserves to embrace sustainable development.

Throughout the project, ETE, the organisation tasked with overall project management, have provided advice and encouragement to the Biosphere Reserves and have facilitated the development of supporting guidelines and methodologies.

Continued monitoring and evaluation is crucial to ensure that adaptive management can be implemented and the Tourism Management Plans and other activities modified accordingly to ensure the positive outcomes and impacts of the various initiatives continue.

**Table 3:** Overall ratings table

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator Rating
<b>A. Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating)</b> <b>Sub criteria (below)</b>	The project was successful in developing Tourism Management Plans for each of the three Biosphere Reserves and in improving the likelihood of combining sustainable tourism with biodiversity conservation. At the time of the Evaluation, there had not been the changes in legislation hoped for at the outset. A follow-up programme in a few years time may be required to assess any significant changes at the national level. The project achieved all the objectives despite some delays in activity completion	S
A. 1. Effectiveness	The project achieved its objectives. The project resulted in Tourism Management Plans for the three Biosphere Reserves being developed and created and strengthened an enabling environment for combining sustainable tourism and biodiversity conservation. International cooperation has been enhanced and many stakeholders have participated in various aspects of the project. The Tourism Management Plans have been adopted by the Regional Development Agencies and will be implemented with the assistance of local stakeholders. However, there were minor delays in completing some of the activities. This did not have a detrimental effect on the quality of the outcomes or the project overall.	S
A. 2. Relevance	The project was highly relevant in the European and international context to promote the conservation of biodiversity through sustainable tourism and involving local communities throughout the process. The project was also relevant at the national level for each of the countries involved.	HS
A. 3. Efficiency	The project was relatively efficient and cost-effective. Some adaptive management measures were implemented throughout the project but in some cases these were forced upon the partners through delays and other problems. However, there was a good use of local people and stakeholders and all three countries exceeded their stated co-financing contributions. The project was also successful at leveraging additional resources.	MS
<b>B. Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating)</b> <b>Sub criteria (below)</b>	The project should be sustainable as it was a central theme from the beginning with a focus on the sustainable use of biodiversity through the development of sustainable tourism. Many of the activities implemented are either self-sustaining or have the support of local stakeholders, NGOs or Regional Development Agency. Implementation of the Tourism Management Plans should ensure the sustainability of the project. However, this partly depends on continued stakeholder involvement which can be unpredictable. Many mechanisms were put in place to raise the awareness and	ML

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator Rating
	knowledge of stakeholders to try and retain their involvement.	
B. 1. Financial	Many of the activities are now self-financing or have local support to ensure their sustainability. All three Biosphere Reserves are trans-boundary and this is currently a key focus for EU-funding streams. Local people were trained in a number of new skills which should benefit them, their communities and the tourists who visit.	ML
B. 2. Socio Political	Local – HS, national – MS Locally, the outcomes are sustainable socio-politically. The Tourism Management Plans have been adopted in each Biosphere Reserve. Two Tourism Associations have been created and the Regional Development Agencies have also adopted the Tourism Management Plans. Local people have also been actively engaged and shown considerable ownership for the project. At the national level, the project is perhaps less sustainable socio-politically. This is a result of frequent changes in the ruling party or administrative staff and the lack of take up nationally of the recommendations resulting from the project.	Locally – L Nationally - MU
B. 3. Institutional framework and governance	The CPEAs in each country are local NGOs and will continue to be involved. Tourism Associations were established in two of the Biosphere Reserves and these will be responsible for maximizing the sustainability of the project and outcomes. Partnerships have been created between various groups including the National Parks, the Forest District and local communities to ensure institutional and governance sustainability	ML
B. 4. Ecological	The sustainable use of biodiversity was central to the project. The activities completed and the mechanisms put in place should ensure that tourism develops sustainably and that visitors are educated about the impacts they are having on the environment. However, a number of external factors, such as outside companies investing in the area, could potentially undermine the ecological sustainability of the project.	ML
C. Achievement of outputs and activities	The project achieved all outputs and activities even though some took longer than anticipated to complete. There were perhaps too many activities as a total of 60 were completed in total.	S
D. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)	The project complied with all the Monitoring and evaluation requirements. The project had a budgeted M&E plan by the time required. M&E was used as a management tool in the day to day running of the project by ETE and also to ensure adaptive management was implemented when completing the various activities. ETE employed someone four months into the project to produce the M&E sheets for each of the activities.	S



Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator Rating
	However, they took 18 months to complete and 60 activities was too many on which to complete the sheets.	
D. 1. M&E Design	The project document included a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that consisted of two parts: tracking tools assessing the management effectiveness of the Biosphere Reserves and a more process-focused section that could be used for adaptive management. OVI were agreed by ETE and UNEP. An annual workplan was agreed at the Inception Workshop which included SMART targets and indicators.	S
D. 2. M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)	Despite being a project involving three countries, the project successfully monitored project implementation throughout the three years. The information gained through the monitoring process was also used to make adaptive management decisions. The tracking tools show modest improvements in the management effectiveness of the three Biosphere Reserves. Quarterly process reports were submitted to UNEP/GEF, the project successfully submitted annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) to GEF. A Terminal Report was also completed. An identification of both internal and external risks to the project was undertaken and necessary steps taken to minimize the threats	S
D. 3. Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	There was sufficient budget allocated for monitoring and evaluation.	MS
E. Catalytic Role	Technical Reports produced for each activity provide detailed descriptions of design, approaches, implementation and lessons learned. The methodologies developed are applicable to other Protected Areas both in the countries involved and elsewhere. The approach taken in developing the Tourism Management Plans is applicable elsewhere if local circumstances are incorporated.	S
F. Preparation and readiness	Most of the activities and components were clearly expressed at the start of project implementation. However, the time allowed for some of the activities, especially engaging the private sector and influencing national legislation, was too ambitious.	MS
G. Country ownership / drivenness	There was strong country-ownership in all three countries. All exceeded their co-financing commitment. However, at the national level this was perhaps one of the weaker aspects of the project despite significant effort and improvement since the start.	S
H. Stakeholders involvement	In each country and Biosphere Reserve, a significant number of stakeholders were involved at numerous stages throughout the project. Mechanisms were put in place to actively seek and engage with stakeholders. They were instrumental in many of the activities including developing the Tourism Management Plans	HS

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator Rating
	and, subsequently, being involved in their implementation.	
<b>I. Financial planning</b>	Due to the devaluation of the US Dollar in relation to local currencies and not enough funding being available for project management, additional funding had to be sourced from co-financing and in-kind donations. However, all partners exceeded their contributions and commitment. There were no significant financial implementations resulting from the delays in completing some of the activities. There were no problems with financial control and level of disbursement.	S
<b>J. Implementation approach</b>	On the whole, the mechanisms outlined in the proposal were adhered to. Through the project, any appropriate changes were made through adaptive management. There were some external delays but these were dealt with effectively by the CPEAs and ETE.	MS
<b>K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping</b>	UNEP/GEF provided strong support in the project development process but once the project had been approved then the involvement of UNEP/GEF was greatly reduced. The project did not face any major threats to implementation that would have required significant intervention by UNEP/GEF. Limited direct contact with the CPEAs in the three countries but went through ETE who acted as the link between both groups.	S
<b>Overall rating</b>		S

**6. LESSONS LEARNED**

**Multi-country projects require additional management**

One of the lessons learnt is that projects involving more than one country require more intensive management than single country projects with the same budget. The overall management by ETE consumed more financial and time resources than had been allowed for within the project design and were not adequately covered by the ten per cent project management budget agreed by GEF. ETE and the country project partners had to find additional resources and funding for project management than had been calculated and allowed for during the application phase.

**The budget can be affected by currency devaluation or converting to local currencies**

As a result of the project funding being provided in US Dollars and the various countries having to convert this to local currency, a portion of the budget was lost. Over the three year project, there was also a significant devaluation in the US Dollar. This resulted in a loss of approximately 20 per cent from the budget. However, in-kind and other co-financing have ensured that all activities have been completed.

**Politically-focused projects take significantly longer**

If part of a project is politically focused, such as reviewing or influencing legislation, indicators and time management for such activities should be developed with caution. By the very nature of the work involved, these aspects are generally less predictable than activities which focus on, for example, training of local people.

### **Engaging with private sector takes significantly longer**

The various project partners suggested that a three year project does not provide sufficient time to fully engage with the private sector. Any results achieved as a result of the efforts during the project will only be seen later. It takes time to develop trust and respect and the NGOs involved need to “speak the language” of business. Different approaches may be required for them to engage such as incentives and more immediate benefits.

### **The total number of activities to be completed during multi-country projects needs to be carefully considered**

It is important that in a multi-country project, local partners are not given a completely free reign on the number of activities they want to implement during the project. With the diverse range of activities involved in this project, there were additional management issues and increased problems surrounding monitoring and evaluation. By having such a large number, there may have been a compromise in the quality and a lack of focus on the really essential deliverables. During the design phases, the activities should be streamlined and carefully analysed to see which are likely to have the greatest impact. It is also important to analyse any cumulative effects of the different activities.

### **Gathering baseline data either before of during the project is invaluable**

The Tourism Management Plans were developed using an agreed methodology. However, each was adapted for local circumstances. Having good, accurate baseline information was essential for this process. Ideally, this baseline information would be available before the project began. However, in this project, a number of the preliminary activities involved gathering baseline data on a range of topics from landuse to traditional building surveys. The incorporate of the baseline data significantly improved the quality of the Tourism Management Plans and, as a result, their implementation will be more deliverable.

### **Requirement for quick win activities to initially engage stakeholders**

Whilst the project needs to have long lasting impacts, there is also a need for small, concrete activities to demonstrate the larger vision of the project and help to convince local communities and, especially the private sector, about the benefits that may be accrued. This should ensure greater buy-in and support for the project and its objectives.

### **Difficult to assess increased understanding and awareness**

One of the principle objectives of this project involved awareness-raising and capacity building. It was hoped that through this, local stakeholders would be able to effectively engage in the Tourism Management Plan process and develop their own sustainable tourism products. The project was very successful at engaging with stakeholders but it is much harder to actually quantify and measure increased understanding. It is hoped that by increasing awareness, attitudes and opinions can be changed. However, witnessing those changes is beyond the scope of a three-year project. A follow-up assessment is required in the future.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1. Recommendations for UNEP/GEF and the GEF secretariat**

#### **Use the UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development in other UNEP/GEF funded projects**

In developing the Tourism Management Plans for the three Biosphere Reserves, the UNEP/CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development were incorporated. They provide a useful framework with logical steps for tourism management planning, especially at

the local level. So to improve the effect and impact of similar projects in the future one of the recommendations to come from this project would be that UNEP/GEF (and other implementing agencies such as United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank) implement the recommendation to make it compulsory for applicants of tourism-related projects to use the UNEP/CBD Guidelines when drafting and conducting such projects. The Guidelines are the only internationally agreed document that focuses specifically on sustainable tourism planning and management whilst incorporating biodiversity and its conservation. By using the Guidelines, there is also a link to national government as they are the ones who will have initially ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity. This should ensure greater support at the national level.

#### **Budget some funding for loss of value in currency conversion or devaluation**

When preparing the budget initially, the managers/organisations developing the project should ensure a small portion is reserved to compensate for any losses made during currency conversion or due to devaluation of a currency. Through leveraged funding and increased in-kind contributions from partners, NGOs and National Parks, all activities in this project were successfully achieved but there is a danger that, if a portion of the budget is lost, activities may not be fully completed or to the expected quality. Any underspend of this part of the budget can be used to compensate for overspend in other areas or be used for future monitoring and evaluation. UNEP/GEF could encourage any organisation submitting an application to ensure currency losses are budgeted and allowed for from the outset.

#### **UNEP/GEF to facilitate the exchange of experiences between projects**

Much knowledge and experience has been gained by all involved in the development and implementation of this project. It is recommended that UNEP/GEF facilitate the exchange of experiences between similar projects. This will not only help projects use the most recent techniques and methodologies but it may also reduce the duplication of time and resources.

#### **Disseminate relevant case studies**

To document the project and the experiences of those involved, a number of case studies have and are being produced. As soon as they are available, they should be disseminated as widely as possible for use nationally, by the GEF secretariat, and by other international organisations. These provide information on the methodologies developed for this project but also examine some of the experiences in implementing them in different countries.

#### **Greater reporting of co-financing and leveraging**

This project was very successful in leveraging additional funding from businesses and the private sector. One of the reasons the leveraging was so successful was that the project was clearly and concisely communicated to the local people and potential investors. However, the leveraging of additional resources was not reported in enough detail. This is not a criticism of the project but there is not really the facility within the current reporting to record these successes. It would be really beneficial, for the long term success of this and other projects, if the reporting of leveraged funding was also included as one of the requirements. It would make investors aware of the important contribution they are making and also provide information and ideas to other groups or users. UNEP/GEF could amend their reporting requirements accordingly to request additional information on co-financing and leveraging successes achieved.

### **Communication and involvement plans for stakeholder engagement**

In Babia Góra a written communication and involvement plan was developed along with stakeholder mapping. This proved to be a really useful, targeted way of engaging stakeholders. It could have been even more successful had it been in place earlier in the project. One of the requirements, from UNEP/GEF, for projects involving stakeholder engagement, should be that a communication and involvement plan is done as soon as the project starts or, more ideally, during the application phase so that it is ready to implement as soon as the project is given approval.

### **Ensure monitoring and evaluation in place before the project is approved**

As part of this project, M&E sheets were completed for each activity. However, they took 18 months to develop and, had other processes not been in place to assess the implementation, it could have had implications for the adaptive management. Since this project started, UNEP/GEF has changed their requirements with regards to monitoring and evaluation. The M&E plan now has to be in place during the proposal evaluation process. However, this would not have resolved the issue with regards to the M&E sheets as they are considered to be part of the implementation of the M&E plan rather than its design. It is recommended that UNEP/GEF ensure that all aspects needed for implementing the M&E plan are established before the project is given the approval to begin.

## **7.2. Recommendations for ETE and the three Biosphere Reserves**

### **Maintain and enhance communication channels**

Numerous documents have been produced as a result of the project. Some of these, as already alluded to, need to be further distributed by the national and international organisations involved such as the CPEAs, ETE and the GEF secretariat. However, the internet and project website also have a significant role to play. The various leaflets, brochures and project literature can be accessed via the internet. The websites also have an important role in continuing to market sustainable tourism and the services offered within the Biosphere Reserves. It is important that the site is maintained and continually updated by the CPEAs and the National Park staff. However, it is also recommended that, in the near future, resources are allocated to those involved in the three countries to allow monitoring of the use of the internet and evaluating the opinions and feedback of users to ensure that it remains an informative communication tool.

### **Monitoring system should be integrated into a regional management organisation**

Monitoring systems have been established in all three Biosphere Reserves. As part of the project, indicators on sustainable development were agreed and can be used to measure impacts after the project has finished. However, it is important that these monitoring systems are integrated into a regional management organisation to ensure that the impacts continue to be measured. At the time of this Evaluation, one of the Biosphere Reserves had managed to get their monitoring system adopted by a regional management organisation. It must be an urgent priority for the other two Biosphere Reserves, and the associated CPEAs, to also complete this as soon as possible.

## **Annex 1: Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **Terminal Evaluation of UNEP /DGEF Project GF/4020-05-01 - GFL/2328-2714-4829 Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity through Sound Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe**

##### **1. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW**

The primary aim of the project was the protection of globally significant mountain ecosystems in selected Biosphere Reserves of Central and Eastern Europe through the development of integrated tourism management plans and broad awareness-raising and capacity-building, in order to create an enabling environment for the continuous implementation of sustainable tourism development. This involved a number of different stakeholder groups, from the political/administrative sector, the ecological, social and culture-related sector, the local population and also the private sector.

All three project areas are Biosphere Reserves (BR) (located in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic) which each consist of a National Park (NP) and a Protected Landscape Area (PLA). Two reserves inhabit parts of the Lower Carpathian Mountain Range, the most important mountain area in terms of biological diversity in Central and Eastern Europe, which provides habitats for a large number of endemic and/or endangered species. The Czech reserve includes a substantial part of the northeast-facing part of the Bohemian Forest, the most extensive continuous forest of Central Europe. The three vegetation zones include remnants of the primeval mountain forests, glacial lakes and extensive peat lands and represent a region of globally significant biodiversity. Each reserve also is a cross-border nature protected area, which makes cooperation even more important.

Cooperative integrated management of all three (+three) reserves was essential for the protection of trans-boundary ecological corridors to ensure the conservation of biological diversity and to manage tourism development, which was, partly due to the participating countries' recent integration into the European Union, at an increasing level. The Lower Carpathian Mountain Range provides an important habitat that cannot be divided by national or regional borders, if its long-scale conservation is to be anticipated.

Despite their protection status, the reserves were facing major threats in their current situation:

- Lack of integrated tourism management
- Lack of environmental awareness
- Loss of traditional and cultural values
- Lack of sustainable infrastructure development
- Increased visitation to sensitive areas

##### **Relevance to UNEP Programmes**

The project objectives were consistent with Operational Program 3: “*Forest Ecosystems*”, mainly through the project’s approach to support the Biosphere Reserves in their effort to conserve the natural environment and enhance biodiversity conservation in

the protected areas. The project also addressed Operational Program 4: “*Mountain Ecosystems*”, through its aim to decrease threats to biodiversity in the project areas that arise from tourism development.

The project was expected to meet the GEF Strategic Priority *Biodiversity BD-2: “Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors and Strategic Priority Biodiversity BD-4: “Generation and Dissemination of Best Practices for Addressing Current and Emerging Biodiversity Issues”*”.

### **Executing Arrangements**

Project Executing Agency (PEA): Organization Ecological Tourism in Europe  
Country Project Executing Agency (CPEA) for each of the three participating countries  
Friends of Babia Góra Association, Poland  
Ecological Institute of Sustainable Development, Miskolc, Hungary  
Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology, Ceske Budejovice, Czech Republic

### **Programme Activities**

The project duration was 36 months starting from April 2005 and ending in March 2008 and was revised for extension to May 2008. The project activities consist of four components as follows:

1. Support to the development and implementation of tourism management plans in relation to biodiversity objectives.
2. Create and strengthen an enabling environment for combining sustainable tourism development and biodiversity conservation.
3. Support international cooperation among the participating countries, especially with regard to trans-boundary cooperation, to enhance knowledge on tourism and biodiversity.
4. Facilitate a consultative process with key stakeholders (in the public and private sectors) to ensure their active participation and influence in the development of public policies for sustainable tourism development and management in vulnerable mountain and forest areas.

### **Budget**

The total budget was US\$ 2,602,600 with US\$ 966,966 being funded by GEF, US\$ 1,181,700 in cash contribution from various donors and 479,000 in kind contributions.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION**

### **1. Objective and Scope of the Evaluation**

The objective of this terminal evaluation is to examine the extent and magnitude of any project impacts to date and determine the likelihood of future impacts. The evaluation will also assess project performance and the implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results. The evaluation will focus on the following main questions:

6. Assess the extent to which the project has strengthened institutional and management frameworks to ensure biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism development.
7. Determine how the project has facilitated the exchange of information, experiences on lessons learned and best practices in order to improve the management of existing and potential conflicts between tourism and biodiversity objectives.
8. To what extent is the private and business sector committed to contribute financially to the conservation of biodiversity to ensure the economic sustainability for successful implementation of sustainable tourism in the Biosphere Reserves.
9. How has the project incorporated future developments to ensure long-term sustainability of the project activities
10. How has the project created awareness and capacity and encouraged local communities and citizens' active participation in the project activities to ensure commitment of local inhabitants to biodiversity conservation and follow-up of project activities.

### **2. Methods**

This terminal evaluation will be conducted as an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby the UNEP/DGEF Task Manager, key representatives of the executing agencies and other relevant staff are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation. The consultant will liaise with the UNEP/EOU and the UNEP/DGEF Task Manager on any logistic and/or methodological issues to properly conduct the review in as independent a way as possible, given the circumstances and resources offered. The draft report will be circulated to UNEP/DGEF Task Manager, key representatives of the executing agencies and the UNEP/EOU. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be sent to UNEP/EOU for collation and the consultant will be advised of any necessary or suggested revisions.

The findings of the evaluation will be based on the following:

7. A desk review of project documents including, but not limited to:
  - (a) The project documents, outputs, monitoring reports (such as progress and financial reports to UNEP and GEF annual Project Implementation Review reports) and relevant correspondence.
  - (b) Project Country Reports
  - (c) Other project-related material produced by the project staff or partners.
  - (d) Relevant material published on the project web-site
8. Interviews with project management and technical support including



- Members of the:
  - Country Advisory Committees (CACs) for each of the three participating countries
  - Local Steering Committees (LSC): for each of the three sites
  - International Advisory Committee (IAC)

9. Interviews and Telephone interviews with intended users for the project outputs and other stakeholders involved with this project, including in the participating countries (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic). The Consultant shall determine whether to seek additional information and opinions from representatives of donor agencies and other organisations. As appropriate, these interviews could be combined with an email questionnaire.
10. Interviews with the UNEP/DGEF project task manager and Fund Management Officer, and other relevant staff in UNEP dealing with Biodiversity related activities as necessary. The Consultant shall also gain broader perspectives from discussions with relevant GEF Secretariat staff if deemed of added value.

11. Field visits to project staff and project site

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12. Evaluator's vetting of the third and final Tracking Tool for Reporting Progress at Protected Area Sites: Data Sheet completed for this project (Draft to be prepared by project team in advance of evaluation)

### **Key Evaluation principles.**

In attempting to evaluate any outcomes and impacts that the project may have achieved, evaluators should remember that the project's performance should be assessed by considering the difference between the answers to two simple questions "*what happened?*" and "*what would have happened anyway?*". These questions imply that there should be consideration of the baseline conditions and trends in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. In addition it implies that there should be plausible evidence to **attribute** such outcomes and impacts **to the actions of the project**.

Sometimes, adequate information on baseline conditions and trends is lacking. In such cases this should be clearly highlighted by the evaluator, along with any simplifying assumptions that were taken to enable the evaluator to make informed judgements about project performance.

### **3. Project Ratings**

The success of project implementation will be rated on a scale from 'highly unsatisfactory' to 'highly satisfactory'. In particular the evaluation shall **assess and rate** the project with respect to the eleven categories defined below:<sup>1</sup>

#### **A. Attainment of objectives and planned results:**

The evaluation should assess the extent to which the project's major relevant objectives were effectively and efficiently achieved or are expected to be achieved and their relevance. The "achievement" indicators provided in the log frame of the project document should be used together with any additional monitoring tools including the GEF Biodiversity Tracking Tools<sup>2</sup>

- *Effectiveness*: Evaluate how, and to what extent, the stated project objectives have been met, taking into account the "achievement indicators". In particular, the analysis of outcomes achieved should include, *inter alia*, an assessment of the extent to which the project has directly or indirectly assisted policy- and decision-makers to apply information supplied by the project in their national planning and decision-making.
- *Relevance*: In retrospect, were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies? Ascertain the nature and significance of the contribution of the project outcomes to the wider portfolio of the UNEP.

#### **B. Achievement of outputs and activities:**

- **Delivered outputs**: Assessment of the project's success in producing each of the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality as well as usefulness and timeliness.
- **Assess the soundness and effectiveness of the methodologies used for developing indicator frameworks for expanding business opportunities of tourism entrepreneurs to tap into the sustainable tourism market and to minimize environmental damage related to the products.**

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<sup>1</sup> However, the views and comments expressed by the evaluator need not be restricted to these items.

<sup>2</sup> [http://gefweb.org/projects/Focal\\_Areas/bio/bio\\_tracking\\_tools.html](http://gefweb.org/projects/Focal_Areas/bio/bio_tracking_tools.html). The evaluator should comment on the relevance of these tracking tools to the overall approach adopted by the project.

- Assess to what extent the project outputs produced have the weight of scientific authority / credibility, necessary to influence policy and decision-makers, particularly at the national level.

### **C. Cost-effectiveness:**

Cost-effectiveness assesses the achievement of the environmental and developmental objectives as well as the project's outputs in relation to the inputs, costs, and implementing time. It also examines the project's compliance with the application of the incremental cost concept. The evaluation will include:

- *Efficiency*: Include an assessment of *outcomes* in relation to inputs, costs, and implementation times based on the following questions: Was the project cost-effective? How does the cost-time vs. outcomes compare to other similar projects? Was the project implementation delayed?
- Assess the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing to project implementation and to what extent the project leveraged additional resources.
- Determine the extent to which scientific and technical information and knowledge have been incorporated within, and have influenced the execution of, the project activities.

### **D. Financial Planning**

Evaluation of financial planning requires assessment of the quality and effectiveness of financial planning and control of financial resources throughout the project's lifetime. Evaluation includes actual project costs by activities compared to budget (variances), financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing. The evaluation should:

- Assess the strength and utility of financial controls, including reporting, and planning to allow the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for a proper and timely flow of funds for the payment of satisfactory project deliverables.
- Present the major findings from the financial audit if one has been conducted.
- Identify and verify the sources of co-financing as well as leveraged and associated financing.
- Assess whether the project has applied appropriate standards of due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits.
- The evaluation should also include a breakdown of final actual costs and co-financing for the project prepared in consultation with the relevant UNEP Fund Management Officer of the project.

### **E. Impact:**

- Evaluate the immediate impact of the project on development of sustainable tourism products and markets while integrating environmental considerations. As far as possible, also assess the potential longer-term impacts considering that the evaluation is taking place upon completion of the project and that longer term impact is expected to be seen in a few years time. Frame recommendations to enhance future project impact in this context. Which will be the major 'channels' for longer term impact from the project at the national and international scales? The evaluation should formulate recommendations that outline possible approaches and necessary actions to facilitate an impact assessment study in a few years time.

### **F. Sustainability:**

Sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived outcomes and impacts after the project funding ends. The evaluation will identify and assess

the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends. Some of these factors might be outcomes of the project, e.g. stronger institutional capacities or better informed decision-making. Other factors will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not outcomes of the project but that are relevant to the sustainability of outcomes. The evaluation should ascertain to what extent follow-up work has been initiated and how project outcomes will be sustained and enhanced over time.

Five aspects of sustainability should be addressed: financial, socio-political, institutional frameworks and governance, ecological (if applicable), and replication<sup>3</sup>. The following questions provide guidance on the assessment of these aspects:

- *Financial resources.* What is the likelihood that financial and economic resources will be available such as the project outcomes/benefits will be sustained once the UNEP assistance ends (resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and market trends that support the project's objectives)? Was the project successful in identifying and leveraging co-financing?
- *Socio-political:* What is the likelihood that the level of stakeholder ownership will allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project?
- *Institutional framework and governance.* What is the likelihood that institutional and technical achievements, legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes will allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? While responding to these questions consider if the required systems for accountability and transparency and the required technical know how are in place.
- *Ecological.* The analysis of ecological sustainability may prove challenging. What is the likelihood that project achievements will lead to sustained ecological benefits?
- *Replication and catalysis.* What examples are there of replication and catalytic outcomes that suggest increased likelihood of sustainability? Replication approach, in the context of UNEP projects, is defined as lessons and experiences coming out of the project that are replicated or scaled up in the design and implementation of other projects. Replication can have two aspects, replication proper (lessons and experiences are replicated in different geographic area) or scaling up (lessons and experiences are replicated within the same geographic area but funded by other sources).

#### **G. Stakeholder participation / public awareness:**

This consists of three related and often overlapping processes: information dissemination, consultation, and "stakeholder" participation. Stakeholders are the individuals, groups, institutions, or other bodies that have an interest or stake in the outcome of the UNEP financed project. The term also applies to those potentially adversely affected by a project. The evaluation will specifically:

- Assess the mechanisms put in place by the project for identification and engagement of stakeholders in each participating country and establish, in consultation with the

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<sup>3</sup> Replication refers to repeatability of the project under quite similar contexts based on lessons and experience gained. Actions to foster replication include dissemination of results, seminars, training workshops, field visits to project sites, etc. GEF Project Cycle, GEF/C.16/Inf.7, October 5, 2000

stakeholders, whether this mechanism was successful, and identify its strengths and weaknesses.

- Assess the degree and effectiveness of collaboration/interactions between the various project partners and institutions during the course of implementation of the project.
- Assess the degree and effectiveness of various public awareness activities that were undertaken during the course of implementation of the project.

#### **H. Country ownership:**

This is the relevance of the project to national development and environmental agendas, recipient country commitment, and regional and international agreements. The evaluation will:

- Assess the level of country ownership. Specifically, the evaluator should assess whether the project was effective in providing and communicating sustainable tourism information that created capacity to design and market products and provided ongoing support to help foster tourism activities.
- Assess the level of country commitment to minimize environmental damage related to tourism products and implementation of environment conservation related conventions for decision-making during and after the project, including in regional and international fora.

#### **I. Implementation approach:**

This includes an analysis of the project's management framework, adaptation to changing conditions (adaptive management), partnerships in implementation arrangements, changes in project design, and overall project management. The evaluation will:

- Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document have been closely followed. In particular, assess the role of the various committees established and whether the project document was clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation, whether the project was executed according to the plan and how well the management was able to adapt to changes during the life of the project to enable the implementation of the project.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency and adaptability of project management and the supervision of project activities / project execution arrangements at all levels.
- Assess the effectiveness of supervision and administrative and financial support provided by UNEP.
- Identify administrative, operational and/or technical problems and constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project.
- Assess whether the logical framework was used during implementation as a management tool and whether feedback from M&E activities more broadly was used for adaptive management.

#### **J. Replicability:**

- Assess whether the project has potential to be replicated, either in terms of expansion, extension or replication in other countries and/or regions and whether any steps have been taken by the project to do so and the relevance and feasibility of these steps.

#### **K. Assessment monitoring and evaluation systems.**

The evaluation shall include an assessment of the quality, application and effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation plans and tools, including an assessment of risk management based on the assumptions and risks identified in the project document. The Terminal Evaluation will assess whether the project met the minimum requirements for 'project design of M&E' and 'the application of the Project M&E plan' (see minimum requirements 1&2 in Annex 4). GEF projects must budget adequately for execution of the

M&E plan, and provide adequate resources during implementation of the M&E plan. Project managers are also expected to use the information generated by the M&E system during project implementation to adapt and improve the project.

### **M&E during project implementation**

- *M&E design.* Projects should have sound M&E plans to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART indicators (see Annex 4) and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. The time frame for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should have been specified.
- *M&E plan implementation.* A Terminal Evaluation should verify that: an M&E system was in place and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period (perhaps through use of a logframe or similar); annual project reports and Progress Implementation Review (PIR) reports were complete, accurate and with well justified ratings; that the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs; and that projects had an M&E system in place with proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities.
- *Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities.* The terminal evaluation should determine whether support for M&E was budgeted adequately and was funded in a timely fashion during implementation.

### **L. Preparation and Readiness**

Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Were the capacities of executing institution and counterparts properly considered when the project was designed? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities), enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place?

### **M. UNEP Supervision and Backstopping**

- Assess the effectiveness of supervision and administrative and financial support provided by UNEP/DGEF.
- Identify administrative, operational and/or technical problems

The *ratings will be presented in the form of a table*. Each of the eleven categories should be rated separately with **brief justifications** based on the findings of the main analysis. An overall rating for the project should also be given. The following rating system is to be applied:

HS	= Highly Satisfactory
S	= Satisfactory
MS	= Moderately Satisfactory
MU	= Moderately Unsatisfactory
U	= Unsatisfactory
HU	= Highly Unsatisfactory

### **3. Evaluation report format and review procedures**

The report should be brief, to the point and easy to understand. It must explain; the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used. The report must highlight any methodological limitations, identify key concerns and present evidence-based findings, consequent conclusions, recommendations and lessons. The report should be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible and include an executive summary that encapsulates the essence of the information contained in the report to facilitate dissemination and distillation of lessons.

**The evaluation will rate the overall implementation success of the project and provide individual ratings of the eleven implementation aspects as described in Section 1 of this TOR. The ratings will be presented in the format of a table with brief justifications based on the findings of the main analysis.**

Evidence, findings, conclusions and recommendations should be presented in a complete and balanced manner. Dissident views in response to evaluation findings may be appended in an annex. The evaluation report shall be written in English, be of no more than 50 pages (excluding annexes), use numbered paragraphs and include:

- i) An **executive summary** (no more than 3 pages) providing a brief overview of the main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation;
- ii) **Introduction and background** giving a brief overview of the evaluated project, for example, the objective and status of activities;
- iii) **Scope, objective and methods** presenting the evaluation's purpose, the evaluation criteria used and questions to be addressed;
- iv) **Project Performance and Impact** providing factual evidence relevant to the questions asked by the evaluator and interpretations of such evidence. This is the main substantive section of the report and should provide a commentary on all eleven evaluation aspects (A – K above).
- v) **Conclusions and rating** of project implementation success giving the evaluator's concluding assessments and ratings of the project against given evaluation criteria and standards of performance. The conclusions should provide answers to questions about whether the project is considered good or bad, and whether the results are considered positive or negative;
- vi) **Lessons learned** presenting general conclusions, based on established good and bad practices, with a potential for wider application and use. The context in which lessons may be applied should be specified, and lessons should state or imply some prescriptive action;
- vii) **Recommendations** suggesting *actionable* proposals regarding improvements of current or future projects. They may cover, for example, resource allocation, financing, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. They should always be specific in terms of who would do what and provide a timeframe;
- viii) **Annexes** include Terms of Reference, list of interviewees, documents reviewed, summary co-finance information and so on.

Examples of UNEP Terminal Evaluation Reports are available at [www.unep.org/eou](http://www.unep.org/eou)

### **Review of the Draft Evaluation Report**

Draft reports submitted to UNEP EOU are shared with the corresponding Programme or Project Officer and his or her supervisor for initial review and consultation. The DGEF staff and senior Executing Agency staff are allowed to comment on the draft evaluation report. They may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. The consultation also seeks agreement on the findings and recommendations. UNEP EOU collates the review comments and provides them to the evaluators for their consideration in preparing the final version of the report.

### **4. Submission of Final Terminal Evaluation Reports.**

The final report shall be submitted in electronic form in MS Word format and should be sent to the following persons:

Segbedzi Norgbey, Chief,  
UNEP Evaluation and Oversight Unit  
P.O. Box 30552-00100  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel.: (254-20) 7623387  
Fax: (254-20) 7623158  
Email: [segbedzi.norgbey@unep.org](mailto:segbedzi.norgbey@unep.org)  
With a copy to:

Maryam Niamir-Fuller  
Director  
UNEP/Division of GEF Coordination  
P.O. Box 30552  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel: + 254-20-7624165  
Fax: + 254-20-624041/4042  
Email: [maryam.niamir-fuller@unep.org](mailto:maryam.niamir-fuller@unep.org)

Kristin McLaughlin  
Global Environment Facility (GEF) Liaison Officer  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Washington Office  
Mobile 202-550-4066  
skype kristin.mclaughlin  
[km@rona.unep.org](mailto:km@rona.unep.org)

The final evaluation report will be printed in hard copy and published on the Evaluation and Oversight Unit's web-site [www.unep.org/eou](http://www.unep.org/eou).

### **5. Resources and schedule of the evaluation**

This final evaluation will be undertaken by an international evaluator contracted by the Evaluation and Oversight Unit, UNEP. The contract for the evaluator will begin on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 and end on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008 (2 months spread over 3 months). The evaluator will submit a draft report on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008 to UNEP/EOU, the UNEP Project Manager, and key representatives of the executing agencies. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be sent to UNEP/EOU for collation and the consultant will be advised of any necessary revisions. Comments to the final draft report will be sent to the consultant by



5<sup>th</sup> December 2008 after which, the consultant will submit the final report no later than 29<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

In accordance with UNEP policy, all UNEP projects are evaluated by independent evaluators contracted as consultants by the EOU. The evaluators should have the following qualifications:

The evaluator should not have been associated with the design and implementation of the project. The evaluator will work under the overall supervision of the Chief, Evaluation and Oversight Unit, UNEP. The evaluator should be an international expert in tourism management or conservation with a sound understanding of environmental monitoring. The consultant should have the following minimum qualifications: (i) experience in environment conservation/tourism management reporting at national and international levels; (ii) experience with management and implementation of projects and in particular with policy-related monitoring and assessments that generate knowledge and information relevant to decision-making; (iii) experience with project evaluation. Knowledge of UNEP programmes and activities is desirable. Fluency in oral and written English is a must.

## **6. Schedule Of Payment**

### **Lump-sum**

The evaluator will receive an initial payment of 30% of the total amount due upon signature of the contract. A further 30% will be paid upon submission of the draft report. A final payment of 40% will be made upon satisfactory completion of work. The fee is payable under the individual SSAs of the evaluator and IS inclusive of all expenses such as travel, accommodation and incidental expenses.

In case, the evaluator cannot provide the products in accordance with the TORs, the timeframe agreed, or his products are substandard, the payment to the evaluator could be withheld, until such a time the products are modified to meet UNEP's standard. In case the evaluator fails to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP, the product prepared by the evaluator may not constitute the evaluation report.

## Annex 1. OVERALL RATINGS TABLE

Criterion	Evaluator's Comments	Summary	Evaluator 's Rating
<b>A. Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating)</b>			
<b>Sub criteria (below)</b>			
A. 1. Effectiveness			
A. 2. Relevance			
A. 3. Efficiency			
<b>B. Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating)</b>			
<b>Sub criteria (below)</b>			
B. 1. Financial			
B. 2. Socio Political			
B. 3. Institutional framework and governance			
B. 4. Ecological			
<b>C. Achievement of outputs and activities</b>			
<b>D. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating)</b>			
<b>Sub criteria (below)</b>			
D. 1. M&E Design			
D. 2. M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)			
D. 3. Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities			
<b>E. Catalytic Role</b>			
<b>F. Preparation and readiness</b>			
<b>G. Country ownership / drivenness</b>			
<b>H. Stakeholders involvement</b>			
<b>I. Financial planning</b>			
<b>J. Implementation approach</b>			
<b>K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping</b>			

## RATING OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

Highly Satisfactory (HS): The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Satisfactory (S): The project had minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The project had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The project had significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Unsatisfactory (U) The project had major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project had severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

**Please note:** Relevance and effectiveness will be considered as critical criteria. The overall rating of the project for achievement of objectives and results **may not be higher** than the lowest rating on either of these two criteria. Thus, to have an overall satisfactory rating for outcomes a project must have at least satisfactory ratings on both relevance and effectiveness.

## RATINGS ON SUSTAINABILITY

A. Sustainability will be understood as the probability of continued long-term outcomes and impacts after the GEF project funding ends. The Terminal evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends. Some of these factors might be outcomes of the project, i.e. stronger institutional capacities, legal frameworks, socio-economic incentives /or public awareness. Other factors will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not outcomes of the project but that are relevant to the sustainability of outcomes..

### Rating system for sustainability sub-criteria

On each of the dimensions of sustainability of the project outcomes will be rated as follows.

Likely (L): There are no risks affecting this dimension of sustainability.

Moderately Likely (ML). There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

Moderately Unlikely (MU): There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability

Unlikely (U): There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

According to the EOU, all the risk dimensions of sustainability are deemed critical. Therefore, overall rating for sustainability will not be higher than the rating of the dimension with lowest ratings. For example, if a project has an Unlikely rating in any of the dimensions then its overall rating cannot be higher than Unlikely, regardless of whether higher ratings in other dimensions of sustainability produce a higher average.

## RATINGS OF PROJECT M&E

Monitoring is a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing project with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, its design, implementation and results. Project evaluation may involve the definition of appropriate standards, the examination of performance against those standards, and an assessment of actual and expected results.

The Project monitoring and evaluation system will be rated on ‘M&E Design’, ‘M&E Plan Implementation’ and ‘Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities’ as follows:

- Highly Satisfactory (HS): There were no shortcomings in the project M&E system.
- Satisfactory(S): There were minor shortcomings in the project M&E system.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were moderate shortcomings in the project M&E system. Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings in the project M&E system. Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings in the project M&E system.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The Project had no M&E system.

“M&E plan implementation” will be considered a critical parameter for the overall assessment of the M&E system. The overall rating for the M&E systems will not be higher than the rating on “M&E plan implementation.”

All other ratings will be on the six point scale.

Performance Description	Alternative description on the same scale
HS = Highly Satisfactory	Excellent
S = Satisfactory	Well above average
MS = Moderately Satisfactory	Average
MU = Moderately Unsatisfactory	Below Average
U = Unsatisfactory	Poor
HU = Highly Unsatisfactory	Very poor (Appalling)

## Annex 2: Review of the Draft Report

Draft reports submitted to UNEP EOU are shared with the corresponding Programme or Project Officer and his or her supervisor for initial review and discussion. The UNEP Division staff and senior Executing Agency staff provide comments on the draft evaluation report. They may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. The review also seeks agreement on the findings and recommendations. UNEP EOU collates the review comments and provides them to the evaluators for their consideration in preparing the final version of the report. General comments on the draft report with respect to compliance with these TOR are shared with the reviewer.

## Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

All UNEP Terminal Evaluation Reports are subject to quality assessments by UNEP EOU. The quality assessment is used as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluator.

The quality of the draft evaluation report is assessed and rated against the following criteria:

Report Quality Criteria	UNEP EOU Assessment notes	Rating
A. Did the report present an assessment of relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives in the context of the focal area program indicators if applicable?		
B. Was the report consistent and the evidence complete and convincing and were the ratings substantiated when used?		
C. Did the report present a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes?		
D. Were the lessons and recommendations supported by the evidence presented?		
E. Did the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?		
F. Did the report include an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?		
UNEP EOU additional Report Quality Criteria	UNEP EOU Assessment	Rating
G. Quality of the lessons: Were lessons readily applicable in other contexts? Did they suggest prescriptive action?		
H. Quality of the recommendations: Did recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'). Can they be implemented?		
I. Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)		
J. Did the report structure follow EOU guidelines, were all requested Annexes included?		
K. Were all evaluation aspects specified in the TORs adequately addressed?		
L. Was the report delivered in a timely manner		

### Rating system for quality of terminal evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = 0.

**Quality of the MTE report = 0.3\*(A + B) + 0.1\*(C+D+E+F)**

**EOU assessment of MTE report = 0.3\*(G + H) + 0.1\*(I+J+K+L)**

**Combined quality Rating = (2\* 'MTE report' rating + EOU rating)/3**  
The Totals are rounded and converted to the scale of HS to HU

### **Annex 3: Minimum requirements for M&E**

#### **Minimum Requirement 1: Project Design of M&E<sup>4</sup>**

All projects must include a concrete and fully budgeted monitoring and evaluation plan by the time of Work Program entry (full-sized projects) or CEO approval (medium-sized projects). This plan must contain at a minimum:

- SMART (see below) indicators for project implementation, or, if no indicators are identified, an alternative plan for monitoring that will deliver reliable and valid information to management
- SMART indicators for results (outcomes and, if applicable, impacts), and, where appropriate, corporate-level indicators
- A project baseline, with:
  - a description of the problem to address
  - indicator data
  - or, if major baseline indicators are not identified, an alternative plan for addressing this within one year of implementation
- An M&E Plan with identification of reviews and evaluations which will be undertaken, such as mid-term reviews or evaluations of activities
- An organizational setup and budgets for monitoring and evaluation.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://gefweb.org/MonitoringandEvaluation/MEPoliciesProcedures/MEPTools/meptstandards.html>

## **Minimum Requirement 2: Application of Project M&E**

- Project monitoring and supervision will include implementation of the M&E plan, comprising:
- Use of SMART indicators for implementation (or provision of a reasonable explanation if not used)
- Use of SMART indicators for results (or provision of a reasonable explanation if not used)
- Fully established baseline for the project and data compiled to review progress
- Evaluations are undertaken as planned
- Operational organizational setup for M&E and budgets spent as planned.

**SMART INDICATORS** UNEP projects and programs should monitor using relevant performance indicators. The monitoring system should be “SMART”:

1. **Specific:** The system captures the essence of the desired result by clearly and directly relating to achieving an objective, and only that objective.
2. **Measurable:** The monitoring system and its indicators are unambiguously specified so that all parties agree on what the system covers and there are practical ways to measure the indicators and results.
3. **Achievable and Attributable:** The system identifies what changes are anticipated as a result of the intervention and whether the result(s) are realistic. Attribution requires that changes in the targeted developmental issue can be linked to the intervention.
4. **Relevant and Realistic:** The system establishes levels of performance that are likely to be achieved in a practical manner, and that reflect the expectations of stakeholders.
5. **Time-bound, Timely, Trackable, and Targeted:** The system allows progress to be tracked in a cost-effective manner at desired frequency for a set period, with clear identification of the particular stakeholder group to be impacted by the project or program.

## Annex 4 List of intended additional recipients for the Terminal Evaluation (to be completed by the IA Task Manager)

Name	Affiliation	Email
Aaron Zazueta	GEF Evaluation Office	azazueta@thegef.org
<b>Government Officials</b>		
<b>GEF Focal Point(s)</b>		
NOWICKI, Maciej	President, EcoFoundation	<a href="mailto:mnowicki@ekofundusz.org.pl">mnowicki@ekofundusz.org.pl</a>
FARAGO, Tibor	Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Water	<a href="mailto:farago@mail.kvvm.hu">farago@mail.kvvm.hu</a>
PASTVINSKÝ, Michal	Director, Department of Global Relations Ministry of Environment	<a href="mailto:pastvinsky@env.cz">pastvinsky@env.cz</a>
<b>Executing Agency</b>		
Michael Meyer	Ecological Tourism in Europe	<a href="mailto:m.meyer@oete.de">m.meyer@oete.de</a>
Jan Tesitel	Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology	<a href="mailto:jante@usbe.cas.cz">jante@usbe.cas.cz</a>
Judit Sandor	Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development	<a href="mailto:sandor@ecolinst.hu">sandor@ecolinst.hu</a>
Wojciech Mróz	NGO Friends of Babia Gora	<a href="mailto:mroz@iop.krakow.pl">mroz@iop.krakow.pl</a>
Michael Wegrzyn	NGO Friends of Babia Gora	<a href="mailto:michal.wegrzyn@uj.edu.pl">michal.wegrzyn@uj.edu.pl</a>
<b>Implementing Agency</b>		
Alexander Juras	Deputy Director and acting UNEP DGEF Portfolio Manager	<a href="mailto:Alexander.Juras@unep.org">Alexander.Juras@unep.org</a>
Steve Twomlow	Senior Programme Officer, BD/LD, UNEP DGEF	<a href="mailto:Stephen.Twomlow@unep.org">Stephen.Twomlow@unep.org</a>



## **Annex 2: List of persons interviewed**

### **UNEP**

Kristin McLaughlin (by phone), Global Environment Facility (GEF) Liaison Officer, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Washinton DC, USA

Stefanos Fotiou, Programme Officer, Sustainable Consumption Programme, UNEP-DTIE (Division of Technology, Industry and Economics)

### **ETE**

Michael Meyer, Ökologischer Tourismus in Europe e.v (Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE)), Germany

Stephanie Roth, Ökologischer Tourismus in Europe e.v (Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE)), Germany

### **Aggtelek, Hungary**

Béla Berecz, Free-lance consultant, Tourism Management Plan development

Bernadett Virókné Fodor, Aggtelek National Park Directorate, Department of Eco-tourism and Environmentl Education, Hungary

János Szilágyi, Aggtelek National Park Directorate, Department of Nature Conservation (orchard)

Judit Sandor, Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development

### **Babia Góra, Poland**

Dr Krzysztof Borkowski, Activity Co-ordinator (BG7 and BG10) and project partner, High School of Tourism and Ecology School, Sucha Beskidzka, Poland

Jadwiga Laskowska, Friends of Babia Góra NGO, Poland

Michal Wegrzyn, Project Co-ordinator, Friends of Babia Góra NGO, Poland

Tomasz Lamorski, Babia Góra National Park Representative, Poland

### **Šumava, Czech Republic**

Jan Tesitel, Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (CPEA)

Martina Paskova, Ministry of the Environment, Czech Republic (CAC member)

Rudolf Dennerlein, NEBE Ltd., Czech Republic (project partner responsible for designing the database on cultural heritage)

Vladimir Silovsky, Regional Development Agency Šumava, Czech Republic (project partner).

### Annex 3: List of documents reviewed / consulted

- Berecz, B., Füzi, J., Nagy D and Tolnay Z (2008) *Tourism Strategy and management plan of Aggtelek Karst and its surrounding areas*. 57pp.
- Draft Terminal Report on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity through Sound Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe. Project number GFL/2328-2714-4829, PMS: GF/4020-05-01.
- ETE (2007) *Background Study on Institutional and Management Frameworks in the Biosphere Reserves Aggtelek (Hungary), Babia Góra (Poland) and Šumava (Czech Republic)*  
[http://www.oete.de/tourism4nature/results/backdocs/Background\\_Study%20on%20Institutional%20and%20Management%20Frameworks.pdf](http://www.oete.de/tourism4nature/results/backdocs/Background_Study%20on%20Institutional%20and%20Management%20Frameworks.pdf). Accessed 24 January 2009.
- ETE (2007) *Criteria for Sustainable Tourism for the three Biosphere Reserves Aggtelek, Babia Góra and Šumava*.  
<http://www.oete.de/tourism4nature/results/backdocs/Criteria%20for%20Sustainable%20Tourism.pdf>. Accessed 24 January 2009.
- ETE (2007) *Sustainable Tourism Management Planning in Biosphere Reserves: a methodology guide*  
<http://www.oete.de/tourism4nature/results/backdocs/Sustainable%20Tourism%20Management%20Planning.pdf>. Accessed 24 January 2009
- ETE (2007) *Sustainable Tourism: training the trainers*  
<http://www.oete.de/tourism4nature/results/backdocs/Sustainable%20Tourism%20Training%20Programme.pdf>. Accessed 24 January 2009
- ETE (2007) *Trail planning Guide: an insight into the process of planning interpretative trails. Principles and recommendations*  
<http://www.oete.de/tourism4nature/results/backdocs/The%20Trail%20Planning%20Guide.pdf>. Accessed 24 January 2009.
- ETE (2008) Co-financing report. 2pp.
- IAC Mission Report from third meeting of IAC, March 2008. 2pp.
- Pawlusiński, R., Mika M and Faracik R (2008) *Regional tourism management and development plan in the Babia Góra Region*. 48pp.
- Picek, M., Růžička, T., Silovský, V., Těšitel, J and Vlášková, K (2007) *Tourism in the Šumava Mountains*. 60pp.
- Schliep, R (2008) *Study of the Review of Policies and Legal Framework of the three Biosphere Reserves Aggtelek (Hungary), Babia Góra (Poland) and Šumava (Czech Republic)*. 37pp.
- UNEP/GEF Project Implementation Review Financial Year 2006 (1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006). 25pp.
- UNEP/GEF Project Implementation Review Financial Year 2007 (1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007). 28pp.
- UNEP/GEF Project Implementation Review Financial Year 2008 (1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008). 26pp.
- United Nations Environment Programme Global Environment Facility *Project Document* (2005). 125pp.

## **Technical Reports**

- Technical Report for the Trail Planning Guide – an insight into the process of planning interpretative trails. Principles and recommendations (2006) 19pp
- Technical Report for the Background Study on institutional and management frameworks in the Biosphere Reserves Aggtelek (Hungary), Šumava (Czech Republic) and Babia Góra (Poland) (2007) 13pp.
- Technical Report for the Criteria for Sustainable Tourism for the three Biosphere Reserves Aggtelek, Babia Góra and Šumava (2006) 10pp.
- Technical Report for the Compendium “Sustainable Tourism Training the Trainers Programme” (2006) 15pp.
- Technical Report for the Methodology Guide “Sustainable Tourism Management Planning in Biosphere Reserves (2006) 12pp.
- Technical Report for AG1 (A.4.1) Setting indicators of sound tourism, state survey, monitoring and review (2008) 53pp
- Technical Report for AG2 (A.1.4) Research of land use history and landscape changes (2006) 10pp
- Technical Report for AG3 (B.3) Survey of attractions, compilation and maintenance of database about services (2008) 12pp
- Technical Report for AG4 (A.4.1) Research of ecological and tourist carrying capacity (2006) 10pp
- Technical Report for A5 (A.1) Tourism Strategy and management plan of the Aggtelek Karst and its surrounding areas (2008) 19pp
- Technical Report for AG6 (B.1) Training Courses (2008) 15pp
- Technical Report for AG7 (B.3) Rehabilitation programmes for traditionally managed areas as sample areas (2008) 18pp
- Technical Report for AG8 (B.2) Printed, digital and exhibition materials (2008) 9pp
- Technical Report for AG9 (A.3.3) Product Development (2008) 181pp
- Technical Report for AG10 (B.3.4) Survey of traditional architectural heritage of the Gömör-Torna Karst (2007) 9pp
- Technical Report for AG11 (B.3.2) Development of village rehabilitation plans including recommendations for restoration and constructions (2008) 8pp
- Technical Report for AG12 (A.3) Developing guidelines on sound tourism for local stakeholders (2008) 10pp
- Technical Report for AG13 (B.2.1) Website development and maintenance (2008) 5pp
- Technical Report for AG14 (B.2) Organising the Gömör-Torna Summer Festival (2008) 19pp
- Technical Report for AG15 (B.2) Development of a marketing plan (2008) 9pp
- Technical Report for AG16 (A.3) Introduction of regional labelling (2008) 46pp
- Technical Report for AG17 (B.3.3) Granting: renovation and use of traditional buildings (2008) 7pp

Technical Report for SU1 (A.2.2) To design a proposal of management system of Biosphere Reserve, including its institutional and organisational framing, and to design “image-building” strategy of the BR (2008) 9pp

Technical Report for SU2 (A.1.5) To evaluation a potential of the BR, in terms of opportunities and risks for development of newly emerging activities of sustainable tourism (2008) 8pp

Technical Report for SU3 (A1.1.1) To develop a strategy of sustainable tourism development within the BR (2008) 13pp

Technical Report for SU4 (A.3.4) To propose a Bavarian-Austria-Czech net of cross-border tourist trails (2008) 9pp

Technical Report for SU5 (A.3.5) To introduce a system of incentives to maintain existing and to start new sustainable activities (2008) 11pp

Technical Report for SU6 (A.3.3) To introduce a system of regional certificates of high quality products and services that are related to sustainable tourism (2008) 10pp

Technical Report for SU7 (B.3.2) To develop a program of revitalisation of cultural potential of the BR territory (2008) 11pp

Technical Report for SU9 (B.1.2) To introduce a system of education, training, round table discussion etc. to solve concrete problems related to sustainable tourism development (2008) 14pp

Technical Report for SU10 (B.1.4) To realise a system of guides based on local people (2008) 25pp

Technical Report for BG1 (A.1) Elaboration of eco-physiographic study for the biosphere reserves and its vicinity. Extending of inventory-making of natural and cultural values for a Transition Area of the Biosphere Reserve and its vicinity (2007) 7pp

Technical Report for BG2 (A.1.1) Elaboration of regional tourism management and development plan in the Babia Góra region (2008) 13pp

Technical Report for BG3 (A.3.4) Integration of Polish and Slovak tourist trail networks (2007) 9pp

Technical Report for BG4 (A.3.4) Establishing of new and rationalising of the routes of existing trails used for hiking, skiing, horse-riding and bicycling as well as educational paths (2008) 10pp

Technical Report for B5 (A.3.5) Setting up of local bus (Shuttle bus) connections between entering points of tourist trails and places of interest (2008) 12pp

Technical Report for BG6 (A.1.5) Limitation of accessing forest roads by local regulations and establishment of parking lots (2007) 8pp

Technical Report for B7 (A.4.1) Monitoring of tourism activities and its impact on biodiversity of the buffer zone and the core area of the Biosphere Reserve (2008) 9pp

Technical Report for BG8 (B.2.2) Shared stands during fairs expositions (2007) 12pp

Technical Report for B9 (B.2.2) Organising interregional events and entertainments (2007) 12pp

Technical Report for BG10 (A.3.3) Elaboration of sustainable tourism packages developed within the project “Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity through Sound

Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe” (2008) 9pp

Technical Report for BG11 (B.3.3) Model project: adaptation of an old house for tourist purposes. Training of its owners (2008) 14pp

Technical Report for BG12 (B.2.1) The annual competition for the best agro-tourist facility with the main emphasis placed on agro-tourist farms (2007) 10pp

Technical Report for BG13 (A.3.5) Maintaining of a suitable tourism infrastructure (e.g. picnic and rest (2007) 13pp

Technical Report for BG14 (B.2) Internet site (2007) 9pp

Technical Report for BG15 (B.2.3) Establishing two visitor centres (2007) 9pp

Technical Report for BG16 (B.3.2) Production of a catalogue of projects promoting a traditional architectural style with the application of modern technologies and methods in architecture (2007) 8pp

Technical Report for BG17 (A.3.5) Remodelling of flock master’s huts and renewing pasturage (2007) 8pp

Technical Report for BG18 (B.3.3) Establishing of a “living museum” on pastoralism, including milk processing according to EU standards (2007) 12pp

Technical Report for BG19 (A.2.3) Formulation of suggestions for policies improvements (2008) 10pp

Technical Report for BG20 (C.3.2) Organising meetings between policy and decision makers, local self-governments, experts and NGOs (2008) 8pp

Technical Report for BG21 (B.1.4) Training of guides (2007) 19pp

Technical Report for BG22 (B.3.1) Training of craftsmen (e.g. weavers, wood-carvers, basket makers) (2007) 10pp

### **Tracking Tools**

WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Czech Republic. Baseline, Jul 2005. 17pp.

WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Hungary. Baseline, Jul 2005. 11pp.

WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Poland. Baseline, Jul 2005. 12pp.

WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority Two: Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Baseline, Jul 2005. 9pp.

WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Czech Republic. Mid-term, Feb 2007. 23pp.

WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Hungary. Mid-term, Feb 2007. 16pp.

WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Poland. Mid-term, Feb 2007. 15pp.

- WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority Two: Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Mid-term, Feb 2007. 10pp.
- WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Czech Republic. Final draft, Aug 2008. 31pp.
- WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Hungary. Final draft, Aug 2008. 16pp.
- WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority One: Catalysing Sustainability of Project Areas, Poland. Final draft, Aug 2008. 15pp.
- WWF Tracking Tool for GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategic Priority Two: Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Final Evaluation, Aug 2008. 11pp.

## Annex 4: Acronyms

BR	Biosphere Reserve
BRESCE	Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe
CAC	Country Advisory Committee
CADSES	Central Europe, Adriatic, Danubian, South-Eastern European Space
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEEC	Central and Eastern European country
CEEWEB	Central and East Europe Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity
CMP	Country Member Partner
CPEA	Country Project Executing Agency
DMO	Destination Management Organisation
EC	European Community
EISD	Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development
ETE	Ecological Tourism in Europe (Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa e.V.)
EU	European Union
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEFSEC	Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
GIT	Gemer Youth Association
GKTE	Gemer Environment and Landscape Development Association
GPS	Global Positioning Systems
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
IAC	International Advisory Committee
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LSC	<i>Local Steering Committee</i>
MAB	Man and the Biosphere Programme (UNESCO)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOV	Means of verification
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NP	National Park
OVI	Objective Verifiable Indicators
PEA	Project Executing Agency
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PLA	Protected Landscape Area
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound
SRDA	Regional Development Agency Šumava
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
TMP	Tourism Management Plan
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WHS	World Heritage Site

## **Annex 5: Activities completed in the three Biosphere Reserves**

### **Aggtelek**

- AG1 A.4.1 Setting indicators of sound tourism, state survey, monitoring and review
- AG2 A.1.4 Research of land use history and landscape changes
- AG3 B.3.4 Survey of attractions, building and maintenance of database about services
- AG4 A.1.4 Research of ecological and tourist carrying capacity by locations, and at local and regional level
- AG5 A.1.1 Development of tourist management plan and the long-term strategy of sound tourism in Aggtelek National Park
- AG6 B.1.3 Training courses on organic farming, bee keeping, catering and handicrafts
- AG7 B.3.2 Rehabilitation programmes for traditionally managed areas as sample areas
- AG8 B.1.2 Printed, digital and exhibition materials on cultural heritage
- AG9 A.3.3 Product development
- AG10 B.3.4 Survey of traditional architecture
- AG11 B.3.2 Development of village rehabilitation plans including recommendations for restoration and constructions
- AG12 A.3.1 Developing guidelines on sound tourism for local stakeholders
- AG13 B.2.4 Website development and maintenance
- AG14 B.2.2 Organising Gömör-Torna Summer Festival
- AG15 B.2.1 Development of marketing plan
- AG16 A.3.3 Introduction of regional labelling
- AG17 B.3.3 Granting: renovation and use of traditional buildings as accommodation, small shop, open workshop, museum
- AG C1 – C.1.3 Sharing of bilateral and multilateral experiences
- AG C3 – C.3.2 and C.3.3 Regional consultative process

### **Babia Góra**

- BG1 A.1.3 Ecophysiological study
- BG2 A.1.1 Elaboration of the regional tourism management and development plan
- BG3 A.3.4 Development of Polish-Slovak network of cross-border tourist trails
- BG4 A.3.4 Establishing of new and rationalising of the routes of the existing trails
- BG5 A.3.5 Setting up of local bus
- BG6 A.3.5 Limitation of accessing forest roads by local regulations and parking lots
- BG7 A.4.1 Monitoring of tourism activities and its impact on biodiversity
- BG8 B.2.2 Shared stands during fairs and expositions
- BG9 B.2.2 Organising interregional events and entertainments
- BG10 A.3.3 Elaborating of sustainable tourism products
- BG11 B.3.3 Model project: adaptation of an old house for tourism purposes
- BG12 B.2.1 Annual contest for the best tourist facility
- BG13 A.3.5 Maintaining of a suitable tourism infrastructure
- BG14 B.2.4 Internet site
- BG15 B.2.3 Establishing of two visitor centres
- BG16 B.3.2 Elaboration of house construction plans catalogue
- BG17 A.3.5 Remodelling of flock master's hut and renewing pasturage
- BG18 B.3.3 Establishing of a "living museum" on pastoralism
- BG19 A.2.1 Formulation of suggestions for policy improvements
- BG20 C.3.2 Meetings policy/decision makers, local governments
- BG21 B.1.4 Training of guides



- BG22 B.3.1 Training of craftsmen e.g. weavers, wood-carvers, basket makers etc.
- BG C1 – C.1.3 Sharing of bilateral and multilateral experiences
- BG C3 – C.3.2 and C.3.3 Regional consultative process

### **Šumava**

- SU1 A.2.2 To design a proposal of management system of Biosphere Reserve as a whole
- SU2 A.1.5 To evaluate the potential of the Biosphere Reserve – SWOT
- SU3 A.1.1 To design a strategy of sustainable tourism development within the Biosphere Reserve
- SU4 A.3.4 To propose a Bavaria-Austria-Czech net work of cross-border tourist trails
- SU5 A.3.5 To introduce a system of incentives to maintain existing and to start new sustainable activities
- SU6 A.3.3 To introduce a system of regional certificates of high quality products and services related to sustainable tourism
- SU7 B.3.2 To develop a programme of revitalisation of the cultural potential of the Biosphere Reserve
- SU9 B.1.2 To introduce a system of education, training, round table discussions etc...
- SU10 B.1.4 To realise a system of guides based on local people
- SU C1 – C.1.3 CPEA and Biosphere Reserve admin undertake regular bilateral consultation and information exchange with cross-border protected areas
- SU C3 – C.3.2 and C.3.3 CPEA and Biosphere Reserve admin establish a regional consultative process.

## **Annex 6: Project objectives, outcomes and activities components**

### **Objective A:**

#### **A.1: Development of new tourism management systems in relation to biodiversity objectives**

- 1.1 Development of an integrated Management Plan for sustainable tourism development in each Biosphere Reserve.
- 1.2 Integration of sustainable tourism component into Natura 2000 management for each Biosphere Reserve
- 1.3 Elaboration of an Eco-physiographic study for Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve
- 1.4 Research on ecological and tourism carrying capacity and land use for Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve
- 1.5 Šumava Biosphere Reserve: elaboration and assessment of a SWOT analysis on tourism potential

#### **A.2: Preparation of Guidelines**

- 2.1 Elaboration of a Feasibility Study on the institutional framework of all three Biosphere Reserves for the further implementation of the Man and Biosphere Concept
- 2.2 Design of a regional management system proposal for Šumava Biosphere Reserves
- 2.3 Review of policies and legal frameworks for all reserves

#### **A.3: Development of biodiversity-friendly tourism activities**

- 3.1 Development of a set of criteria for sustainable tourism activities, based on the Viabono eco-label scheme
- 3.2 Development of principles for trail construction and maintenance
- 3.3 Elaboration and development of five sustainable products in each Biosphere Reserves
- 3.4 Establishment of cross-border trail networks in Babia Góra and Šumava Biosphere Reserves and their adjacent counterparts
- 3.5 Actions to regulate and improve tourism-related infrastructure

#### **A.4: Identification of indicators and analysis models**

- 4.1 Elaboration of a set of indicators for sustainable tourism for monitoring tourism impacts on biodiversity
- 4.2 Application of these established indicators and results to Šumava Biosphere Reserve, which are transferable to the other Biosphere Reserves.

#### **B.1: Teaching programmes, methods and materials for integrated training courses**

- 1.1 Establish an overall training and education scheme on sustainable tourism in the participating Biosphere Reserves
- 1.2 Implementation of comprehensive teaching programme (at least 12 training courses and workshops)
- 1.3 Implementation of specific courses, such as organic farming, bee keeping, catering and handicrafts in Aggtelek and Šumava
- 1.4 Implementation of training measures for local people to become nature guides in Šumava and Babia Góra

#### **B.2: Promotion and marketing on the importance of biodiversity**

- 2.1 Promotion of activities on nature-based tourism (e.g. exhibitions and roadshows)
- 2.2 Organisation of inter-regional events and entertainments in Aggtelek and Babia Góra Biosphere Reserves

- 2.3 Planning and establishment of two visitor centres in Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve
- 2.4 Creation of networks and partnerships between visitors, service providers and entrepreneurs.

### **B.3: Revitalisation of cultural and traditional heritage**

- 3.1 Creation of a regional network of traditional handicraft users/producers
- 3.2 Village/house restoration and construction plans that conserve cultural heritage and promote sustainable use of resources
- 3.3 Babia Góra and Aggtelek Biosphere Reserves: model reconstruction of historical buildings with traditional architecture
- 3.4 Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve: survey on architectural heritage styles, attractions and service databases

### **C.1: Sharing or regional experiences with the collaborators**

- 1.1 Elaboration of a case study on bilateral consultation and information exchange processes
- 1.2 Application of the project into broader regional context through the creation of linkages with the Carpathian Convention
- 1.3 Regular bilateral consultation and information exchange with the cross-border protected area, undertaken by the CPEAs and the Biosphere Reserve administration
- 1.4 Establishment of an international steering committee (2 meetings pa) in cooperation with the Carpathian Convention
- 1.5 Establishment of a regular consultation process with other related GEF projects in CEE

### **C.2: International conferences**

- 2.1 Compilation of “best practice” and “lessons learned” examples
- 2.2 Joining conferences at European and International level concerning biodiversity and sustainable development

### **C.3: Regional consultative process among all key stakeholders**

- 3.1 Realisation of three conferences between the participating Biosphere Reserves
- 3.2 Implementation of an involvement plan and information system for the local and national stakeholders
- 3.3 Realisation of workshops and round tables to inform local stakeholders and to get feedback on the project implementation

### **C.4: Support to the role of NGOs in CEECs**

- 4.1 Strengthened importance of NGOs in regional development processes, also as a means to ensure local stakeholder involvement in the future.

### **D.1: Incremental operating costs of the Project Executing Agency**

- 1.1 Development of a communication support system for the projected implementation and the dissemination of the project results through websites and traditional means.

### **D.2: Monitoring costs**

- 2.1 Elaboration of a Case Study of the introduction of a tourism and biodiversity management system in Šumava Biosphere Reserve
- 2.2 Operation activities of the CPEAs

**D.3: Evaluation costs**

- 3.1 Mid-term evaluation and final evaluation to measure the project's fulfilment of the set goals
- 3.2 Independent external evaluation team for additional project evaluation

**D.4: Dissemination of the project results through website and traditional means**

- 4.1 Local dissemination process among the involved stakeholders
- 4.2 Regional dissemination of interim results between the participating project regions

## **Annex 7: Objective verifiable indicators**

OVI 1 All three Biosphere Reserves have new adopted tourism management plans that match the local circumstances and sensitively integrate biodiversity-related conditions to ensure long-term sustainability in the regions.

OVI 2 The newly established management plans provide for at least 20% new and innovative approaches for integrated tourism management and biodiversity conservation.

OVI 3 Enhanced policies, rules, regulations, incentive measures and enforcement mechanisms improve the management of existing and potential conflicts between tourism and biodiversity objectives by at least 20%.

OVI 4 Regional certificates and labelling systems for the creation of sound tourism offers and activities are elaborated and adopted in at least 5 locations or facilities in each Biosphere Reserve.

OVI 5 Model initiatives are created and pilot projects implemented as examples for good sustainable tourism implementation in at least 5 locations in each Biosphere Reserve.

OVI 6 A monitoring system concerning tourism impacts on biodiversity is developed and established in at least two Biosphere Reserves.

OVI 7 Impact assessments for the Biosphere Reserves are realised by the established monitoring systems.

OVI 8 At least 12 training seminars on biodiversity and tourism are carried out in each Biosphere Reserve to strengthen institutional and human capacities.

OVI 9 An average of 10% private and business sector financial contribution to the conservation of biodiversity is realised.

OVI 10 At least 30% contribution to the conservation of biological diversity to ensure economic sustainability for successful implementation of sustainable tourism in the Biosphere Reserves.

OVI 11 At least 5 incentive measures for ecologic and social sound tourism products are established for each Biosphere Reserve.

OVI 12 The results are integrated in the adaptive management systems of the Biosphere Reserves.

OVI 13 Systematic actions for continuous information exchange at international and regional level are implemented.

OVI 14 A system of criteria and indicators for sustainable tourism activities is developed.

OVI 15 Effectiveness through surveys of cooperation processes are proven suitable.

- OVI 16        CEEWEB in Hungary serves as the platform for communication.
- OVI 17        Information systems, external monitoring and accounting are established.
- OVI 18        Performance targets are achieved as specified in the annual operating plan.
- OVI 19        Deviations from the annual reporting plan are corrected promptly and appropriately.
- OVI 20        The project partners have established adequate management systems and have created international and regional communication and cooperation structures.
- OVI 21        Disbursements are made on a timely basis, and procurement is achieved according to the procurement plan.
- OVI 22        Adaptive management is applied through continuous consultations which are realised regularly.
- OVI 23        Effectiveness, efficiency and implementation procedure of the project are evaluated in detail in Mid-Term of the project and at the end.
- OVI 24        Impact and sustainability of anticipated results are evaluated and recommendations for future activities formulated.
- OVI 25        Project related information is distributed regularly to stakeholders to build commitment and ownership of the project activities within communities.

## Annex 8: Sources of project co-financing (cash and in-kind contributions)

Title of Project:	Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity through Sound Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe						
Project Number:	GFL / 2328 - 2714 - 4829 PMS:GF/4020-05-01						
Name of Executing Agency:	Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE)						
Project Duration:	From: April 2005		To: May 2008				
Reporting Period (to be done annually):	April 2005 - May 2008						
Source of Cofinance	Cash Contributions			In-kind Contributions			Comments
	Budget original (at time of approval by GEF)	Budget latest revision	Received to date	Budget original (at time of approval by GEF)	Budget latest revision	Received to date	
1 Gmina of Lipnica Wielka	5.800	10.900	28.318	0	3.500	3.573	New letter requested
2 Gmina of Jablonka	1.100	4.700	6.270	0	4.000	5.797	New letter requested
3 Babia Gora National Park	106.100	98.600	360.981	0	2.000	1.952	New letter requested
4 Forest District of Sucha	40.000	11.850	5.327			150	New letter requested
5 Forest District of Nowy Targ	8.000	91.100	86.072			0	New letter requested
6 Ministry of Environment and Water, Hungary	33.500	33.500	57.514				
7 Aggtelek National Park and Biosphere Reserve	43.600	43.600	113.898				
8 Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic	50.000	50.000	0	0	0	0	
9 Museum – The Orava Ethnographic Park		22.500	33.262	33.100	9.400	8.320	New letter requested
10 County of Sucha Beskidzka		2.700	5.154	13.300	4.000	3.378	New letter requested
11 Ministry of Environment and Water, Hungary				24.000	24.000	406	
12 Aggtelek National Park and Biosphere Reserve				70.700	70.700	121.830	
13 Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology	0	0	40.161	0	0	5.448	New letter requested
14 Sumava NP and PLA Administration	0	0	22.100	0	0	31.719	original inkind 40.000 still to be compensated
15 Friends of Babia Gora	26.500	10.500	8.561	22.500		21.240	Clarification of in-kind revision
16 Polskie Towarzystwo Turystyczno-Krajoznawcze Zarad Główny	818.100	731.000	931.272			0	New letter requested
17 Central and Eastern European Working	12.000	12.000	40.244				
18 Ecological Tourism in Europe	3.000	3.000	5.982				
19 Galyasag Village Association				3.900	7.050	10.490	
20 Central and Eastern European Working				23.900	23.900	26.651	
21 Ecological Tourism in Europe				107.300	107.300	136.400	

22	High School of Tourism and Ecology	4.000	2.600	2.592	6.000		6.000	Clarification of in-kind revision
23	United Nations Educational, Scientific and	30.000	30.000	33.631				
24	Environmental Protection and Regional	0	0	255	42.100	42.100	8.722	New letter requested
25	Ecological Institute for Sustainable	0	0	25.487	25.700	25.700	53.477	New letter requested
26	Sumava Regional Development Agency	0	0	0	10.000	10.000	14.956	
27	United Nations Educational, Scientific and				85.000	85.000	35.882	
28	Local Government of Trizs				0	1.000	894	New letter requested
29	Folk Chöre of Szécliget				0	135	133	New letter requested
30	Local Government of Felsőtelekes					1.000	2.548	New letter requested
31	Local Government of Gömörzsolos				0	1.000	674	New letter requested
32	Local Government of Hidvégyardó				0	2.000	3.289	New letter requested
33	University of Debrecen				0	0	0	mistake: belongs to Meridian foundation, shifted to it
34	Meridián Foundation				0	11.000	15.447	New letter requested
35	North-Hungarian Confederation of					3.761	3.761	New letter requested
36	Centre of Mountain Tourism PTTK			3.944				New letter requested
37	REC			71.957			14.982	New letter requested
38	Gömör-Torna Foundation	0	1.755	1.618				New letter requested
39	Aggtelek					15.000	12.835	New letter requested
40	Herman Ottó Múzeum					300	208	New letter requested
41	Jószafo					2.500	3.896	New letter requested
42	Perkupa					300	277	New letter requested
43	Várhosszúrét					600	554	New letter requested
44	Gömörhorka					350	323	New letter requested
45	Terre Foundation					1.500	1.156	New letter requested
46	Tornakápolna					0	323	New letter requested
47	Gömöri Ifjúság Társaság					500	501	New letter requested
48	Dövény						1.661	New letter requested
49	Edelény Public Library						52	New letter requested
50	Komját						1.661	New letter requested
51	Putnok						1.661	New letter requested
52	Szendro						1.661	New letter requested
53	Szuhafo						1.661	New letter requested
54	NORDA						1.691	New letter requested
	Total	1.181.700	1.160.105	1.884.598	467.500	459.596	568.237	

Name: Michael Meyer  
Position: Project Manager  
Date: 09/01/2008

*All amounts in US dollars*



**Annex 9: Reported Expenditures to-date and Yearly Audit Received (by UNEP/GEF)**

**Reported Expenditures To-date and Yearly Audit Received**

	Yearly Reported Expenditures				Total	Original Budget	Variance
	2005	2006	2007	2008			
<b>10 PROJECT PERSONNEL COMPONENT</b>							
<b>1100 Project Personnel</b>							
1101 Programme Manager (Project Director)	8,024	10,832	8,585	4,615	32,057	32,400	(343)
1102 Project Management, assistant	4,099	5,517	5,974	1,214	16,804	16,200	604
<b>1199 Sub-Total</b>	<b>12,123</b>	<b>16,349</b>	<b>14,559</b>	<b>5,829</b>	<b>48,860</b>		
<b>1300 Administrative Support</b>							
1301 Project Management, secretarial help, 1 secretary	2,704	3,632	3,010	2,160	11,506	11,100	406
<b>1399 Sub-Total</b>	<b>2,704</b>	<b>3,632</b>	<b>3,010</b>	<b>2,160</b>	<b>11,506</b>		
<b>1600 Travel on Official Business</b>							
1601 travel into regions project team	4,475	4,391	5,809	1,407	16,082	10,500	5,582
<b>1699 Sub-Total</b>	<b>4,475</b>	<b>4,391</b>	<b>5,809</b>	<b>1,407</b>	<b>16,082</b>		
<b>1999 Component Total</b>	<b>19,302</b>	<b>24,372</b>	<b>23,378</b>	<b>9,396</b>	<b>76,448</b>		
<b>20 SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT</b>							
<b>2200 Sub-Contracts with supporting organisation (NGOs, Govts.)</b>							
2101 A.1 Review of existing and development of new tourism management plans	16,240	54,136	23,025	16,279	109,679	109,800	(121)
2102 A.2 Preparation of guidelines to fill legislation gaps	4,429	18,134	11,615	13,202	47,380	47,000	380

2103	A.3 Development and implementation of biodiversity-friendly tourist including the development of appropriate criteria	1,952	43,808	87,340	18,373	151,474	150,300	1,174
2104	A.4 Identification of measurable indicators and analysis models	3,370	6,006	10,320	6,172	25,868	28,500	(2,632)
2105	B.1 Development and implementation of teaching programs	3,685	27,646	32,389	24,222	87,942	89,000	(1,058)
2106	B.2 Promotion and marketing on the importance of biodiversity	3,624	8,952	29,061	18,529	60,166	63,600	(3,434)
2107	B.3 Alternative income-generating activities / revitalization of cultural and traditional heritage.	9,437	43,270	57,973	34,639	145,319	146,400	(1,081)
<b>2199</b>	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>42,738</b>	<b>201,951</b>	<b>251,721</b>	<b>131,418</b>	<b>627,829</b>		
<b>2999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>42,738</b>	<b>201,951</b>	<b>251,721</b>	<b>131,418</b>	<b>627,829</b>		
<b>30</b>	<b>Training Component</b>							
<b>3300</b>	<b>Meetings/Conferences</b>							
3301	C.1 Sharing of multi- and bi-lateral experiences	4,058	13,435	30,529	14,216	62,238	63,000	(762)
3302	C.2 International conferences to identify needs for collaboration	619	552	6,579	-	7,750	7,500	250
3303	C.3 Establishment of a consultative process	4,303	19,538	20,877	39,451	84,169	84,900	(731)
<b>3399</b>	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>8,980</b>	<b>33,525</b>	<b>57,984</b>	<b>53,668</b>	<b>154,157</b>		
<b>3999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>8,980</b>	<b>33,525</b>	<b>57,984</b>	<b>53,668</b>	<b>154,157</b>		
<b>40</b>	<b>EQUIPMENT AND PREMISES COMPONENT</b>							
<b>4100</b>	<b>Expendable Equipment</b>							
4101	Office Supplies	2,172	2,874	1,442	1,169	7,656	7,200	456
<b>4199</b>	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>2,172</b>	<b>2,874</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>1,169</b>	<b>7,656</b>		
<b>4200</b>	<b>Non-Expendable Equipment</b>							
4201	Computer Hardware	-	1,271	411	-	1,682	1,300	382
4202	Office Equipment	-	324	-	-	324	600	(276)

	<b>4299 Sub-total</b>	-	<b>1,595</b>	<b>411</b>	-	<b>2,006</b>		
<b>4300</b>	<b>Premises Rent</b>							
	4301 Office Rental	462	1,623	2,256	1,257	5,597	5,400	197
	<b>4399 Sub-total</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>1,623</b>	<b>2,256</b>	<b>1,257</b>	<b>5,597</b>		
<b>4999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>2,633</b>	<b>6,092</b>	<b>4,109</b>	<b>2,426</b>	<b>15,259</b>		
<b>50</b>	<b>MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT</b>							
	<b>5200 Reporting Costs</b>							
	5201 Dissemination of project results through website, trad. means	-	1,507	90	3,021	4,617	4,300	317
	5202 Printing, copying, distribution of documents	354	1,296	980	635	3,266	2,600	666
	<b>5299 Sub-total</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>2,803</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>3,656</b>	<b>7,883</b>		
<b>5400</b>	<b>Hospitality &amp; Entertainment</b>							
	5401 9 Meetings Steering Committee	176	1,039	1,178	1,314	3,706	4,500	(794)
	<b>5499 Sub-Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>1,039</b>	<b>1,178</b>	<b>1,314</b>	<b>3,706</b>		
<b>5500</b>	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>							
	5501 Project Evaluation	6,000	9,052	7,778	3,000	25,830	21,600	4,230
	5502 Project Monitoring	7,500	10,463	10,240	2,585	30,788	34,200	(3,412)
	<b>5599 Sub-Total</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>19,516</b>	<b>18,018</b>	<b>5,585</b>	<b>56,618</b>		
<b>5999</b>	<b>Component Total</b>	<b>14,031</b>	<b>23,358</b>	<b>20,265</b>	<b>10,554</b>	<b>68,208</b>		
<b>99</b>	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>87,684.33</b>	<b>289,297.13</b>	<b>357,457.78</b>	<b>207,460.76</b>	<b>941,900.00</b>	941,900	0
	Yearly audited expenditures	87,684.32	289,297.13	357,457.83	207,823.43	942,262.71		
	Difference	0.01	-	(0.05)	(362.67)	(362.71)		