

CONSERVING MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY IN SOUTHERN LESOTHO

(CMBSL)

(Project Number LES/97/G31/B/1G/99)

FINAL EVALUATION



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| List of Acronyms | 2 |
| Executive Summary | 3 |
| 1. Introduction | 10 |
| 1.1 Objectives of evaluation | 10 |
| 1.2 Methodology | 10 |
| 1.3 Structure of Report | 11 |
| 2.0 Project Concept Design and Development Context | 12 |
| 2.1 Background | 12 |
| 2.2 Project Objectives and Activities | 14 |
| 2.3 Project Institutional Framework | 16 |
| 2.4 Project Budget | 17 |
| 2.5 Project Revision | 17 |
| 3.0 Project Management | 17 |
| 3.1 Country Ownership and Drivenness | 19 |
| 3.2 Stakeholder Participation | 20 |
| 3.3 Project Replication | 21 |
| 3.4 Cost Effectiveness | 22 |
| 3.5 Linkages with other Interventions | 23 |
| 3.6 Financial Planning | 23 |
| 4.0 Monitoring and Evaluation | 29 |
| 4.1 Role of UN Agencies | 30 |
| 4.2 Coordination and Operational Issues | 31 |
| 5.0 Attainment of Project Objectives | 33 |
| 5.1 Summary of overall project achievements | 33 |
| 5.2 Project Impact and sustainability | 39 |
| 5.3 Contribution to Upgrading skills at national level | 40 |
| 6.0 Conclusions | 41 |
| 7.0 Lessons Learned | 42 |
| 8.0 Recommendations | 44 |
| Annexes | 46 |

List of Tables

| | |
|---------|--|
| Table 1 | Project Financing Sources |
| Table 2 | CMBSL Annual Expenditures |
| Table 3 | CMBSL Consolidated Financial Expenditures by Budget |
| Table 4 | Achievements against stated outcomes of the project. |
| Table 5 | Project Achievements Rated Against Objectives |

List of Figures

Figure 1: Project Implementation and coordination model

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|---------|--|
| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| CBNRM | Community-Based Natural Resource Management |
| CBO | Community Based Organisation |
| CMBSL | Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho Project |
| CNR | Community Nature Reserve |
| CTA | CMBSL Chief Technical Advisor |
| DIT | District Implementation Team |
| DPO | CMBSL District Project Officer |
| DS | District Secretary |
| DSC | District Steering Committee |
| EU | European Union |
| GEF | Global Environmental Facility of the United Nations |
| GoL | Government of Lesotho |
| GS | Grazing Scheme |
| ICDP | Integrated Conservation and Development Project |
| LHDA | Lesotho Highlands Development Authority |
| LHWP | Lesotho Highlands Water Project |
| M & E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MDTP | Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (GEF/World Bank project) |
| MSc | Master of Science degree |
| MTE | Mid-Term Evaluation |
| MTEC | Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture, Lesotho |
| NBSAP | National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan |
| NES | National Environment Secretariat (Lesotho) |
| NEX | National Execution |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NPM | CMBSL National Project Manager |
| NSC | National Steering Committee |
| PA | Protected Area |
| PDF | GEF Project Development Funding |
| PIR | Project Implementation Report |
| PIU | Project Implementation Unit |
| PS | Principal Secretary (Head of Government Ministry) |
| QWDT | Quthing Wildlife and Development Trust |
| RMA | Range Management Area |
| SABONET | Southern African Botanical Diversity Network (GEFproject) |
| SABSP | Southern Africa Biodiversity Support Project (GEF/UNDP project) |
| SDTFCA | Southern Drakensberg Trans-Frontier Conservation Area (private initiative) |
| STAP | the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the GEF |
| TPR | Tripartite Review |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNDP CO | United Nations Development Programme Country Office |
| UNOPS | United Nations Office for Project Services |
| USD | United States dollar |
| WSSD | World Summit on Sustainable Development |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho (CMBSL) project was an innovative biodiversity management project that was premised on: (a) the presence of globally significant plant diversity, unique habitats and high endemism in the Drakensberg-Maloti montane mountain region of the country; (b) the very low proportion (0.4%) of the country under formal conservation protection; and (c) the perceived threat to these floral and habitat values by overgrazing, over-frequent burning and, in the case of wetlands, by erosion within an open access system of land tenure operational in the country.

The CMBSL project was implemented through two distinct but complimentary interventions. The first was to work with government entities and community groups to create a network of small protected sites targeting specific biodiversity values hence the focus on establishing protected areas and community nature reserves. The second intervention was to address conservation more broadly through the incorporation of biodiversity conservation in rangeland management systems already operational in the country. Through this second intervention, a number of range management areas would be established in the project area. To achieve these objectives, the project envisioned working at both policy level and local implementation level through the provision of “incentives and regulatory systems within central district and community organisations”. (CMBSL Project Document). CMBSL adopted an approach to conservation that recognised community responsibility, involvement and ownership in project management. Due to the communal system of land tenure and high population densities in rural Lesotho, the designation of land to augment the limited extent of protected areas in the country was always going to be difficult. Instead, an approach that would encourage highland communities to regulate their use of biological resources for conservation purposes, and to obtain some return for this through income from such activities as ecotourism was adopted. This was an innovation for Lesotho as such a project had never been implemented before.

The project selected Quthing District in the southern highlands as its focus and later spread to cover Mohale’s Hoek and Qacha’s Nek districts. The focus on the southern Highlands was so that there would be no geographical overlap with the other two large Maloti projects that were already being implemented. In addition, communities in the southern highlands were poorer and often ignored in development activities. The project would therefore compliment development programmes that were being implemented in other parts of the country.

A number of features characterised the conservation and development context of the project at the time of its design. Firstly, at that time, there was low institutional capacity for managing conservation projects in Lesotho. Most projects prior to CMBSL were managed by institutions and individuals residing outside the country. There was also a very weak non-governmental base that could have been used to bridge this gap as happens in other countries in the region.

At this time there were a number of issues that were affecting the development space in the country in addition to those relating to weak institutional capacity addressed above. The period from 1997 to 2000 was one of high political tension in the country that ended with violent civic action that required the intervention of forces from neighbouring countries to resolve the situation. The country also experienced a severe drought which resulted in a major rural food crisis. At the same time, the HIV/AIDS pandemic became a major issue for

both government and donors thereby diverting resources that would have been directed at conservation towards mitigating this national problem. These developments affected the political and social context within which the project was designed. These factors were unfortunately not assessed to establish whether they would have an impact on the project when it went to implementation. Such an analysis would also have provided a baseline against which progress with implementation could have been measured.

At about the same time as CMBSL was being formulated a number of other important initiatives were being developed. These include: formulation of a National Environmental Action Plan; the production of an Environmental Policy, and the development of the Lesotho Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, also funded by GEF. In addition, the Lesotho Highlands Water Project that was funded by the World Bank was also under implementation and creating some small protected areas and botanic gardens around the dams they were developing. The European Union (EU) was also developing a Drakensberg-Maloti Mountain Conservation Programme in 1995/96, which in many respects formed the basis for the World Bank/GEF funded Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP), which commenced in Lesotho in early 2003. From an institutional development perspective, a nascent National Environment Secretariat (NES), was becoming fully established and raising the profile of environmental issues in the country with support from UNDP.

It is useful to note that all the initiatives highlighted above did not constitute a consolidated national environment programme for Lesotho that would have provided a context for CMBSL. Further,, these initiatives did not constitute an assessment of the situation at local level where the project was to be implemented. The project could have benefited from a comprehensive assessment of the biodiversity, social and economic status of the situation on the ground in the southern mountains of Lesotho to establish a baseline for measuring progress towards realisation of project objectives.

As part of standard project reporting procedure, as laid down in the Project Document, UNDP/GEF projects require periodic independent evaluations, including a terminal evaluation. An Independent Evaluation was conducted in 2004. This report details the results of the terminal/final evaluation of the Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho (CMBSL) project (Project Number LES/97/G31/B/1G/99). The evaluation was conducted over the period 21st August – 15th October, 2006 by a team of two independent consultants – Mr Oliver Chapeyama (International, Team Leader) and Dr Taelo Letsela (National Consultant).

The project was to be implemented over a five year period from May 1999 to March 2004 but due to delays in start up caused mainly by delays in the recruitment of project management staff, the project was “re-phased” and was to end in June 2005. However, due to issues regarding staff performance and the fact that the project ran out of funds, the project was prematurely closed in December of 2004. Prior to its official start-up the project was implemented through ad-hoc arrangements with the National Biodiversity Coordinator in the Ministry of Environment, Tourism and Culture acting as the National Programme Manager. The project started with a focus on Quthing District but was latter expanded to cover Mohale’s Hoek and Qacha’s Nek Districts. The project was funded to a total of US \$ 2,485,000 by GEF with an in-kind GoL contribution of US \$ 530 000.

Approximately two years into project implementation the project was adjusted to accommodate the time that had been lost because there were no project management staff on board. This adjustment also included a revision of project goals with these being expanded from two to four. This evaluation was based on these adjusted goals and objectives which are summarised as:

- A. A planned and rational network of Protected Areas is in place, which adequately covers the extent of Lesotho's biodiversity.
- B. Improved grazing and resources management systems resulting in reduced rate of biodiversity loss outside formal Protected Areas.
- C. An integrated bioregional approach (also trans-border) to biodiversity conservation and watershed management is established.
- D. A functional project organisation, management and co-ordination system for the implementation of biodiversity conservation programs established at central, district and community levels.

There were also the following four project Outcomes:

1. A more complete Protected Area network for biodiversity, managed with local people.
2. Mechanisms in place to protect biodiversity resources outside Protected Areas and participatory range management area plans implemented. It is expected that the policy regime will have been reviewed to reinforce these community initiatives.
3. A stronger network of biodiversity institutions in place at regional, national, district and community levels.
4. An integrated bio-regional approach to biodiversity conservation and watershed management in place to reinforce the integration of community development, biodiversity conservation and watershed management.

CMBSL was a National Executed project with the National Environment Secretariat (NES) in the Ministry of Environment, Tourism and Culture (MTEC) as the implementing agency. While GEF provided the funding, UNDP Lesotho provided administrative and logistical support with technical backstopping coming from GEF regional offices in Nairobi/ Pretoria. NES hosted a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) that was headed by a National Programme Manager supported by a Chief Technical Advisor, an Environmental Economist and other nationally recruited staff. Project staff was also deployed to the three districts where they provided support to the district administrative implementation structures such as the District Steering committees that assumed responsibility for project implementation and management. At national level, a National Steering Committee comprising relevant institutions was also set up to provide overall administrative guidance to the project. Principal institutions that were members of the steering committee at national level included the Ministries of Local Government, Range Land Management, Forestry, and Agriculture.

The overall objective of the Terminal Evaluation is to review the achievements made by the project to achieve the specified objectives and outcomes. It will establish the relevance, performance and success of the project, including the sustainability of results.

Main Findings of the Evaluation

The evaluation established that the project was poorly designed with no baselines having been established before implementation started. The focus on biodiversity in the southern mountains was therefore not based on any empirical evidence of threats to such biodiversity. In addition, the potential for achieving conservation of biodiversity in a communal land tenure system was not properly assessed. Staff assigned responsibilities for implementing this initiative were also not adequately qualified. As a result of this, the project easily veered off course and ended up focussing on issues that the communities involved in its implementation considered important. Among these were water bottling, chicken farming which did not have a direct bearing on the project's objectives. These could at best be described as development projects instead of the biodiversity conservation that was GEF's reason for supporting the initiative. There were therefore no networks of protected areas established in the project area with the best attempt having been made at Letseng la Letsie in Quthing district.

The project supported a lot of community training and mobilisation through the established national and district level committees. As a result of this community mobilisation, a number of sites were identified for the establishment of community nature reserves and range management areas. Little was however done to advance to actual establishment of these features of the project focus. In sum therefore community groups could point to the areas identified for the establishment of these project goals but none were functionally operational.

Another aspect of project focus was the establishment of a network of national institutions promoting biodiversity conservation. The project did mobilise support from a variety of institutions including the National University at Roma and Quthing Wildlife Trust. However, due to management failures, the contribution of these institutions to the realisation of project objectives was very weak. At the time of the terminal evaluation there was no evidence of a network of national level institutions that was functional. Skills improvement at both national and district levels was also not readily evident.

The project focus was shifted in 2002 to include the promotion of a bioregional approach to biodiversity conservation. A natural linkage would have been that with the South Africa component of the unfolding Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier initiative but there was no evidence at the time of the evaluation of any attempt having been made to develop this link. This might have been because of the poor technical capacity of project managers.

Project finances were found to be not reconciled particularly between the PIU and the UNDP CO resulting in assertion to the effect that considerable sums of money had gone missing from the project. The evaluation managed to establish that there was no malfeasance with regards to project finances. All that had happened was that project expenditures had not been tracked effectively enough with expenditures at some cost centres, such as UNOPS, not being accounted for in time.

Overall, the project was evaluated as having failed to meet its intended goals and objectives. The table below summarises project performance against intended outcomes.

Project Achievements Rated Against Objectives

| PROJECT OBJECTIVES | ACHIEVEMENTS | RATING |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. Establishing a network | | U |

| | | |
|---|--|----------|
| of protected areas in the 3 southern districts of Lesotho | No functional protected areas in all the project sites | |
| 2. Facilitating protection of biodiversity outside protected areas in Range Management Areas as buffer zones or in RMAs that do not surround core Pas | No functional RMAs established or assisted by the project in all the project sites | U |
| 3. Establish a strong network of biodiversity institutions, nationally and regionally. | Not such networks established in all the project sites, nationally and across borders. | U |
| 4. Establish project organization, management and coordination at the district and national levels | The structure was established to manage the project which ran from the national level to the district level. The structure could not deliver expected results however. | MS |
| Overall Assessment | | U |

The project was rated as having been unsuccessful.

Despite the unsuccessful rating, the following are considered to be the lessons learnt from the implementation of CMBSL:

1. Projects such as CMBSL whose success depends upon winning the hearts and minds of community groups require individuals or institutions that champion their cause. A good example of this is the CAMPFIRE programme in Zimbabwe that was popularised by the CAMPFIRE Association, a CBO that represented the interests of the participating communities. The head of the secretariat of the association was passionate about the project and its potential for transforming the lives of rural populations in Zimbabwe and effectively lobbied government and the international conservation movement to recognise this aspect of the programme. CMBSL did not have such a champion and depended instead on the PIU for the advancement of its goals.
2. Biodiversity conservation projects need to be preceded by comprehensive situation analyses covering biodiversity, social and economic conditions at proposed project sites. These assessments should also include capacity assessments of institutions to be involved in advancing project goals so as to identify institutional capacity development needs to be focussed upon as projects are implemented. The baselines developed through this process will be useful in measuring project progress;
3. Biodiversity projects need to focus on those project aspects that allow for replication of experiences.
4. Institutional capacity limitations are a common feature among most government entities in developing countries. These limitations can be addressed through the involvement of civil

society entities working to compliment government efforts. A good example of the benefits of this is what has occurred at Maputsane in Quthing District where, with the involvement of the Quthing Wildlife Development Trust, the community group has continued implementing the programmes initiated under CMBSL.

4. Biodiversity conservation projects are highly specialised and require specialised inputs from technically qualified managers. In addition, there is a strong need in projects concerning biodiversity conservation to have regular technical input from conservation or biological scientists, particularly if such skills are not available on the project staff. The engagement of people with appropriate technical skills to manage projects will ensure that appropriate action is taken to correct misdirected project initiatives.

5. Although CMBSL engaged a range of institutions to participate in project supervision, institutional commitment to the project was generally weak. A review of the minutes of the National Steering Committee shows that most institutions were represented by different people at the project review meetings which detracted from continuity of inputs.

6. Steering committees, however well-constituted, can lack the ability to have a significant influence or redirect a project. They need to be well-informed, have continuity and commitment of membership, and be able to actively influence progress if required. Field visits and significant time spent with project management are required if their input is to be useful.

7. Look and learn tours can be very useful tools for promoting community participation and monitoring progress with implementation of projects. However, for study tours to be of use to participants, they need to be arranged so communities are taken to visit projects that are similar to theirs. CMBSL took participants on tours to Zimbabwe to visit CAMPFIRE project sites. While CAMPFIRE and CMBSL were similar in outlook, they focussed on different resources. CAMPFIRE focussed on large faunal species while CMBSL was focused on flora/scenery. It was easy to draw participants under CAMPFIRE because of the potential for realising immediate benefits from managing the resources available in project area. CMBSL did not have such glamorous resources so returns from participation in resource management could only be promised sometime in the future on account of poor resource endowment. CMBSL should have identified projects with a pastoral orientation and worked with such projects to distil lessons for use in promoting biodiversity conservation.

8. CMBSL was associated with the disbursement of large sums of money to participating communities, especially in the form of per diems on field visits. Some of the sums of money disbursed were so large, they became the primary reason for communities to participate in the project as they hoped to also benefit. While communities are entitled to receive allowances when they travel, care should always be taken to balance this with the management of Lesotho's biodiversity heritage.

9. The sites at which a project will work need to be clearly articulated during the formulation stage. Likewise, the type of activities that will take place there, targets and expected achievements ought to be specified in the logframe. If this is not, done, as was the case with CMBSL, sites and activities may become inappropriate.

Some of these lessons have already been taken up and are being used to inform project formulation elsewhere in the region by UNDP-GEF.

With this overall assessment, the evaluation team made a number of recommendations for use in structuring future initiatives of this nature in Lesotho and elsewhere. These recommendations were made with the realisation that Lesotho still requires assistance in the area of biodiversity conservation despite the failures that have been realised under projects such as CMBSL.

Principal recommendations are that:

- NES should reengage with relevant government entities proposing biodiversity conservation projects involving community groups in the former project areas to ensure that the high levels of motivation that are evident among these communities for involvement in future conservation programmes are marshalled and put to effective use.
- Some useful studies have been conducted on the biodiversity and tourism potential of the southern mountains of Lesotho as part of the CMBSL initiative. These need to be properly packaged for use by on-going and future initiatives. These could also lay the foundation for a body of knowledge about this important eco-region in Lesotho.
- Although UNDP CO and GoL have agreed to and indeed now use other project management models, the experiences with the use of the PIU model gained from the CMBSL project need to be documented so as to inform follow-on initiatives in Lesotho and elsewhere.
- Letsa-la-Letsie is considered a flagship of CMBSL but remains unprotected to date despite its designation as a Ramsar site. The process of legal gazettelement initiated under CMBSL should be completed as without it, the current problems of uncoordinated use of resources will continue to the detriment of the biodiversity of the area. The issue of fencing of the area needs to be reviewed as it has caused a lot of conflict. Consideration should therefore be given to other conservation models with protection being viewed from a variety of angles. It is unlikely that communities will stop using the area for pasturing their stock. A level of protection that allows for continued community use could be considered for the area.
- The CMBSL experience with the approach of using the PIU model for project management should be documented and shared with other government entities in order that the experience is used to inform choices of project management models in future. Already, UNDP CO, with the concurrence of GoL has adopted models that allow for capacity being left behind after projects are closed. A case in point is the National Capacity Self Assessment Project hosted by NES. These should be institutionalised across government.
- While the goals of CMBSL might be considered to have been good, there is a need to understand how protected areas can best be established under systems of communal resource tenure. Lessons from other countries in the region need to be used to inform this enquiry.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives of the Evaluation

As part of standard project reporting procedure, as laid down in the Project Document, UNDP/GEF projects require a terminal evaluation. This report records the findings and recommendations of a Terminal Evaluation of the Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho (CMBSL) Project Number LES/97/G31/B/IG/99. The Terminal Evaluation was commissioned by UNDP and conducted according to guidance, rules and procedures for such evaluations established by UNDP and the Global Environment Facility. The overall objective of the Terminal Evaluation is to review the achievements made by the project towards realising the specified project objectives and outcomes. It will establish the relevance, performance and success of the project, including the sustainability of results. The evaluation also identified specific lessons pertaining to the strategies employed, and implementation arrangements, which may be accommodated in the design of similar projects in Lesotho and elsewhere. The evaluation, more specifically, assessed the contribution of the project towards addressing global environmental objectives. Full Terms of Reference for the present evaluation are given as Annex 1.

During the initial briefing at UNDP GEF regional office in Pretoria, it was emphasised that there was a need to review the overall national context within which the project was developed and implemented as this might have influenced the way the project was implemented.

Methodology

The evaluation was conducted over the period 21st August – 15th October, 2006 by a team of two independent consultants – Mr Oliver Chapeyama (International Consultant and Team Leader) and Dr Taelo Letsela (National Consultant). After an initial briefing by Mr Nik Sekhran (GEF Co-ordinator for Southern Africa, Pretoria), Mr Chapeyama travelled to Maseru, Lesotho, where he and Dr Letsela commenced work with reviews of relevant project documents. The original plan had been for the consulting team to consult with Project Managers at UNDP Country Office (UNDPCO) and Ministry of Tourism Environment and Culture (MTEC) before going on field visits to the three districts where the project was implemented for local level consultations and evaluation of project impact. The project was operationally closed in December 2004, so when the review team started work, representatives of most relevant stakeholder institutions such as the Project Management Teams at both national and district levels, and the National and District Steering Committees had already stood down and moved on to new jobs. As a result of this, the consulting team spent a considerable amount of time during the mobilisation period locating individuals that had been involved with project implementation and setting up interviews. The situation was compounded by the absence from office of the Project Manager at UNDP and the Director of the National Environment Secretariat (NES) at the start of the assignment. These critical stakeholders were only interviewed two weeks into the evaluation. Despite these initial bottlenecks, the consulting team managed to interview a variety of stakeholders. These included three former National Project Managers, a former District Project Officer and individuals from government departments such as Forestry and Range Management that sat on the National Steering Committee and other relevant institutions, including the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP).

The consulting team also undertook a week-long field visit to all three districts where the project was implemented. The following project sites were visited:

Qacha's Nek District:

Mosaqane Protected Area;
Pheellong Range Management Area;
Sekake Botanical Garden (Community Nature Reserve);
Makhoareng Community Nature Reserve.

Quthing District:

Letsa-la-Letsie Protected Area;
Seforong Community Nature Reserve;
Tsatsane Protected Area;
Qhoali Range Management Area;
Quthing Wildlife Development Trust.

Mohale's Hoek District:

Qobong Community Nature Reserve;
Mapotsane Community Nature Reserve;
Thaba Putsoa/Ketane Range Management Area.

The visits were arranged with the assistance of District Environment Officers and Rural Development Officers who, as in the case of Qacha's Nek and Quthing Districts, had worked as members of the District Steering Committees under the project. In choosing project sites to be visited, care was taken to ensure that representative examples of protected areas, nature reserves and range management areas were visited. Interviews were conducted with community project participants at each site visited. In all, twelve (12) sites, including Quthing Wildlife Development Trust were visited.

Initial findings of the evaluation were discussed with the Principal Secretary, MTEC, the Director of NES and senior UNDP Staff on September 7 and 8 respectively. A brief written report was also submitted to the GEF Southern Africa Co-ordinator in Pretoria on the 6th September in place of the original plan for an out brief.

1.3 Structure of the Report

This Terminal Evaluation report is structured as follows:

- Section 1 is an introduction to the evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation, key issues addressed and the methodology used in conducting the evaluation are detailed in this section.
- Section 2 presents the project concept and its development context, the problem(s) the project was meant to address, the project structure and development objectives. The modalities of execution and the levels of participation by other agencies and departments at various levels are also presented in this section as are the roles of various UN agencies with particular reference to monitoring and evaluation.
- Section 3 discusses project management arrangements.

- Project Monitoring and Evaluation is discussed in Section 4
- Section 5 is the main body of the evaluation as it details project overall ratings against its objectives and also discusses project impact and sustainability.
- Section 6 is a Conclusions section.
- Section 7 discusses lessons learnt from implementing the project, and
- Section 8 details the recommendations from the evaluation.

The following Annexes are attached to this report: Terms of Reference, list of persons met, and a general assessment of project progress.

2. PROJECT CONCEPT, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1 Background

The Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho project was initially conceived in 1994. It was premised on: (a) the presence of globally significant plant diversity, unique habitats and high endemism in the Drakensberg-Maloti montane mountain region, 70% of which lies in the Kingdom of Lesotho; (b) the very low proportion (0.4%) of the country under formal conservation protection; and (c) the perceived threat to these floral and habitat values by overgrazing, over-frequent burning and, in the case of wetlands, by erosion within an open access system of land tenure operational in the country.

The CMBSL project provided two distinct but complimentary interventions. The first was to work with the government and community groups to create a network of small protected sites targeting specific biodiversity values. The second intervention was to address conservation more broadly through the incorporation of biodiversity conservation in rangeland management systems already operational in the country. Through this second intervention, a number of range management areas would be established in the project area. To achieve these objectives, the project envisioned working at both policy level and local implementation level through the provision of “incentives and regulatory systems within central district and community organisations”. (CMBSL Project Document). CMBSL adopted an approach to conservation that recognised community responsibility, involvement and ownership in project management. This approach was never aimed to designate land for the establishment of further national parks, but to see if highland communities could be encouraged to regulate their use of biological resources for conservation purposes, and to obtain some return for this through income from such activities as ecotourism.

The project selected Quthing District in the southern highlands as its focus and later spread to cover Mohale’s Hoek and Qacha’s Nek districts. The focus on the southern highlands was so that there would be no geographical overlap with the other two large Maloti projects described below. In addition, communities in the southern highlands were poorer and often ignored in development activities. In this case therefore the project was complimentary to development programmes that were being implemented in other parts of the country.

At the time the project was being developed, the capacity for conservation in Lesotho was low with much of the knowledge regarding biodiversity in the country being held by institutions and individuals residing outside the country. In other countries in southern Africa, this issue of institutional capacity weakness is usually bridged by engaging non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to collaborate with government in implementing programmes. These civil society entities usually have greater capacity as they can pay more attractive salaries. The NGO base in Lesotho is generally weaker than is found in other countries in the region, therefore this strategy might not have worked effectively in the case of CMBSL implementation. The only NGO that availed itself to the project was the Quthing Wildlife Development Trust which has continued to support one of the most successful CMBSL initiated activities at Tsatsane in Quthing district.

At the same time as the CMBSL project was being formulated, there were other ongoing and relevant conservation initiatives in the country. The country had formulated a National Environmental Action Plan and an Environmental Policy. The development of the Lesotho Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, also funded by GEF, was being carried out at the same time as CMBSL. The strategy, which was adopted after the period of implementation of the CMBSL, clearly lays out the legal and institutional framework for conservation in the country. It also highlights the unique components of biodiversity and threats to them. The Lesotho Highlands Water Project that was funded by the World Bank was also under implementation and creating some small protected areas and botanic gardens around the dams they were developing. At the same time, the EU was developing a Drakensberg-Maloti Mountain Conservation Programme in 1995/96, which in many respects formed the basis for the World Bank/GEF funded Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP), which commenced in Lesotho in early 2003. Both these initiatives were located in the north of the country. At the same time, the newly-created National Environment Secretariat (NES), which then fell under the Prime Minister's Office, was becoming fully established and raising the profile of environmental issues in the country. It is instructive to note that UNDP was providing a lot of support for the establishment of NES at this time.

Although the initiatives highlighted above provided a useful baseline and input into the design of CMBSL, they did not constitute a consolidated national environment programme for Lesotho that would have provided a context for the project. In addition, these initiatives did not constitute an assessment of the situation at local level where the project was to be implemented. The project could have benefited from comprehensive biodiversity, social and economic analyses in the southern mountains of Lesotho to establish a baseline for measuring progress towards realisation of project objectives.

At this time there were a number of issues that were affecting the development space in the country in addition to those relating to weak institutional capacity addressed above. The period from 1997 to 2000 was one of high political tension in the country that ended with violent civic action that required the intervention of forces from neighbouring countries to resolve the situation. The country also experienced a severe drought which resulted in a major rural food crisis. At the same time the HIV/AIDS pandemic became a major issue for both government and donors thereby diverting resources that would have been directed at conservation and re-directing them towards mitigating those emerging national problems. These developments affected the political and social context within which the project was implemented. There was a need therefore for a comprehensive assessment of this context to obtain an understanding of what effect it might have on the project as well as to establish a

baseline against which progress was to be measured. There is no documentation to show that any pre-project development assessments were conducted to establish the social, economic and political context within which the project was to be implemented. In other words, project targets were set without a baseline against which success was to be measured. While it is not clear what effect these “context” issues had on both project implementation and achievement of results, it is possible that some of the administrative challenges the project faced were as a result of this background.

In 1995 the project received a GEF PDF A allocation of USD 25,000 for project design and proposal formulation. The project proposal was approved by the GEF Council in October 1997, and the Project Document signed in April 1999 for a five-year period (estimated to run until mid-2004). The project officially commenced on 11 May 1999. Some staff, including the first National Project Manager (NPM) and at least one District Officer (the Economist) were in place by mid-1999. After the resignation of the first NPM in December 1999, the Biodiversity Officer in NES assumed the responsibility of the NPM until a substantive manager was recruited in November 2000. Because of delays in recruitment of a replacement NPM and of the first Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), the project suffered a marked loss of momentum and direction. The full complement of key personnel including a Chief Technical Advisor, and a National Project Manager was only in place by January 2001.

2.2 Project Objectives and Activities

The project was an attempt to address the threats to globally-significant biodiversity by involving community groups in its conservation. The project sought to learn how to apply the community-based approach from other initiatives and could therefore be considered to have been experimental in that it was breaking new ground in the context of Lesotho. Community based natural resources management (CBNRM) can be defined as follows: “Community-based natural resources management is a process whereby local people and communities are organized to implement natural resources management activities. It evolved from the participatory development paradigm which sees people as both the means and end of the development process. As such, CBNRM is often contraposed to the government-centered or top-down approach wherein government officials and agencies take on the lead role in formulating policies, choosing appropriate management technologies and implementing natural resources management programs. The community-based approach rests on the premise that people who actually use a given resource, and who gain first-hand knowledge of such resource from their daily interaction with the natural environment, are in the best position to protect and manage it. CBNRM thus asserts the principle of local community control and initiative while recognizing the importance of institutional and policy contexts in influencing its performance in harnessing local resources and using them productively, equitably and sustainably to meet community needs.” (CBNRM Resource Centre 2005).

It is instructive to note that community based approaches to conservation were receiving a lot of attention across the southern Africa region with flagship programmes such as the Regional Natural Resources Management Project made up of the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) in Zimbabwe, Administrative Management and Design (ADMADE) in Zambia and the Botswana Natural Resources Management Project (BNRMP). The CMBSL project was therefore structured to learn from these well-established initiatives. The basis for this was however questionable as conditions on the ground in Lesotho were different from those in the other countries. While Botswana,

Zambia and Zimbabwe had large faunal species that formed the basis of their programmes (for photo safaris and hunting), the southern mountains in Lesotho offered little more than beautiful scenery which could hardly have been considered to be the basis for a viable eco-tourism initiative comparable to those other countries. Although the scenery and the floral components may have been attractive the possible returns from investing in a fully fledged CBNRM programme on the basis of managing these vistas were always going to be uncomparable to those in the other countries making these experiences not directly transferable.

The Project Document states that the project was to cover "... two distinct but complementary interventions". The first is to work with government and communities to create a network of small protected sites, targeting specific biodiversity values. The second objective addresses conservation more broadly, by seeking to incorporate biodiversity values in rangeland management systems. This will require inputs to policy review as well as developing incentive and regulatory systems within central, district and community organisations."

The overall project goal was "To ensure the conservation and sustainable utilisation of unique alpine and montane landscapes in Lesotho". The intermediate objectives of the project were stated as:

- A. A planned and rational network of Protected Areas is in place which adequately covers the extent of Lesotho's biodiversity.
- B. Improved resource management systems reduce the rate of biodiversity loss outside formal Protected Areas.

In May 2002 the project was "rephased" to make up for the initial implementation time lost at start up. A projected project end date of May 2005 was proposed and project objectives modified to the following:

- A. A planned and rational network of Protected Areas is in place, which adequately covers the extent of Lesotho's biodiversity.
- B. Improved grazing and resources management systems resulting in reduced rate of biodiversity loss outside formal Protected Areas.
- C. An integrated bioregional approach (also trans-border) to biodiversity conservation and watershed management is established.
- D. A functional project organisation, management and co-ordination system for the implementation of biodiversity conservation programs established at central, district and community levels.

The transboundary aspects of biodiversity conservation in the southern mountain region were thus made more explicit, while project implementation also became an objective.

The Terminal Evaluation was done against these revised Objectives.

There were also four stated Outcomes:

1. A more complete Protected Area network for biodiversity, managed with local people.

2. Mechanisms in place to protect biodiversity resources outside Protected Areas and participatory range management area plans implemented. It is expected that the policy regime will have been reviewed to reinforce these community initiatives.
3. A stronger network of biodiversity institutions in place at regional, national, district and community levels.
4. An integrated bio-regional approach to biodiversity conservation and watershed management in place to reinforce the integration of community development, biodiversity conservation and watershed management.

The project was to be implemented through twenty-two activities as indicated in Table 4. Project achievements have been evaluated against each of these activities.

2.3 Project Institutional Framework

The project was located in MTEC, and implemented under the guidance of the National Environment Secretariat. The formal Executing Agency was the Government of Lesotho under what was then the evolving National Execution (NEX) modalities, whereby NES was executing the project on behalf of the Government of Lesotho. To assist NES to do this, the project had a provision for the engagement of a locally recruited National Project Manager (NPM) who was responsible for the management of the project and reporting directly to NES. The NPM was to be supported by an internationally recruited Chief Technical Advisor and Environmental Economist.

In addition to the management arrangements described above the project provided for the establishment of a National Steering Committee to oversee the execution of the project at policy level. It was made of senior project staff, UNDP CO, and representatives from the main collaborating government departments. More practical management and technical guidance was provided by a Project Management Committee which, however, did not seem to have ever been functional. The NSC was mirrored at district level where a district steering committee comprising representatives from relevant departments, individual projects, NGOs and community representatives was established to promote local coordination. The project also provided for collaboration with institutions in other sectors. These institutions included, at the time of design, the Range and Conservation Divisions of the Ministry of Agriculture (now both Departments under the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation), the National University of Lesotho at Roma, and NGOs such as the Quthing Wildlife Development Trust. NES was meant to provide project administrative oversight and co-ordination. The project CTA and NPM and other members of the Project Implementation Unit were based at NES. Other key stakeholder institutions were the Department of Forestry, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Local Government.

The UNDP Country Office in Maseru was responsible for disbursement of all funds through NEX, and for overall accounting to GEF. GEF input into the project was provided through the UNDP CO, mostly in the form of approvals for particular major expenditures. The UNDP/GEF Southern African Advisors based in Nairobi/ Pretoria also provided intermittent backstopping to the project. UNOPS in Nairobi had responsibility for recruitment of the two international staff and for procurement of external consultancies.

To improve on technical backstopping, a suggestion had been made at the time of project rephasing that a technical agency should be involved in (a) recruitment of international staff, and (b) providing technical input and oversight. The institution suggested at the time was The Mountain Institute (TMI) based in Virginia, USA. However, this suggestion was never implemented.

2.4 Project Budget

The overall project budget was estimated at USD 12,395,000 made up as follows:

Table 1: Project Financing Sources

| UNDP and 3 rd PARTY FINANCING | |
|--|---------------------|
| GEF | \$ 2,485,000 |
| Government | \$ 530,000 |
| Co financing (other donors) | \$ 9,380,000 |
| TOTAL | \$12,395,000 |

Source: CMBSL Project Document

Total GEF funding was for a total of USD 2,510,000 made up of USD 2,485,000 for project implementation and an additional USD 25,000 for the PDF A phase in 1995. The PDF A allocation is not included in the budget summary in the table above. Government contribution was to be met through in-kind contributions such as provision of office space and fuel for project vehicles.

2.5 Project Revision

Due to the delays in project start up that were experienced, the project was rephased in early 2002 with an extension of project lifespan to March 2005. At the same time, the project shifted focus through the expansion from two to four objectives through the addition of objectives focussing on bioregional conservation and project management. While consideration was given to the possible implications of this refocusing, no additional financial resources were secured to support the expanded project mandate. The addition of transboundary initiatives as an objective would have financial implications but no revision of the budget was made to reflect this despite the issue being pointed out. There seems to have been an understanding that the project would perhaps source more funds to address the financial shortage. This was unfortunately never attained. Attempts were made and proposals were written but they never came to fruition.

At the same time, the project scope was expanded to cover two additional districts with all the attendant institutional and administrative burdens. This had an effect of spreading the project too thinly over a large geographic area.

3.0 Project Management

A major feature that seems to have adversely affected project management was the lack of clarity regarding responsibility for project implementation. The Project Implementation Unit

model adopted for the project created unclear lines of responsibility as the PIU at times felt answerable to UNDP while NES had the overall responsibility for coordinating project activities. This was particularly so with the second CTA who spent a considerable amount of time working from the UNDP CO when in fact he was supposed to provide technical advisory services to the project and GoL. NES was also a new institution that did not have representation at district level. All matters regarding the project at this level were therefore left to the Project Implementation Unit through which district project officers (DPOs) were appointed. This dispersed leadership failed to provide clear direction and guidance to the project. Although NES was ultimately responsible for the project, the National Project Managers who were operationally responsible to NES, felt that they were UNDP employees. All PIU employees signed contracts with UNDP and therefore felt that they were UNDP employees. It was therefore possible for PIU staff to play both NES and UNDP against each other. This explains the fact that the second NPM is still seeking compensation from UNDP, whom he considers to have been his employer, for being dismissed from his job “unfairly.” It was in response to this that NES management ultimately decided to have all NEX funded project staff convert to GoL contract employees.

The project also suffered from a very high staff turnover. There were two CTAs in the space of four years and effectively four NPMs through the life of the project (2001-2004). At the time of the mid-term review, two of the three DPOs had been in post for less than 6 months. While the first CTA left to assume new duties with the United Nations in Nairobi, it was clear to the evaluators that some of the staff turnover was occasioned by personality differences between project staff and NES management. These differences resulted in at least one of the NPMs being relieved of his duties on the premise that he was underperforming. The net effect of the high staff turnover was that there was loss of institutional memory and lack of continuity in project implementation resulting in little progress on the ground.

Although the project had put in place an institutional framework for tracking implementation progress through national and district level steering committees, these committees did not seem to have much influence over limited implementation progress. The National Steering Committee for example expressed concern about the poor performance of one National Programme Manager but action to correct the situation was only taken after a very long time thereby compromising project performance. The performance of the National Steering Committee was also compromised by frequent changes in institutional representation at meetings, a situation that detracted from consistency.

The project also received very little technical backstopping from relevant UN agencies. UNOPS did not seem to have the requisite technical capacity to advise the project right from the beginning while the UNDP CO that was responsible for project oversight on behalf of GEF also had capacity limitations. The UNDP-GEF regional office at best provided intermittent support. As a result, no curative measures were taken when the project seemed to veer off course. A typical case in point was when the project was rephased and it moved from focussing on globally-significant biodiversity which was the justification for GEF support, to conservation of biological resources of significance to local communities. This move did not seem to be noted or questioned, apart from a brief mention in the report "Interim Assessment of Project Implementation Progress: October 2001" ("Experience that the project has gained so far seems to indicate that communities sometimes would like to conserve what they believe is flora and fauna that has significant biodiversity [sic] values at their local level and may not necessarily be of global significance. In this respect, it is probably prudent to

broaden biodiversity conservation to include aspects that are not necessarily of significance globally but are highly valued by local communities as worthwhile conserving."). In effect, this decision nullified the conservation concern that justified its support from GEF (conservation of "...globally significant plant diversity, with unique habitats and high endemism..."). This shift may have been more acceptable if it was more explicitly stated, and if project objectives were addressed later by transference of the findings to areas of greater significance, i.e. if a strategy were in place to link conservation at project sites to that at sites of significant conservation concern. However, neither of these was done. Another reason given for the change in focus was that CMBSL was, in effect, acting as a pilot for the larger GEF/World Bank Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Project then coming on stream, and needed to rapidly come up with clear lessons regarding community involvement and motivation. However, there is no evidence of CMBSL experience being taken on board when MDTP was eventually designed.

The experiences with project management under CMBSL point to the need for streamlining management systems for effective delivery of results. Both UNDP and GoL realised that the PIU model was not an effective project management model and have since adopted a strategy that integrates project management into government management systems. A current example of this system is the National Capacity Self Assessment Project (NCSA) also funded by UNDP whose project staff is embedded with NES staff report directly to line managers within the organisation. This way, capacity is built within government and will remain with government after projects close. This approach should be institutionalised as a management system for use with follow-on projects.

3.1 Country Ownership/Drivenness

Country ownership of programmes speaks to whether a programme addresses a national priority in addition to whether it is implemented by national stakeholders within the framework of on-going national programmes. The observation has been made earlier that CMBSL was premised on the need for the conservation of globally significant biodiversity in the southern mountains of Lesotho and the need to involve rural communities in the programme. Although at the time the project was initiated there was no real national natural resources management programme, issues of resource conservation and community participation were gaining increased currency within the country's development planning processes. A number of conservation initiatives had already been started in the north of the country.

Although NES was a relatively new government institution, it became the "institutional home" of the project. While there was some evidence of contestation for control of the project between the PIU and NES, ultimate responsibility for project implementation was ultimately with NES. Throughout the life of the project GoL continued to commit resources such as fuel for project vehicles and office space as well as staff that facilitated project implementation. Community groups also committed time and resources to the project effort while NGOs such as QWDT also entered into agreements with the project to implement some of its aspects. Even though little was achieved in the form of physical projects on the ground, a lot was done in the area of community mobilisation. Almost all community groups visited during the evaluation pointed to the fact that they had been willing to participate in project activities but had been let down by poor project management.

Most successful conservation programmes are usually driven by either institutions or individuals that lead the campaign for resource mobilisation and recruitment of community support and participation in the implementation of activities on the ground. The CAMPFIRE programme in Zimbabwe, for example, was led in the initial phase by Zimbabwe Trust, a local NGO and latter by the Campfire Association, a CBO based umbrella NGO that campaigned for increased community ownership over indigenous resources. These champions lobbied government for policy and legislative changes that resulted in community groups in Zimbabwe realising proprietary rights over the resources they lived with. Although there was community participation in CMBSL, the level of ownership over the process by these communities fell short of having the programme institutionalised within these communities as was the case in Zimbabwe. Without community ownership, it was difficult to see proposals for the gazettement of protected areas such as Letsa-la-Letsie through. NGO participation was also limited to intermittent and localised input from QWDT. There were therefore no clearly identifiable champions that advocated for CMBSL, either at CBO level or among civil society entities. Instead, the PIU, with its capacity limitations drove the process and when it was disbanded due to lack of funding, the project also collapsed. Had there been a champion for the project outside the project management structures, they could have carried on lobbying for continued government and donor support of the project as happened with CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe.

Country ownership and driveness was also compromised by the fact that the project went to implementation without the benefit of an assessment of the extent to which the biodiversity in the project area was under threat from over exploitation. Further there was no assessment of the capacity for local level management among the communities that were to be involved in project implementation. In short, there was little understanding of the technical foundations for the project, little appreciation of the technical limitations of the institutions that were to be involved in the project as well as little or no understanding of the social, political and economic contexts within which the project was to be implemented. There were perceived threats which motivated project proponents to develop CMBSL. A critical question that was not answered before project implementation was whether protecting biodiversity within the context of open access regimes would yield benefits to affected communities. If they were benefits to be realised, no assessment was made to establish whether these would be comparable to use values that existed on the ground. This would have been an important consideration as it would have indicated how the communities were probably going to react to the project. Rationally people would not deliberately choose an option that leads to reduction in welfare. It is therefore not entirely surprising that it was found necessary to introduce incentive measures to address community needs towards the end of the project. This issue still remains a challenge for Lesotho and all other countries where an open access regime operates. Clearly the challenge lies with the land tenure system that is characterised by this open access regime.

3.2 Stakeholder participation

A fundamental principle of the CMBSL project was that it would involve beneficiary communities in the planning and implementation of activities in line with trends that were taking place in other parts of the southern Africa region. In addition, a wide range of governmental and non-governmental institutions were to be involved in the process. This spread of stakeholders was structured into a number of institutions set up to move the process forward. The project set up various project management and guidance institutions such as

national and district level steering committees. These institutions however operated at varying levels of efficiency.

At national level, although the National Steering Committee (NSC), was supposed to ensure a sense of ownership and a means for co-ordinating project activities, it was evident that some members were not as committed to the process as others were. The performance of the NSC was therefore compromised as a result. At district level, the project seemed to have had a significant profile. District Steering Committees (DSC), chaired by the District Secretary, met regularly to review progress and to co-ordinate the activities of Government departments as regards the project. Also sitting on these committees were chiefs, local community leaders, NGOs, and representatives from participating communities. However, frustration was expressed by those community members interviewed regarding the lack of transparency in decision making under the project. In most cases decisions taken at district level received little consideration from the national level. There appears to have been very little link between national and district steering committees. In sum, the project seemed to have been driven more by the PIU (CTA and NPM and DPOs), a situation which resulted in the apparent contestation for control between the PIU and NES management and left communities waiting for the project to deliver development.

Departments such as Forestry and Range Management also played peripheral roles in project implementation despite the centrality of their mandates to the achievement of project objectives.

An area of concern identified by the evaluation team with regards to stakeholder participation was in connection with the participation of community groups in some aspects of project implementation. While community members were involved in project implementation to some extent, decisions regarding who attended training courses and community visits to other projects seemed to have been made by District Project Officers without the involvement of the affected communities. This caused a lot of tensions within communities and was interpreted as showing favouritism towards some members of the community in a project that was meant to be for the entire community. A case in point is what happened in Mapotsane where some members were nominated by the community to go on a study tour and were left behind on the day of departure having been replaced by other members that were chosen by the DPO. This issue still raises emotions when discussed in this community.

In addition, although all the three DSCs had a variety of stakeholders as their members, there was very poor NGO representation and those that were available such as QWDT were not actively involved in the project. QWDT had signed a contract with CMBSL for support of the construction of vulture restaurants at Tsatsane, but were frustrated when the promised financial resources were never made available with the exception of some fencing material that still remains unused. QWDT was meant to be the project partner from 1999. In 2004, when the project ended, nothing much had been done to consolidate that partnership.

3.3 Replication Approach

A number of lessons have emerged from the implementation of the CMBSL project. A major lesson that is discernible is that experimental projects of this nature need to be preceded by comprehensive pre feasibility analyses of the contexts within which they are to be implemented. A number of factors, including social and political instability, weak

institutional capacity at national level, weak governance structures for project management, a serious regional drought and the emergence of a serious HIV/AIDS pandemic were issues that affected the country at the time CMBSL was being conceptualised. These factors needed to be assessed during project design and factored into the final project. These issues are now being considered in the design of new GEF interventions. A major lesson has been that there is a need for stronger project oversight and support from UNDP which has resulted in the establishment of a delivery initiative in the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa specifically to provide monitoring and early warning services that identify problems with project implementation as they begin to occur.

The assessment of the evaluation team is that the CMBSL project spread itself too thinly across both issues and area resulting in it failing to produce results that could readily be replicated in other areas. With limited internal management capacity the project could not provide the necessary focus required to produce substantive results in any one place. Instead the project attempted to do “everything everywhere” with little impact on the ground. Despite this, the project was considered a pilot with regards to the involvement of community groups in the management of biodiversity in the context of a communal land management system. It was also expected to assist community groups with improved management of biodiversity outside the protected area system through sustainable utilisation of rangelands. The results from this pilot initiative were expected to yield results for replication to the rest of the country and to other parts of the region where community groups deal with similar environmental problem. Perhaps a useful approach for CMBSL would have been to develop a focussed intervention in a specific area of the country where results would be generated before expanding to new areas. Quthing district could have provided the area for this focus.

3.4 Cost Effectiveness

With the exception of those project sites where communities were involved in eco-tourism initiatives and have established lodges such as at Qobong and Tsatsane, the evaluation team did not find any physical projects on the ground at all the project sites visited. Areas where protected areas, community nature reserves and range management areas were to have been established were indicated by the communities but nothing was evident as having been done to physically develop these through project interventions. The network of protected areas or the improved biodiversity conservation outside protected areas that were intended to be established were therefore never established. What was evident was the increased levels of awareness of the need for biodiversity conservation among community groups. This was due to the fact that the project did indeed spend a considerable amount of time and money on awareness raising and training. The evaluation team’s assessment is that the project had generally failed to meet its basic objectives of establishing a network of protected areas, improving grazing and resource management and integrating a bioregional approach to resource management. GEF funding is normally targeted at promoting biodiversity conservation that would not otherwise be achieved without such funding. In the case of CMBSL, although resources were made available for this purpose, there is little evidence of quantifiable results having been achieved. It is also not clear whether the project managed to attract additional resources to those committed by GoL and GEF.

Annex 4 to this report shows a summary of project achievements between October 2002 and December 2004 when the project was closed. From this report it is clear that a lot of planned

activities were not implemented in the proposed time frame either due to lack of capacity or lack of financial resources.

CMBSL was an experimental project in Lesotho that targeted resource conservation for purposes of promoting community based approaches. The project used lessons from other community-based initiatives to inform its processes. Unfortunately the experiences from these examples could not be used to establish whether the project was cost-effective when compared with these initiatives as they were founded on very different sets of parameters. The team therefore found it difficult to benchmark the project experiences against those of other projects in the region.

Another aspect of lack of cost effectiveness is reflected in budget realignments conducted in the later stages of the project. The budget revision conducted in December 2003 (Revision N) resulted in realignment of resource allocation in favour of administration and personnel at the expense of activity implementation. Administration and staff costs were raised to almost 50% of the project costs for the remainder of the project, a situation that prompted NES management to call for a re-evaluation of the need for expensive international staff on the project.

3.5 Linkages with other interventions within the sector

While CMBSL could be considered to have been a pilot in community level participatory biodiversity management initiatives in Lesotho, it failed to cultivate linkages with other programmes that were developed at the same time as it was being rolled out. Of particular concern was the apparent lack of coordination between two GEF-funded projects, MDTP and CMBSL, with both attempting to achieve very similar things in overlapping geographic areas. Each project had its own DSC, with very similar membership, but with little apparent co-ordination.

CMBSL made little effort to link to other national initiatives. In addition to the lack of linkage with MDTP highlighted above, no effort was made to link with initiatives such as SABONET (Southern Africa Botanical Network), also a GEF project, which could have provided inputs relating to botanical inventories of the target areas. The Southern African Biodiversity Support Programme (SABSP), also GEF funded, had limited funding available for developing conservation initiatives that fell within certain criteria. CMBSL could readily have developed a proposal to utilise that source of support. The project should have used these other initiatives to fulfil its objectives, and likewise NES, through which they were being co-ordinated, should have enforced collaboration.

3.6 Financial Planning

Financial planning for this project was one of the weakest aspects of project management under CMBSL. It developed into a crisis towards the end resulting in the abrupt operational closure of the project in December 2004 when financial resources ran out. For a long time before the Mid Term Evaluation, UNDP CO had been unable to provide up-to-date statements on the state of the project finances. The problem was made worse by the introduction of a new project management system throughout the UNDP system. This system saw UNDP transition from FIM to ATLAS during the currency of the project. Due to

limited capacity, it took the UNDP CO in Maseru a long time to effectively institutionalise this new management system.

Financial management and control systems regarding the project were very weak with no reconciliations between accounts at UNDP CO and the project office. This resulted in both the UNDP CO and the implementing agency committing to an exit strategy for the project on the mistaken understanding that there was up to US\$ 500,000 of funding still available on the basis of an assessment of the project funds conducted by UNDP CO in September 2004. It was on the basis of this assessment that the Mid Term Evaluation recommended a scaling down of project activities to achieve meaningful impact in some exemplary project areas. Unfortunately this assessment had not factored in expenses incurred by UNOPS. When these were posted, the project ran out of funds. On the 24th November 2004 UNDP reported to the government that the project was only left with USD 22,000 and no new commitments could be made. Despite this, a review of all audit reports and according to our findings as evaluators, there is no evidence of any financial mulcificence under CMBSL.

An analysis of annual expenditures reveals that towards the end of the project considerable amounts of money were spent on salaries for international staff. In 2004 (the year of Mid Term Evaluation) almost USD 500,000 was spent by the project. Although most of this money was spent locally (USD 308,754.15), UNOPS spent USD 232,451.87 which accounts for 47% of all the annual expenditure in that year. Of the money spent by UNOPS, USD 121,471.36 (52%) was for the salaries of the CTA and the Environmental Economist while the rest went into the other ancillary international dimensions of the project. In that year, 70% of all expenditures went into international consultants and administrative support (Table 2). The Mid Term Evaluators had noted this anomalous distribution and had raised a caution that perhaps the remaining funds would not be sufficient for the required activities.

Another problem could be connected with the USD 138,895.86 that is reflected under miscellaneous in Table 2. The rule of thumb is that the miscellaneous line item should be the smallest. In 2004 it was the second largest after international consultants. Our understanding is that this was again a problem that was connected with moving to ATLAS system. We are informed that most activities were charged under sundry which became difficult to un-bundle at this late stage of project implementation.

The Mid Term Evaluators had recommended that the fencing at Letseng-la-Letsie be reviewed with a view to spending money on some other exit strategy activities if found necessary. After the evaluation both the UNDP and the government decided that fencing in that area had to continue because they attached a lot of significance to it. A contractor was engaged but the fencing was never completed. Some partial work was done with the materials amounting to M730,000 that had been bought. When the fencing stopped considerable quantities of materials were left at the project site.

Some of the fencing materials were apparently vandalized by the local communities once they were left unattended at the project site. Considerable quantities of fencing materials and cement, that is now unusable, were moved to the Army Base in Ongelos Nek for safe keeping, where they still sit today.

The community members who were employed as labourers claim that they are still owed some money by the contractor who left before finishing the tasks he had been contracted to

perform. This became a source of community disenchantment that is still evident today and threatens to undermine follow on conservation initiatives in the area due to lack of cooperation by community groups. The engagement of community members as workers on a project aimed at benefiting them also detracted from engendering ownership over the process as communities considered the fencing initiative as a source of employment.

Table 2: CMBSL Annual Expenditures as Reflected in the Signed Combined Delivery Reports

| RECONCILIATION OF PROJECT EXPENDITURES | | |
|--|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| TOTAL PROJECT FUNDS | | 2,485,000.00 |
| 1998 PDF | 92,156.06 | |
| 1999 as per certified CDR ¹ | 153,162.13 | |
| 2000 as per certified CDR | 180,088.85 | |
| 2001 as per certified CDR | 279,283.76 | |
| 2002 as per certified CDR | 476,696.85 | |
| 2003 as per certified CDR | 729,377.51 | |
| 2004 as per certified CDR | 499,124.08 | |
| Total expenditures: 1998 – 2004 | 2,409,889.24 | |
| Total project funds less total expenditures | | 75,111.42 |
| Remaining funds according to UNOPS | | 67,635.20 ² |
| Difference | | 7,475.56 ³ |

¹ The CDR for each year includes NEX and UNOPS expenditures

² This is the remaining balance as per UNOPS Project Expenditure Report as at 31 December 2004

³ Difference could maybe due to exchange rates as UNDP and UNOPS use different systems

| Budget line | 19984 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | TOTAL |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| International Consultants | | - | 9,349.00 | 89,889.00 | 78,261.00 | 337,544.00 | 215,277.59 | 730,320.59 |
| Administrative Support | | 21,384.89 | 44,616.22 | 38,134.06 | 30,749.21 | 47,899.09 | 133,137.53 | 315,921.00 |
| Monitoring & Evaluation | | 675.42 | 1,582.78 | 5,880.50 | 4,158.31 | 7,081.83 | 313.97 | 19,692.81 |
| Missions costs | | - | 13,972.89 | (2,624.00) | 6,199.00 | - | - | 17,547.89 |
| National Consultants | | 27,105.56 | 51,059.49 | 55,839.63 | 37,901.89 | 49,847.53 | 48663.77 | 221,754.10 |
| Contracts | | - | - | 56.70 | 24,695.10 | 101,956.68 | 35370.79 | 210,743.04 |
| Training | | 9,451.86 | 16,316.65 | 27,564.20 | 195,052.71 | 153,819.93 | (98,958.82) | 303,246.53 |
| Equipment | | 14,323.05 | 26,865.88 | 47,144.51 | 63,352.12 | 66,185.88 | 6,033.73 | 223,905.17 |
| Miscellaneous | | 5,591.98 | 16,325.94 | 7,310.46 | 51,585.51 | 13,762.41 | 5138,895.86 | 233,472.16 |
| Exchange differential | | - | - | 10,088.70 | (15,258.00) | (48,719.84) | 20,389.66 | (33,499.48) |
| Invalid sub-lines | | 74,629.37 | - | - | - | - | - | 74,629.37 |
| BUDGET TOTAL | 92,156.06 | 153,162.13 | 180,088.85 | 279,283.76 | 476,696.85 | 729,377.51 | 499,124.08 | 2,409,889.24 |

Table 3: CMBSL Consolidated Financial Expenditures by Budget Line

4 This is the amount for PDF A

5 In 2004 when ATLAS was first used, due to the lack of familiarity of the new system, a lot of expenditures were charged to sundry



UN

UN Development Programme
Report ID: UNGL143a

Combined Delivery Report With Encumbrance

Page 1 of 1
Run Time: 23-09-2005 04:09:30

Selection Criteria :

Business Unit : LSO10
Period : Jan-Dec (2004)
Selected Award Id : 00013401
Selected Fund Code : 62000

| | | | | |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Award Id : 00013401 MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY IN LESOT | Period : Jan-Dec (2004) | | | |
| Project # : 00013401 MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY IN LESOT | Impl. Partner : 01855 National Execution Lesotho | | | |
| Location : | | | | |
| Govt Disb | UNDP Disb | UN Agencies | Encumbrance | Total Exp |

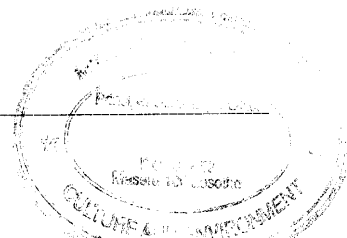
Fund : 62000 (GEF Voluntary Contribution)

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 56025 - Realized Gains | 0.00 | - 257.98 | 0.00 | 0.00 | - 257.98 |
| 61305 - Salaries - IP Staff | 0.00 | 0.00 | 6,309.00 | 0.00 | 6,309.00 |
| 63405 - Learning Costs | 0.00 | 12,043.15 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 12,043.15 |
| 71105 - Salaries - ALD | 0.00 | 0.00 | 121,471.36 | 0.00 | 121,471.36 |
| 71110 - Medical Insurance - ALD | 0.00 | 0.00 | 2,530.00 | 0.00 | 2,530.00 |
| 71115 - Contr to Jt Staff Pens Fd-ALD | 0.00 | 0.00 | 28,997.22 | 0.00 | 28,997.22 |
| 71130 - Mission Allowance - ALD | 0.00 | 0.00 | 13,242.60 | 0.00 | 13,242.60 |
| 71135 - Appoint/Sep Cost Incl Trvl-ALD | 0.00 | 0.00 | 22,720.80 | 0.00 | 22,720.80 |
| 71160 - Other Personnel costs ALD(A&T) | 0.00 | 0.00 | 9,229.78 | 0.00 | 9,229.78 |
| 71205 - Intl Consultants-Sht Term-Tech | 0.00 | 31,278.05 | 3,818.83 | 0.00 | 35,096.88 |
| 71210 - Intl Consultants-Sht Term-Supp | 0.00 | 273.91 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 273.91 |
| 71305 - Local Consult-Sht Term-Tech | 0.00 | 25,867.17 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 25,867.17 |
| 71310 - Local Consult-Short Term-Supp | 0.00 | 22,796.60 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 22,796.60 |
| 71405 - Service Contracts-Individuals | 0.00 | 133,137.53 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 133,137.53 |
| 71605 - Travel Tickets-International | 0.00 | 3,968.96 | 6,807.87 | 0.00 | 10,776.83 |
| 71615 - Daily Subsistence Allow-Intl | 0.00 | 9,494.09 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 9,494.09 |
| 71620 - Daily Subsistence Allow-Local | - 124,966.50 | 10,204.59 | 0.00 | 0.00 | - 114,761.91 |
| 71635 - Travel - Other | 0.00 | 313.97 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 313.97 |
| 72420 - Land Telephone Charges | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 72425 - Mobile Telephone Charges | 0.00 | 23.90 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 23.90 |
| 72435 - E-mail-Subscription | 0.00 | 175.65 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 175.65 |
| 72445 - Common Services-Communications | 0.00 | 0.00 | 105.75 | 0.00 | 105.75 |
| 72505 - Stationery & other Office Supp | 0.00 | 487.34 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 487.34 |
| 72510 - Publications | 0.00 | 196.23 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 196.23 |
| 73410 - Maint, Oper of Transport Equip | 0.00 | 5,044.86 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 5,044.86 |
| 74110 - Audit Fees | 0.00 | 7,723.74 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 7,723.74 |
| 74310 - Contributions to JIU | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 74410 - Charges on Fin Completed Projs | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 74515 - Claims and Adjustments | 0.00 | 190.97 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 190.97 |
| 74525 - Sundry | 82,884.56 | 23,598.11 | 17,218.66 | 0.00 | 123,701.33 |
| 75105 - Facilities & Admin - Implement | 0.00 | 503.82 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 503.82 |
| 75110 - Facilities & Admin - Services | 0.00 | 1,041.85 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1,041.85 |
| 76125 - Realized Loss | 0.00 | 20,647.64 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 20,647.64 |
| Total for Fund 62000 | - 42,081.94 | 308,754.15 | 232,451.87 | 0.00 | 499,124.08 |
| Total for Project : 00013401 | - 42,081.94 | 308,754.15 | 232,451.87 | 0.00 | 499,124.08 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Award Total : | - 42,081.94 | 308,754.15 | 232,451.87 | 0.00 | 499,124.08 |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|

Signed By : _____

Date : _____



4. Monitoring and Evaluation

CMBSL was developed without initial assessments of the social and economic environment in Lesotho which would have provided for the definition of a baseline against which progress towards achievement of project objectives would be measured. In addition, although a Logical Framework with activities, outputs and objectively verifiable indicators was developed at the time of project design, no comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan was developed for the project until 2002 after the first CTA assumed duty. Up until this time project implementation went ahead without a clear monitoring plan. In his Inception Report of 2001, the CTA observes that “there were no workplans or budget available to date, no systematic progress reports except those from the DPO Quthing, and no indicators shown for monitoring.” Detailed four-year workplans covering the period 2002 to 2005 were subsequently developed for the three districts. These plans included lists of objectively verifiable indicators, means of verification, assumptions and risks for each of the 21 activities identified for the project. Even then no detailed annual workplans were developed leaving project management without tools for use in tracking progress with implementation in the short term.

Another shortcoming with regards to Monitoring and Evaluation was that although the project established a National Steering Committee (NSC) and District Steering Committees (DSCs), these committees were generally weak with the NSC failing to follow up on lack of progress with implementation that was reported. Without a benchmark, it was also difficult for these committees to track progress.

When the first CTA left the project in September 2002, he reported that the project was underperforming with an approximate achievement of 30% and suggested remedial measures that should be taken if performance were to improve. Critical among his recommendations was that the CTA should spend more time in the field advising field teams on project implementation. He further suggested that the CTA should closely supervise consultants in the field. Despite these recommendations, the CTA that was appointed after him spent most of his time at UNDP providing only marginal service to the project. It is not clear to the Evaluators why it was considered necessary for the CTA to be located at UNDP. This disconnected him from the project which was his core business and caused a lot of friction between him and other members of the PIU as well as NES management. Although UNDP CO claim that the CTA spent time at UNDP because he was also responsible for advising management there on various aspects of project management, this view was not shared by principals at NES who considered him to have deserted his duties.

After joining the project in February, 2003, this new CTA initiated an internal evaluation of the progress of the project. The conclusions of that process were in agreement with those mentioned by the previous CTA in his End of Mission Report. These were that only about 30% of the project intended scope of work had been achieved with 40% of the budget used and further that the project still had major issues with community mobilization on the ground in almost all the project sites and that none of the intended protected areas were actually established and functional on the ground. This ought to have been an early warning that something was wrong with the way things were going.

It has been mentioned earlier that another method of monitoring used by the project was site visits. Although these visits were done by all key players (CTA, NPM, UNDP, NES), they all seem to have been haphazard and not targeted. The Evaluators have not been able to establish any systematic workplan that outlines site visitations by all these key players. On an *ad hoc* basis certain areas were visited but nowhere does it appear that follow up visits were planned to backstop the field officers on the ground in a coordinated manner. This lack of close supervision of field officers by individuals that were charged with oversight responsibility seems to have been a significant cause of failure to detect warnings that CMBSL was not heading in the right direction.

The National Steering Committee (NSC) and District Steering Committees (DSCs) noted on many occasions that the project was not achieving its intended objectives on the ground. Cases in point relate to the following: the fencing issue at Letšeng-la-Letsie and its associated problems and the contractual arguments between NUL-CONSULS and CMBSL management. On the latter, the NSC had even decided that the contract with NUL-CONSULS be terminated but the government rescinded that decision. In the end, NUL-CONSULS was unable to deliver the baseline studies that were expected from it which were a critical component in ensuring that the project focussed on biodiversity protection.

The Evaluators therefore conclude that the project suffered from poor monitoring and evaluation by all that were charged with oversight responsibility. It is important to note that tracking progress with biodiversity projects is an extremely difficult process requiring clearly defined baselines against which such progress can be measured. All future projects should therefore be preceded by baseline surveys that form the basis for project monitoring. In addition, project implementation should never be allowed to proceed without a clearly defined monitoring and evaluation plan in the form of both long term and short term targets.

4.1 Role of UN Agencies

The CMBSL project was funded by GEF. UNDP, through the Country Office had administrative and supervisory responsibilities over the project on behalf of GEF. All project funds were channelled through this office which also placed the onus of accounting on it. As a disbursement and accounting office, UNDP thus had the responsibility, on behalf of GEF, to oversee the project. In that capacity, UNDP was involved in all key decisions that were taken on the project. UNDP was represented in the NSC and there was regular communication between the Resident Representative and Deputy Resident Representative and the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture which housed the project. On a day-to-day basis, oversight over the project within UNDP CO rested with the Energy and Environment Unit while other units provided support services such as financial administration. In this capacity, the Energy and Environment unit participated in all NSC meetings and also participated in monitoring visits to project sites.

UNOPS in Nairobi were responsible for recruiting and administering the contracts of internationally recruited staff and for procurement of external consultancies.

In addition to providing financial resources for the project, GEF also provided intermittent technical input into project implementation through the Regional Advisor's office in Pretoria.

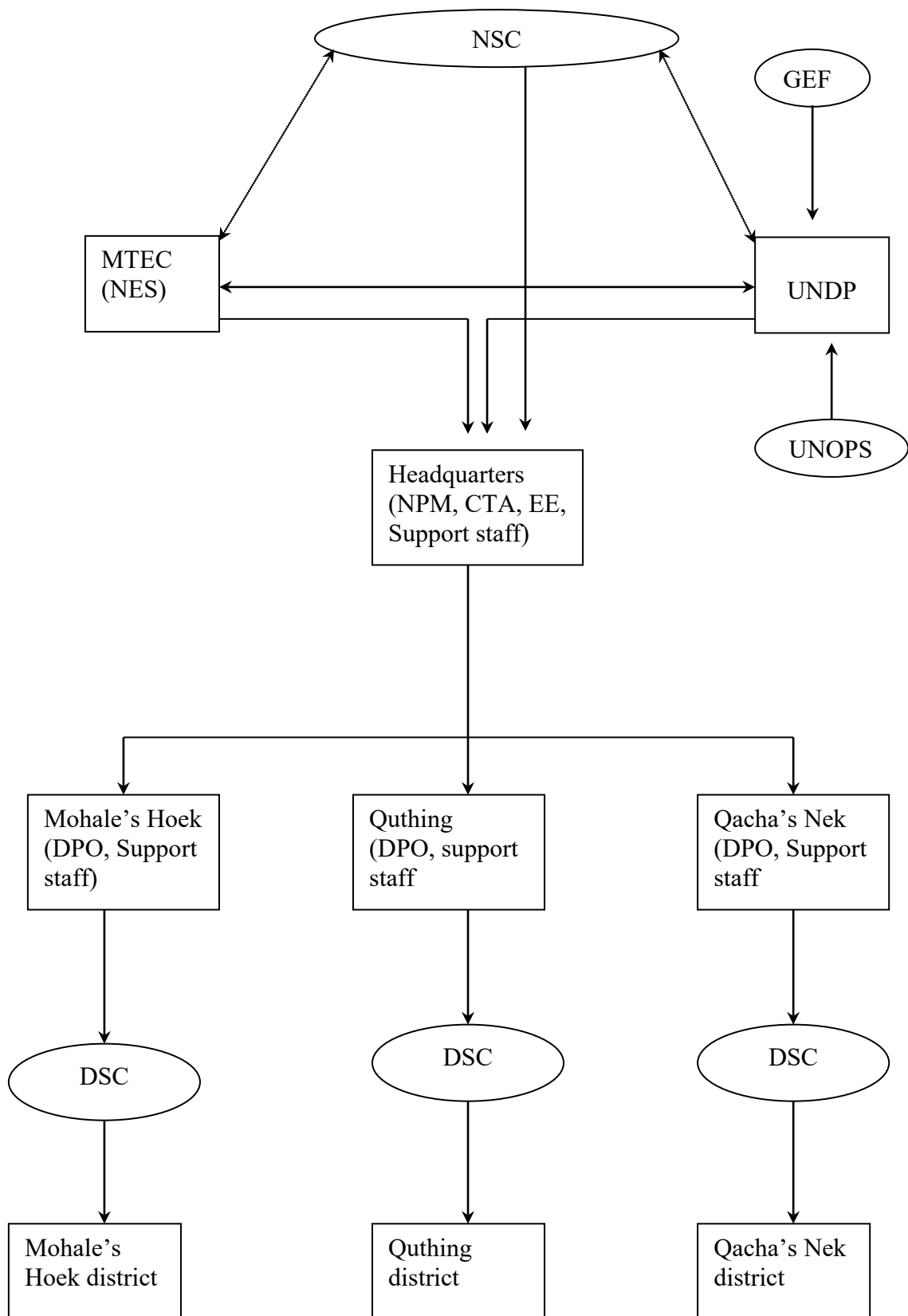
While there were some cases where it appeared as if the UNDP CO was taking unilateral decisions regarding project administration, it is important to note that project management responsibility was shared with the GoL who were the custodians of the project. The Energy and Environment Unit had limited staff capacity with only the Sustainable Development Advisor and one other Programme Officer. With this limited capacity, the CO could at best only provide advice to government with whom the responsibility for making final decisions regarding programmatic issues rested.

It was in this spirit of collaboration that decisions were taken to change the financial disbursement modalities from the advance system to direct payment when problems with financial management became evident. In the initial phase of project management, contracts for all PIU staff members were issued through UNDP but these were reviewed and converted to GoL contracts when it was felt that this was the most suitable arrangement. UNDP CO has therefore worked closely with GoL principals to improve on administrative arrangements for this and other projects that have been supported. This spirit of collaboration will need to be nurtured into the future as UNDP and the GoL negotiate additional support for programmes of support in the environment and other sectors.

4.2 Coordination and Operational Issues

CMBSL followed the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) model. The PIU was a functional unit with staff in Maseru at the headquarters and in the districts (Fig. 1). All the three districts had functional offices that were supported by the DSCs. A number of problems have been experienced with this management model especially with regards to capacity building. PIUs assume lives of their own and become discrete management units for projects. When projects are closed, PIUs also wind up and do not get integrated into government entities that they provide services to. This results in little or no capacity enhancement within recipient governments. CMBSL was a classic example of what happens with the PIU model as no project management capacity was left within NES at the close of the project. A lesson from this experience is that new project management modalities should include integrating technical advisory units within government entities to ensure sustainability of programmes after termination of external support. UNDP Lesotho has started introducing this project management approach in a number of projects that they are support in the country.

Figure 1: Project Implementation and coordination model



5.0 Attainment of Objectives

CMBSL was setup as a biodiversity conservation project. The first Objective was to establish a network of protected areas in recognition of the fact that Lesotho's various landscapes are poorly represented in the few protected areas that the country had established. When CMBSL was conceptualised, Lesotho had only 0.4% of its land area under formal protection at Sehlabathebe National Park, Masitise Nature Reserve, Tsehlanyane National Park and the Bokong Nature Reserve. The second objective was to improve resource management systems to reduce the loss of biodiversity outside formal protected areas. Although these objectives were latter amended to include a bioregional approach to resource management this did not necessarily move the project away from its conservation goal. An innovation introduced with the project was the intended involvement of local communities in the programme which would see the introduction of protected area management within the context of communal resource management. The following outcomes were expected at the end of the project:

- A more complete Protected Area network for biodiversity, managed with local people.
- An integrated bio-regional approach to biodiversity conservation and watershed management in place to reinforce the integration of community development, biodiversity conservation and watershed management.
- Mechanisms in place to protect biodiversity resources outside Protected Areas and participatory range management area plans implemented. This outcome was predicated upon a review of the policy regime to reinforce these community initiatives.
- A stronger network of biodiversity institutions in place at regional, national, district and community levels, and

A total of twenty-two activities were to be implemented to achieve these objectives and outcomes over the duration of the project. An institutional infrastructure, including a PIU housed within NES, a National Steering Committee and District Steering Committees in the three project districts was established to implement the project. Table 4 below summarises project achievements as measured against the stated objective and intended outcomes.

5.1 Summary of the Overall Project Achievements

Table 4: Project Achievements against Objectives

| OBJECTIVES | FINDINGS | RATING |
|---|--|--------|
| PURPOSE A: A PLANNED AND RATIONAL NETWORK OF PROTECTED AREAS IS IN PLACE, WHICH ADEQUATELY COVERS THE EXTENT OF LESOTHO'S BIODIVERSITY | | U |
| A.1 Implementing institutions empowered to support the development of PAs, CNRs & RMAs in Lesotho | No evidence of strengthening institutions except for two MSc degrees in Range Management that were never necessarily applied to project activities. Because the project used the PIU model, it did not build any capacity within NES as all project staff have left. None were | U |

| | | |
|--|---|----------|
| | absorbed. None form the staff compliment of the newly established NES offices in the districts. | |
| A.2 Knowledge (including indigenous) on BD generated through research activities | Limited research knowledge available (birds, mammals, flora). No evidence of application of indigenous knowledge. Baseline studies were done towards the end of the project. Some were completed while others were partially completed– some still outstanding. NUL was not capacitated to act as a hub or repository of knowledge as the project required. Data on economic valuation was available and some analysis done. None of this knowledge was applied substantively to project activities. | U |
| A.3 Local communities empowered with increased knowledge on sustainable use of BD within their areas | Perhaps the most successful aspect of the project even though patchy in nature. Awareness was created among communities through training and study tours. Some study tours caused tensions within communities though. Selection to participate on study tours problematic. Nothing much happened after all the sensitization with communities “left high and dry”. | MS |
| A.4 Alternative livelihood systems based mainly on ecotourism enterprises developed | Some ecotourism & other income generating projects identified. Ecotourism consultancy was done identifying potential. Some communities have constructed basic facilities, with Tsatsane community hosting tourist at the moment. This is the only exemplary community that the project. Limited involvement of private sector but some interest especially with encouragement of NGOs such as QWDT. The limited private sector involvement is also connected to the Tsatsane ecotourism activities whereby they linked their marketing to that of Malealea Lodge. | MS |
| PURPOSE B: IMPROVED GRAZING AND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS RESULTING IN REDUCED RATE OF BIODIVERSITY LOSS OUTSIDE FORMAL PROTECTED AREAS | | U |
| B.1 BD-relevant policies and regulations developed, revised and/or strengthened | No new significant policies or regulations were developed and none in place. Some assistance to increasing number of plant species. on regulatory legislation. Poor advocacy. | U |
| B.2 Regulatory agencies empowered with clear mandates and capacity for BD conservation and supported at district & national level | Still some institutional confusion on regulatory and implementing agencies. Moderately good cooperation at district level. Good training. | U |
| B.3 Local communities and CBOs (including Grazing Associations) empowered to regulate access to grazing resources or RMAs and utilization in project areas | A number of communities have formed CBOs e.g. VGAs but effectiveness in controlling grazing & resource use is not present. Many of these associations are not practically functional. Some members of some communities are eager and self-motivated; although still await promised development assistance. There are some impediments at the regulatory & political levels (chiefs/councils). Legal gazettement a major impediment. CMBSL had planned to help communities with this aspect but did not succeed because of poor effort. | U |
| B.4 Communities and local government authorities with increased knowledge on BD issues | Greatly increased awareness of biodiversity issues by communities & district authorities. Good participation and team work was observed especially in Qacha and Quthing. Mohale’s Hoek lacks behind although communities in this district are also eager. Poor support from the government especially the newly established Environment Office in the district. | MS |
| B.5 Viable projects prepared and approved for funding | At least 4 project proposals prepared (incl. Mosaqane water bottling, Qobong Botanical Garden). Viability of | U |

| | | |
|--|--|-----------|
| | all these projects was questionable although they apparently generated a lot of enthusiasm. Even the government was rallying behind them which should have provided the much needed political support. None were funded or implemented and, even the Qobong Botanical Garden which had been started has collapsed. The ecotourism potential at Qobong still remains and rondavels for that purpose were built by the community. Unfortunately the community organization has collapsed making it difficult to resuscitate that project. | |
| PURPOSE C: AN INTEGRATED BIOREGIONAL APPROACH (ALSO TRANS-BORDER) TO BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ESTABLISHED | | U |
| C.1 Network with other biodiversity projects within Lesotho established and strengthened | No significant networking with other institutions. Anticipated link with NUL collapsed over contractual disputes over baseline surveys. Poor attempts were made to resolve the issue and the relationship got strained. Some contact was made with MDTP, but relationship was never formalized. | U |
| C.2 Network with South Africa on cross-border biodiversity conservation established and strengthened | Links made to Peace Parks & SDTFCA, but never formalised. | U |
| C.3 Network with regional organizations established and strengthened | Not done | U |
| C.4 Methodologies for bioregional approaches developed and approved by the parties | Not done | U |
| C.5 Integrated bioregional plans implemented | Not done | U |
| PURPOSE D: A FUNCTIONAL PROJECT ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION SYSTEM FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED AT CENTRAL, DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY LEVELS | | MS |
| D.1 Project facilitation services operational at national and district level | Indeed the project was operational at the national level in Mophale's Hoek, Quthing and Qacha. Offices were established and staff recruited. There was high staff turnover though which significantly affected the impetus of the project. One of the major slacks of the project which probably affected its delivery was the fact that it was a biodiversity project that was not staffed with people who had expertise in biology and consequently biodiversity issues. This was one of the major drawbacks for this project. It seems poor attention was paid to the appropriateness of the office bearers in terms of qualification and experience. With that slack there was poor technical backstopping to the field staff by both the CTA and the NPM. It is probable that these key project personnel (CTA and NPM0 could not afford those services to the field staff because they also lacked the necessary skills. | S |
| D.2 Documents/guidelines prepared on project management and organization | Some documents were prepared but implementation was very weak and in some cases totally nonexistent. | U |
| D.3 Project staff and implementing agencies staff with increased knowledge on | Because this evaluation was done long after the project had ended, the evaluators were not able to speak to many project staff. Those that were interviewed showed | MS |

| | | |
|--|---|----------|
| project management and organization and BD conservation | considerably understanding of the issues. Staff in related institutions also showed considerable knowledge. Not possible to make judgment on project management and biodiversity organization. There are obvious capacity constraints at the national level as well as district level both material and human. | |
| D.4 Long-term project funding ensured | None | U |
| D.5 Project annual planning and budgeting system operational at national and district levels | Planning and budgeting systems were operational especially post 2002 with production of annual work-plans. Delays within NES/MTEC and there were problems at UNDP especially as regards up-to-date statements to the implementing agency and the donor. A lot of activities were planned but never implemented. | MS |
| D.6 Project monitoring and evaluation systems operational at all levels | With the exception of documents produced by the EE M&E was weak throughout. None of the structures and offices that were expected to monitor could deliver. This was one of the biggest problems of this project which resulted in absolutely no impact on the ground. Neither the implementing unit nor institutions charged with oversight seemed to conclusively realize that the project was heading for disaster. The wake up call seems to come only after the Mid Term Evaluation which was done too late. | U |
| D.7 Project procurement system operational at national and district levels | Procurement system operational, but kept changing. Delays were experienced, but mostly external to project. Asset management was poor. | MS |
| D.8 Project financial management system operational at national and district levels | Serious problems experienced with financial management. Records at UNDP contributed significantly to the project demise. UNDP claims that its problems were largely not of their own making. Initially it was poor reconciliation and accounting by the project and NES and then from January 2004, ATLAS. Although these assertions are fathomable they are still inexcusable. In a case of the latter, a manual backup system should have been used while the former is completely not understandable and should not have happened. | MS |
| OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT | | U |

NB: HS – Highly satisfactory; S – Satisfactory; MS - Marginally satisfactory; U – Unsatisfactory

Table 5: Project Achievements Rated Against Outcomes

| PROJECT OBJECTIVES | ACHIEVEMENTS | RATING |
|---|--|---------------|
| 1. Establishing a network of protected areas in the 3 southern districts of Lesotho | No functional protected areas in all the project sites | U |
| 2. Facilitating protection of biodiversity outside protected areas in Range Management Areas as buffer zones or in RMAs that do not surround core | No functional RMAs established or assisted by the project in all the project sites | U |

| | | |
|--|--|----------|
| Pas | | |
| 3. Establish a strong network of biodiversity institutions, nationally and regionally. | Not such networks established in all the project sites, nationally and across borders. | U |
| 4. Establish project organization, management and coordination at the district and national levels | The structure was established to manage the project which ran from the national level to the district level. The structure could not deliver expected results however. | MS |
| OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT | | U |

NB: HS – Highly satisfactory; S – Satisfactory; MS - Marginally satisfactory; U – Unsatisfactory

CMBSL was conceptualised at a time when critical biodiversity related processes were being rolled out. These processes included the analysis of the National State of Environment – Lesotho (1999), the articulation of the National Strategy on Lesotho’s Biological Diversity: Conservation and Sustainable Use (2000) and the production of the Biodiversity Country Report (2000). These processes could have been used to establish a baseline against which progress towards achieving the biodiversity management goals of the project as stated in the first two objectives. The assessment of the project shows little evidence of the project having capitalised on these processes to inform its own structure. As a result, there was no evidence on the ground of any protected areas or nature reserves having been established although community groups could point to the areas that had been earmarked for this purpose. A number of factors could be advanced as the reason for this. First, there was a delay in getting a full compliment of staff to manage the project with full mobilisation being achieved only in 2002 with the appointment of the first CTA. Valuable implementation time was lost due to these delays. Further, the staff that were recruited to manage the project did not have the requisite qualifications to manage such a complex project.

While the specific biodiversity objectives were not realised, there is evidence of the project having mobilised community groups for participation in activities aimed at these outcomes. Unfortunately the failure by the project to introduce practical projects on the ground frustrated involved community groups who had expected quantifiable changes in their social and economic condition as a result of the implementation of the project.

Due to the use of the PIU model, there is no evidence that the project resulted in improved institutional capacity to manage biodiversity in Lesotho. When the project was closed as a result of shortage of funds, the PIU was also wound up thereby leaving no capacities within NES to carry on implementing the project. It had also been intended to create national level institutions with capacity for programme and financial management. This was not achieved as the PIU became the project driver with no local institution set up to learn from it.

The second objective of the project was to facilitate the establishment of Range Management Areas outside the protected areas. This was conceptualised in the classical manner of protecting core biodiversity areas with well managed buffer zones. Indeed, the project document makes a proviso that allows working with RMAs that do not

surround any core protected areas. The rationale was to improve communally managed areas so that biodiversity hotspots in the districts do not become islands that are surrounded by deteriorating landscapes. This was a noble goal. It was also consistent with the efforts of the Range Management Department of the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation. Indeed many communities continue to show enthusiasm and support towards the idea of RMAs but the bottleneck is always lack of legal gazettment. With legal gazettment, communities claimed that they would have a legal basis to manage and protect such exclusive use zones. Without it, these areas will remain open access areas where control of resource use would always be difficult. It is not immediately clear to the evaluators why this is a difficult process for government to address since the procedure seems straight-forward. It could only be indicative of the slow pace of the government machinery. Unfortunately, this leaves many communities totally disillusioned and disgruntled.

The fourth objective was complimentary to the first three. It called for the establishment of functional project structures at district and national levels. This was aimed at improving efficiency in project implementation. Indeed the project was successful in this regard in the sense that a coordinating office was established at the headquarters in Maseru, and three other offices were established in the three project districts. This improved the performance of the project in the field since staff were situated near to their working sites. The difficulty tended to lie in lack of technical backstopping that was supposed to come from the headquarters. The CTA and the NPM rarely visited field officers and there is no evidence of their guidance on the ground. There were claims that the government contributed to this problem by regularly denying permission for these key project officers to go on field visits. It is not clear why such interference would have been necessary. The project staff should have been allowed to do project work to the best of their abilities given the limitations of the resources available to them.

The overall assessment of the evaluation was that the project failed to achieve its objectives and is rated as unsuccessful. CMBSL started with no comprehensive ecological or social assessments to establish the environmental and social contexts within which the project was to be implemented. It is critical that future interventions of a similar nature establish a baseline against which progress can be measured before going on to implementation.

On the issue of community mobilisation, it was not clear to the evaluators whether project managers had a clear understanding of how to engage communities in projects of this nature. As the project progressed, there is evidence of the project losing focus and promoting community development initiatives instead of the originally intended biodiversity conservation outcomes. Even at project sites such as Letseng La Letsea where there was scope for focusing on biodiversity conservation, the project ended up engaging communities in programme activities for reward, which deviated from the project's intended objective. A lot of promises went unmet resulting in community disgruntlement. The lesson from this is that clear community involvement procedures need to be defined at the outset with specific deliverables being explained to participating communities. Community engagement also needs to be oriented towards increased ownership of the project by involved community groups.

5.2 Project Impacts and Sustainability

CMBSL has not had a major impact in the three districts that it operated in. Most of the project resources were spent on sensitization, awareness raising, study tours, training and community mobilization which were never systematically conceptualized and implemented. As such it was not possible for those who were involved to conclusively know whether they were making progress or not. Even towards the end of the project in 2004, a study tour to Zimbabwe was still being contemplated. This trip did not take place because of the intervention from UNDP CO which indicated to the implementing agency that the project had run out of time and resources.

Despite this huge expenditure on community mobilization, training and awareness raising, the Evaluators did not see exemplary evidence of conservation in the project communities when compared with communities that were not part of the project. The problems are still the same as before. Clearly this project has not been able to infuse a biodiversity conservation ethic in these communities with the possible exception of Tsatsane where the community continues to push forward with the establishment of the vulture restaurant that was proposed by the project. Although CMBSL failed to see that proposal through to fruition, this community has continued to work on the initiative with assistance from DED and through a partnership with the Quthing Wildlife Development Trust. This is an important aspect of project management which demonstrates the value of creating partnerships with capable institutions that can carry on with project work when donor funding ends.

In Mapotsane the community had closed off an area that was proposed for the establishment of a nature reserve for almost three years but have now opened it to grazing after realising that CMBSL was no longer available to assist them. In Letseng-la-Letsie stock-posts have been re-introduced into the area and grazing continues unabated. These developments have an effect of “de-conserving” that was raised by the Mid Term Review. From our analysis, this behaviour is fostered by the feeling of disillusionment and disenchantment that came with broken promises and the untimely closure of the project. This has cultivated a perception that communities are taken for granted and that their needs and wishes are not a priority to the government. This has long term and far reaching implications for future conservation projects in Lesotho. It is important that this perception is corrected. Letsa-la-Letsie is designated a Ramsar site but that is not succeeding because of the problems that have been left by CMBSL in the communities.

An important feature of CMBSL was its plan to establish protected areas within the context of communal land and resource management regimes. The problems highlighted above could be due to the fact that the approach adopted was not sustainable under these tenure regimes. Experiences from elsewhere in the region demonstrate the need for some form of legal recognition of community rights over resources if biodiversity conservation is to succeed. Under CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe, community rights were enshrined in the District Councils which ensured that benefits from conservation were disbursed to communities. Under the Botswana Natural Resources Management Project, communities established Trusts which obtained leases over conservation areas from local authorities with which they entered into agreements with commercial entities for management and use. Although CMBSL tried to borrow from some of these

experiences, it is instructive to note that the project was implemented outside of a legal framework that guaranteed community rights over the resources.

As a national project with expected global impacts, CMBSL was a failure. Many of the areas that it had chosen did not represent the biodiversity values that could have a global significance. As mentioned earlier, the problem lay with the approach which saw sites chosen without any scientific and technical basis and then baseline studies commissioned to validate the selection. It should have been done the other way round. In other words the project should have begun with baseline surveys which should have informed site selection.

Unfortunately, CMBSL also failed to establish links with institutions that would have helped it achieve its objectives. These included institutions such as the NUL, the Department of Range Management and Local Government structures. Without the participation of these, institutions sustainability was always going to be in question.

5.3 Contribution to Upgrading Skills at the National Level

As mentioned in the preceding sections, CMBSL used the PIU model which means all staff were given short term contracts. The project staff were not engaged as government employees but were on contract with UNDP which were latter converted to GoL contracts. They were all dismissed when the project came to an end in December 2004. Although they gained some experience from working under the project they were not absorbed by the implementing agency when NES established district offices. They went off to look for alternative employment wherever they could find it. This represented a loss of the critical mass that could have been used as a foundation when NES established district offices. The three project districts (Mohale's Hoek, Quthing and Qacha's Nek) are now manned by an entirely new team. It is not clear why the project staff were not considered for absorption when such an opportunity was already available. To that extent, CMBSL was not used to build capacity for the country to implement biodiversity conservation programmes. If a similar project were to occur, it would have to start from the beginning as well.

There were two M.Sc degrees that were obtained in range management through CMBSL support . This was a positive contribution which unfortunately was not fully utilised to further project goals during its lifespan and afterwards.

To avoid this being repeated in future projects, it is recommended that future programmes adopt an approach where technical input into projects is fully embedded within implementing agencies so that when programmatic support from outside comes to an end, the capacity that will have been built will be retained and used for the implementation of follow-on programmes.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

CMBSL was meant to be a ground breaking biodiversity conservation project in Lesotho primarily due to its proposal to involve communities in project implementation and management. The project was also a well conceptualized project which would have effectively increased the extent of land under formal protection in the country. This would have gone a long way towards improving Lesotho's compliance with its international obligations in respect of Agenda 21.

Despite being poised to make a difference in both biodiversity conservation and community involvement, CMBSL was characterised by a number of design problems that made project implementation difficult.

First, the project was designed and implemented without the benefit of preliminary baseline economic, social and biodiversity surveys. Progress with implementation was therefore difficult to measure as there were no benchmarks against which such progress could be assessed. While some attempts were made to create these baselines, these were conducted too late in the project cycle to be of any effect.

A second major feature of the CMBSL project was the failure to recruit adequately qualified project management personnel to manage it. The project was a biodiversity management project but none of the senior project management staff recruited to be CTAs or NPMs were qualified in fields directly related to biodiversity conservation. This might have been the primary reason that the project never stayed on course. The reasons for this failure to recruit suitably qualified staff are unclear but could be due to lack of vigilance and poor decision making on the part of the structures that were charged with that responsibility. A consequence of this poor recruitment of personnel was that the project seemed to take a route that flaunted money as a system of winning communities over. This created a situation where the project appeared to "buy" communities through what were at best "give-and-give" transactions for the areas that were supposed to be turned into community nature reserves, protected areas or RMAs. The project promised community groups livelihood projects which were never its core business. In turn the communities reciprocated by setting aside a piece of land for the project.

The project was also characterised by lack of clarity regarding responsibility for management of the initiative by PIU staff and staff at NES. The Directorate at NES correctly believed they had the mandate to manage what was intrinsically a GoL project while PIU staff felt that they were managing a UNDP/GEF project and were therefore independent of government. This lack of clarity resulted in competition for control and ended up with a high staff turn-over at the project as NPMs were either relieved of their duties by GoL principals. This high staff turn-over affected project delivery and continuity. At the end of the day, the project lost its focus, and was turned into a rural development project with aspects of biodiversity.

Despite these problems however, the project posted some positive achievements. Perhaps the most important achievement scored by the project was that it raised awareness about the link between conservation and livelihoods among communities that were involved in the project. The Mid Term Review made reference to this increased level of awareness at the project sites. The Final evaluation can also attest to this, 1½

years after the project ended operationally. The communities showed keen interest in converting the awareness that they have of biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation linkages and expressed the desire to have the promises made under CMBSL turned into projects on the ground. While there is no evidence of improved conservation practices on the ground, it is important that GoL re-visit these communities to bring closure to these outstanding issues and find ways of incorporating them in new initiatives that are being proposed. Opportunities for doing this are available through the recently approved GEF Small Grants Programme. Both UNDP/GEF and GoL need to ensure that future interventions take into account the problems that occurred in these communities and find ways of avoiding them in their design..

The relationship between UNDP CO and the MTEC as represented by NES was less than optimal and contributed in large measure to a lot of the problems experienced by the project. There was contestation for power and control between NES and the PIU which detracted from project implementation. This resulted in the project failing to achieve its intended objectives. Similar situations need to be avoided in future since it is the communities that loose out in the end.

Financial management processes under this project were problematic with no reconciliation between the records kept at the project level by the PIU and at UNDP. This resulted in the untenable situation where large sums of money were purported to have gone missing. The final evaluation has however established that there was never any misappropriation of funds under CMBSL and that this assertion must have emanated from poor records keeping.

7.0 LESSONS LEARNED

Although CMBSL is rated as having been unsuccessful, there are a number of lessons that the evaluation team discerned from experience with implementing the project. These are discussed below.

1. Projects such as CMBSL whose success depends upon winning the hearts and minds of community groups require individuals or institutions that champion their cause. A good example of this is the CAMPFIRE programme in Zimbabwe that was popularised by the CAMPFIRE Association, a CBO that represented the interests of the participating communities. The head of the secretariat of the association was passionate about the project and its potential for transforming the lives of rural populations in Zimbabwe.

2. Biodiversity conservation projects need to be preceded by comprehensive situation analyses covering biodiversity, social and economic conditions at proposed project sites. These assessments should also include capacity assessments of institutions to be involved in advancing project goals so as to identify institutional capacity development needs to be focussed upon as projects are implemented. The baselines developed through this process will be useful in measuring project progress;

3. Biodiversity projects need to focus on those project aspects that allow for replication of experiences.

4. Institutional capacity limitations are a common feature among most government entities in developing countries. These limitations can be addressed through the involvement of civil society entities working to compliment government efforts. A good example of the benefits of this is what has occurred at Apostate in Quoting District where, with the involvement of the Quoting Wildlife Development Trust, the community group has continued implementing the programmes initiated under CMBSL.

4. Biodiversity management projects are highly specialised and require specialised inputs from technically qualified managers. In addition, there is a strong need in projects concerning biodiversity conservation to have regular technical input from conservation or biological scientists, particularly if such skills are not available on the project staff. The engagement of people with appropriate technical skills to manage projects will ensure that appropriate action is taken to correct misdirected project initiatives.

5. Although CMBSL engaged a range of institutions to implement various aspects of the project institutional commitment to the project was generally weak. A review of the minutes of National Steering Committee shows that most institutions were represented by different people at the project review meetings.

6. Steering committees, however well-constituted, can lack the ability to actually have a significant influence or redirect a project. They need to be well-informed, have continuity and commitment of membership, and be able to actively influence progress if required. Field visits and significant time spent with project management are required if their input is to be useful.

7. Look and learn tours can be very useful tools for monitoring progress with implementation of projects. However, for study tours to be of use to participants, they need to be arranged so communities are taken to visit projects that are similar to theirs. CMBSL took participants on tours to Zimbabwe to visit CAMPFIRE project sites. While CAMPFIRE and CMBSL were similar in outlook, they focussed on different resources. CAMPFIRE focussed on large faunal species which CMBSL was focussed on scenery. It was easy to draw participants under CAMPFIRE because of the potential for realising immediate benefits from managing the resources available in project area. CMBSL did not have such glamorous resources so returns from participation in resource management could only be promised for sometime in the future on account of poor resource endowment. CMBSL should have identified projects with a pastoral orientation and work with such projects to distil lessons for use in promoting biodiversity conservation.

8. CMBSL was associated with the disbursement of large sums of money to participating communities, especially in the form of per diems on field visits. Sum of the sums of money disbursed were so large, they became the primary reason for communities to participate in the project as they hoped to also benefit. While communities are entitled to receive allowances when they travel care should always be taken to balance this with the management of Lesotho's biodiversity heritage.

9. The sites at which a project will work need to be clearly articulated during the formulation stage. Likewise the type of activities that will take place there, targets and

expected achievements ought to be specified in the log-frame. If not, as was the case here, sites and activities may become inappropriate.

10 Monitoring and evaluation modalities need to be thought through during the formulation stage, and adhered to during implementation. Regular external review missions are important

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CMBSL left communities with a lot of unmet expectations and promises at almost all the project sites visited. In addition, the project had been rephased at the end of 2004 and an exit strategy which focussed programmatic attention on those villages in the southern mountains that have potential for yielding results. It is important that the lessons from the project are properly documented and used as a base for use in defining follow-on programmes.
2. NES, as the coordinating agency for environmental programmes in Lesotho, needs to encourage all agencies embarking upon biodiversity management programmes to build upon the high levels of community mobilisation for conservation generated by the project. NES should mobilise the participation of relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions and agencies to carry forward some of the activities that CMBSL had begun. In particular discussions must be initiated with Range Management at the highest possible level to facilitate the legal gazettment of the RMAs that were part of the project.
3. Legal gazettment of Letsa-la-Letsie as a Protected Area should be completed as without it, the current problems of free access will continue. NES, together with the Wetlands Unit of the Ministry of Natural Resources should work together on this issue. CMBSL had facilitated surveying of the area which was a precondition for legal gazettment. The maps and data must be secured from the Department of Lands and Survey of the Ministry of Local Government.
4. Some important studies that could benefit Lesotho and the communities in the three southern districts have been done under CMBSL. The results of these studies should be made available to stakeholders that could meaningfully use them. For example, the ecotourism study could be useful to the Lesotho Tourism Corporation as they could include its recommendations in tourism planning. The biophysical studies and the economic valuation studies should be shared with follow-on programmes such as MDTP and other government ministries e.g. Local Government and Range Management.
5. The fencing at Letseng-la-Letsie should be re-visited with a focus on new and adaptive approaches to conservation. Failure to address this Letseng issue may have short and long term implications for the country's conservation programmes. As things stand now, Letsa-la-Letsie has been designated a Ramsar site of international significance yet it is not protected and no efforts are being made to protect it. There is a substantial amount of materials that are still available at the Army Base in Ongelos Nek. UNDP CO and the GoL should find the best way to dispose of this material.

6. The project must be formally closed and the issue of outstanding staff benefits resolved. Because CMBSL was a GoL project, the onus of formal closure lies with the government.
7. The lessons from CMBSL must be shared with other government ministries that use the PIU model so that the experiences can be used to inform choices of management models for future projects. Innovative approaches to project management that ensure that capacity is left behind after project completion need to be developed and institutionalised across government.
8. The protected areas that were supposed to be established by CMBSL have not been established. A clearer understanding of how this could be done within a communal land management system is required. There is still a need therefore to re-visit this goal so that unique ecosystems, landscapes and species found in this country could be protected. The aims of CMBSL were good and need to be followed up. NES, GEF and UNDP CO should begin a dialogue that will facilitate a follow up process.
9. All future projects/programmes that are implemented by NES and UNDP CO should ensure that they have a strong monitoring and evaluation system in place. This will provide for early warning systems and ensure that such projects/programmes achieve their stated objectives.
10. NES and UNDP CO should assess and re-evaluate their capacity to implement large projects that have multiple activities at a large geographical scale. Both institutions are fairly thin on the ground. If more large scale projects like CMBSL are implemented by these institutions, capacity enhancement might be a necessary conditionality for both of them.

Annex 1

Terms of Reference

Project Terminal Evaluation

Project: Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho

Project Number LES/97/G31/B/1G/99



1. Introduction:

1. A: Standard UNDP-GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Requirements

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy applied by UNDP-GEF at the project level has four objectives: i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts; ii) to provide a basis for decision making; iii) to promote accountability for resource use; and iv) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned. In accordance with UNDP/GEF M&E policies and procedures, all regular projects supported by the GEF must undergo a final evaluation upon completion of implementation.

Final evaluations are intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project.

1. B. Background/Rational for Project

Seventy percent of the Drakensberg -Maloti Mountains lie within the Kingdom of Lesotho. The area contains globally important floral diversity, characterized by high endemism, but is threatened by heavy livestock grazing (with a livestock grazing regime based on open access, with limited regulatory controls), and frequent burning. Lesotho also has the lowest Protected Area coverage of any nation in Africa (<0.4%), meaning that there are few effective refugia for biota threatened by anthropogenic pressures. The country's Biodiversity is thus at risk. The project Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho (CMBSL) was a five-year initiative, with funding from GEF/ UNDP amounting to US\$2, 48 million, designed to "ensure the conservation and sustainable utilisation of unique alpine and montane landscapes". There were four complementary objectives:

- A. *A planned and rational network of Protected Areas is in place, which adequately covers the extent of Lesotho's biodiversity*
- B. Improved grazing and resources management systems resulting in reduced rate of biodiversity loss outside formal Protected Areas.
- C. An integrated bioregional approach (also trans-border) to biodiversity conservation and watershed management is established.
- D. *A functional project organisation, management and co-ordination system for the implementation of biodiversity conservation programs established at central, district and community levels.*

The Project was nationally executed by the Lesotho Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture.

2. Objective of the Evaluation

The Evaluation has been commissioned by UNDP and will be conducted according to guidance, rules and procedures for such evaluations established by UNDP and the Global Environment Facility. The overall objective the Terminal Evaluation is to review the achievements made by the project to achieve the specified objectives and outcomes. It will establish the relevance, performance and success of the project, including the sustainability of results. The evaluation team should identify specific lessons pertaining to the strategies employed, and implementation arrangements, which may be accommodated in the design of similar projects in Lesotho and elsewhere. It will, more specifically, assess the contribution of the project towards addressing global environmental objectives.

3. Scope of the Evaluation

The Evaluation will evaluate the project's achievements according to the following Project Review criteria (an explanation of the terminology employed is provided in annex 2):

a) Outcomes

- Assess progress towards attaining the project's environmental objectives and outcomes at all levels – global, regional and national. This should include the extent to which the project contributed to: (a) expanding the protected area network in Lesotho and improving PA management; (b) putting mechanisms in place to protect biodiversity resources outside Protected Areas particularly developing range management areas; (c) a stronger enabling environment, through effective policies, development of institutional capacities, increased public awareness and stakeholder involvement; and (d) developing an integrated bio-regional approach to biodiversity conservation and watershed management.

b) Implementation approach

- Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various individuals, agencies and institutions and the level of coordination between relevant players. In particular, the capacity and performance of the National District Project Officer, District Steering Committee, Project Manger, Chief Technical Advisor and National Steering Committee will be reviewed.
- Assess the level to which the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) and performance indicators were used as project management tools.
- Evaluate any partnership arrangements established for implementation of the project with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region.
- Describe and assess efforts of UNDP in support of the implementing agencies and national institutions.
- Make recommendations as to how to improve project performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiency in achieving impact on both capacity development and the targeted conservation concerns.

c) Country Ownership/driven ness

- Assess the extent to which country representatives (including governmental officials, civil society, etc.) were actively involved in project implementation.
- Assess whether the Government of Lesotho has maintained financial commitment to the project

d) Stakeholder Participation and benefits accrued

- Assess the level of public involvement in the project and comment as to whether the scope of public involvement has been appropriate given the broader goals and objectives of the project.
- Review and evaluate the extent to which project benefits have reached the intended beneficiaries.

e) Sustainability

- Assess the likelihood of continuation of project outcomes/benefits after completion of GEF funding; and describe the key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of project outcomes. Factors of sustainability that should be considered include; institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) social sustainability, policy and regulatory frameworks that further the project objectives, financial sustainability

f) Replication Approach

- Assess the extent to which the lessons and experiences that have emerged from the project are being accommodated in the design of similar initiatives. Make recommendations of how this could be achieved if necessary.
- Describe the main lessons that have emerged in terms of: strengthening country ownership/driven ness; strengthening stakeholder participation; application of adaptive management strategies; efforts to secure sustainability; knowledge transfer; and the role of M&E in project implementation. In describing all lessons learned, an explicit distinction needs to be made between those lessons applicable only to this project, and lessons that may be of value more broadly.

g) Financial Planning

- Assess the financial control systems, including reporting and planning, that allowed the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget.
- Assess the extent to which the flow of funds had been proper and timely both from UNDP and from the project management unit to the field.
- Evaluate the extent of due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits.

h) Cost effectiveness

- Assess compliance with the incremental cost criteria (GEF funds used to finance a component of the project that would to take place without GEF funding and securing co-funding and associated funding)
- Assess the extent to which the project has completed the planned activities and met or exceeded the expected outcomes according to schedule and as cost effective as initially planned.

i) Monitoring and Evaluation

- Review the project's reporting systems and their efficiency.
- Review the implementation of the project's monitoring and evaluation plans including any adaptation to changing conditions (adaptive management).

4. Products Expected from the Evaluation

The Evaluation team will present a final report to UNDP following the format appended as Annex 1. The Report will include an Executive Summary summarising the main findings, lessons and recommendations. The evaluation will include ratings⁶ on the following aspects (1) sustainability, (2) Outcome/ achievement of the objectives, 3. implementation approach.

5. Evaluation Team

The evaluation will be performed by a two-person team. The team will comprise an international consultant and national consultant, both wholly conversant with the development context of Southern Africa, and Lesotho in particular. The team will have a wide range of skills, including prior evaluation experience, expertise in biodiversity conservation and related activities, and experience with economic and social development issues.

6. Methodology

⁶ The ratings will be Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginally Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory and N/A.

The evaluation team will specify the methods used in compiling the evaluation in the final report. These will include the following:

The Evaluation team will liaise with all key stakeholders, including Government Ministries at national and district level, NGOs and academic institutions, and civil society representatives. Structured and semi structured interviews will be organised with key stakeholders to collect information.

The Evaluation team will review and build on the findings of an earlier Independent Review of the project conducted in 2004, as well as audit assessments. The evaluation team will undertake a review of documentation, including the Project Document and technical reports.

Field visits to the project sites in Southern Lesotho, to verify information collected at the national level.

7. Implementation Arrangements

The evaluation should take should **1 month** starting **Mid-August 2006**. The final report will be presented to UNDP no later than 30 December, 2006. The UNDP Country Office in Lesotho will assume responsibility for coordinating the in country programme of the evaluation team, including stakeholder meetings and field visits in consultation with the Government of Lesotho. The evaluation team will be briefed by the UNDP Country Team, upon the commencement of the assignment, and will also provide a terminal briefing. Other briefing sessions may be scheduled, if deemed necessary.

Annex 2

Evaluation Report Outline

Executive summary

- Brief description of project
- Context and purpose of the evaluation
- Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

Introduction

- Purpose of the evaluation
- Key issues addressed
- Methodology of the evaluation
- Structure of the evaluation

The project(s) and its development context

- Project start and its duration
- Problems that the project seek to address
- Immediate and development objectives of the project
- Main stakeholders
- Results expected

Findings and Conclusions

- Project formulation
 - Implementation approach

- Country ownership/Driveness
- Stakeholder participation
- Replication approach
- Cost-effectiveness
- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- Indicators
- Management arrangements

- Implementation
 - Financial Planning
 - Monitoring and evaluation
 - Execution and implementation modalities
 - Management by the UNDP country office
 - Coordination and operational issues

- Results
 - Attainment of objectives
 - Sustainability
 - Contribution to upgrading skills of the national staff

Recommendations

Annex 3

Explanation of Terminology

Implementation Approach includes an analysis of the project's logical framework, adaptation to changing conditions (adaptive management), partnerships in implementation arrangements, changes in project design, and overall project management.

Some elements of an effective implementation approach may include:

- The logical framework used during implementation as a management and M&E tool
- Effective partnerships arrangements established for implementation of the project with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region
- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) incorporated into project implementation
- Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management.

Country Ownership/Driveness is the relevance of the project to national development and environmental agendas, recipient country commitment, and regional and international agreements where applicable.

Some elements of effective country ownership/driveness may include:

- Project Concept has its origin within the national sectoral and development plans
- Outcomes (or potential outcomes) from the project have been incorporated into the national sectoral and development plans
- Relevant country representatives (e.g., governmental official, civil society, etc.) are actively involved in project identification, planning and/or implementation
- The recipient government has maintained financial commitment to the project
- The government has approved policies and/or modified regulatory frameworks in line with the project's objectives

For projects whose main focus and actors are in the private-sector rather than public-sector (e.g., IFC projects), elements of effective country ownership/driveness that demonstrate the interest and commitment of the local private sector to the project may include:

- The number of companies that participated in the project by: receiving technical assistance, applying for financing, attending dissemination events, adopting environmental standards promoted by the project, etc.
- Amount contributed by participating companies to achieve the environmental benefits promoted by the project, including: equity invested, guarantees provided, co-funding of project activities, in-kind contributions, etc.
- Project's collaboration with industry associations

Stakeholder Participation/Public Involvement 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 GEF-financed project. The term also applies to those potentially adversely affected by a project.

Examples of effective public involvement include:

Information dissemination

- Implementation of appropriate outreach/public awareness campaigns

Consultation and stakeholder participation

- Consulting and making use of the skills, experiences and knowledge of NGOs, community and local groups, the private and public sectors, and academic institutions in the design, implementation, and evaluation of project activities

Stakeholder participation

- Project institutional networks well placed within the overall national or community organizational structures, for example, by building on the local decision making structures, incorporating local knowledge, and devolving project management responsibilities to the local organizations or communities as the project approaches closure
- Building partnerships among different project stakeholders
- Fulfillment of commitments to local stakeholders and stakeholders considered to be adequately involved.

Sustainability measures the extent to which benefits continue, within or outside the project domain, from a particular project or program after GEF assistance/external assistance has come to an end. Relevant factors to improve the sustainability of project outcomes include:

- Development and implementation of a sustainability strategy
- Establishment of the financial and economic instruments and mechanisms to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the GEF assistance ends (from the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and market transformations to promote the project's objectives).
- Development of suitable organizational arrangements by public and/or private sector
- Development of policy and regulatory frameworks that further the project objectives
- Incorporation of environmental and ecological factors affecting future flow of benefits.
- Development of appropriate institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.)
- Identification and involvement of champions (i.e. individuals in government and civil society who can promote sustainability of project outcomes)
- Achieving social sustainability, for example, by mainstreaming project activities into the economy or community production activities
- Achieving stakeholder's consensus regarding courses of action on project activities.

Replication approach, in the context of GEF 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). Examples of replication approaches include:

- Knowledge transfer (i.e., dissemination of lessons through project result documents, training workshops, information exchange, a national and regional forum, etc).
- Expansion of demonstration projects.
- Capacity building and training of individuals, and institutions to expand the project's achievements in the country or other regions.
- Use of project-trained individuals, institutions or companies to replicate the project's outcomes in other regions.

Financial Planning includes actual project cost by activity, financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing. If a financial audit has been conducted the major findings should be presented in the TE.

Effective financial plans include:

- Strong financial controls, including reporting, and planning that allow the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget at any time, allows for a proper and timely flow of funds, and for the payment of satisfactory project deliverables
- Due diligence due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits.

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. Cost-effective factors include:

- Compliance with the incremental cost criteria (e.g. GEF funds are used to finance a component of a project that would not have taken place without GEF funding.) and securing co-funding and associated funding.
- The project completed the planned activities and met or exceeded the expected outcomes in terms of achievement of Global Environmental and Development Objectives according to schedule, and as cost-effective as initially planned.
- The project used either a benchmark approach or a comparison approach (did not exceed the costs levels of similar projects in similar contexts). A benchmark approach in climate change and ozone projects measures cost-effectiveness using internationally accepted threshold such as 10\$/ton of carbon equivalent reduced, and thresholds for the phase out of specific ozone depleting substances measured in terms of dollars spent per kg (\$/kg) of each type of ODS reduced.

Monitoring & Evaluation. Monitoring is the periodic oversight of a process, or the implementation of an activity, which seeks to establish the extent to which inputs, work schedules, other required actions and outputs are proceeding according to plan, so that timely action can be taken to correct the deficiencies detected. Evaluation is a process by which program inputs, activities and results are analyzed and judged explicitly against benchmarks or baseline conditions using performance indicators. This will allow project managers and planners to make decisions based on the evidence of information on the project implementation stage, performance indicators, level of funding still available, etc, building on the project's logical framework.

Monitoring and Evaluation includes activities to measure the project's achievements such as identification of performance indicators, measurement procedures, and determination of baseline conditions. Projects are required to implement plans for monitoring and evaluation with adequate funding and appropriate staff and include activities such as description of data sources and methods for data collection, collection of baseline data, and stakeholder participation. Given the long-term nature of many GEF projects, projects are also encouraged to include long-term monitoring plans that are sustainable after project completion. Any issues related to the quality of backstopping and quality assurance and control of project deliverables listed in the project document should be addressed in this section.

Annex 4

Table: Summary of planned and actual activities for CMBSL Project October 2002 to December, 2004

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Purpose A: A planned and rational network of Protected Areas is in place, which adequately covers the extent of Lesotho's biodiversity | A.1. Knowledge (including indigenous) on biodiversity generated through research activities | A.1.1. Conduct awareness meetings with key institutions (steering committees etc) | Awareness meetings held over the first three years of the project | Communities greatly aware of conservation issues |
| | | A.1.2. Review regulatory mechanisms for biodiversity conservation, creation and management of Pas | Not done | Project management did not commission the consultancy. |
| | | A.1.3. Prepare training plan for short-term courses | Training plans prepared every year | The training plans were not fully implemented. |
| | | A.1.4. Prepare training plan for long-term courses | Plan was prepared | Plan did not target or include NES staff |
| | | A.1.5. Provide short-term training for key staff members of implementing institutions on biodiversity related topics, project management and organization | - Some project staff and district implementing teams were trained & awareness visits on community conservation issues. | The course on environmental policy analysis was not implemented due to financial problems |
| | | A.1.6. Provide long-term training to key staff members of implementing institutions on biodiversity related programs | 2 MSc completed in Range Management. | The knowledge acquired is not being directly applied to project activities. No marked capacity increase in NES. |
| | | | | |
| | A.2 Knowledge (including indigenous on biodiversity generated through research activities | A.2.1. Analyse existing data sets, commission new surveys in gap/hot-spots | Partly accomplished | - Existing data sets were not fully analyzed. - Besides the baseline surveys, no new surveys were commissioned. |
| | | A.2.2. Compile report on | Not done | Bio-physical |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|---|---|---|--|
| | | hotspots, with information on suitability for Pas | | baselines not completed |
| | | A.2.3. Set up prioritized biodiversity research needs, (scientific and applied) | - Partly done because bio-physical baselines were not completed to give focused research. - Data on economic valuation of biological resources available, but the knowledge was not applied substantively to project activities. | - Limited research knowledge is available. - Planned research on range management, energy sources, household food security, and contribution of biodiversity to household livelihoods, developing a quantitative model linking household food security, HIV/AIDS and biodiversity conservation was not implemented. |
| | | A.2.4. Set up interactive biodiversity database at NUL | Not done | - Consultancy not commissioned. - NUL not acting as hub or repository of knowledge. |
| | | | | |
| | A.3. Local communities empowered with increased knowledge on sustainable use of BD within their areas. | A.3.1 Conduct awareness meetings with selected villages | Awareness meetings held. | Awareness meeting reports not available. |
| | | A.3.2 Assess, with communities, suitability of RMAs for BD conservation | Assessments done on the suitability of RMA for BD conservation. | Criteria and results reports of the assessments not available |
| | | A.3.3 Assess, with communities value of traditional reservations (<i>leboella</i>) for BD values | Assessments done. | Technical reports on the assessments not available. |
| | | A.3.4 Assess/explore with communities, possibility of setting aside small core areas (PAs and Community Nature Reserves) on village land | Assessments done on the possibility of setting-up PAs and CNRs. | Criteria and results reports of the assessments not available. |
| | | A.3.5 Work with communities and NGOs/CBOs to develop PAs and Community Nature Reserves and other conservation programs | Partly done. | Mainly due to slow project implementation. |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|---|---|---|--|
| | | A.3.6 Work with communities, districts to establish and manage local Pas | Partly done. | Mainly due to slow project implementation. |
| | | A.3.7 Organise look and learn visits for community members participating in the in project | Look and learn visits were undertaken for Mohale's Hoek and Quthing districts to Zimbabwe. | - Some of the knowledge gained being applied by the communities. - More guidance was needed from the project for effective application of the knowledge gained. |
| | A.4 Alternative livelihood systems mainly based on eco-tourism based enterprises developed | A.4.1. Conduct meetings/training sessions on alternative and viable rural enterprises | - Initial community meetings to identify potential tourism enterprises undertaken during May in Qachas Nek and Mohale's Hoek and July in Quthing - A course on community-based tourism attended by project staff and implementing institutions in June 2003 - Meetings were held to identify and discuss possible community based eco-tourism enterprises in Quthing and Qachas Nek during April 2004 | - Intensive meetings and community training on alternative and viable rural enterprises still needs to be done once management plans are finalized. |
| | | A.4.2. Assist communities to prepare/design action plans/project proposals for funding | Not done. | - Was awaiting discussion of the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) consultancy report which did not take place |
| | | A.4.3. Assist communities to identify funding sources for approved projects | Not done. | “ “ |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | A.4.4. Assist communities to implement and monitor projects | Not done. | “ “ |
| | | A.4.5. Work with communities to promote eco-tourism on biodiversity sites. | Not done. | “ “ |
| | | | | |
| Purpose B: Improved grazing and resources management systems reduce the rate of biodiversity loss outside formal Protected Areas | B.1. Biodiversity-relevant policies and regulations developed, revised and/or strengthened | B.1.1. Analyse exiting policy and regulatory framework for BD conservation and its impact on biodiversity | Not done | Contract for local consultancy was not prepared. |
| | | B.1.2. Revise and strengthen policies/regulations that are inadequate to support biodiversity | Partly done. Range management guidelines were revised to include BD issues. | Revision of the range management guidelines to include BD issues was not finalized. |
| | | B.1.3. Assist government to develop appropriate policies/regulations for BD conservation | Not done | Knowledge gained through project consultancy work not applied to project activities and to inform policy development and implementation. |
| | | B.1.4. Conduct awareness campaign for, and promote new policy framework at national, district and community level | Partly done. Project contributed to the amendment of the law prohibiting the harvesting of endangered flora and fauna of 2004. | No other new policies were developed through the project. |
| | | | | |
| | B.2. Regulatory agencies empowered with clear mandates and capacity for biodiversity conservation and supported at district and national level | B.2.1 Undertake review of institutional responsibilities and mandates for BD | Not done. | Local consultancy not commissioned. |
| | | B.2.2 Produce Sesotho literature guidelines on biodiversity/range | Not done. | Consultancy not commissioned. |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|--------|---|---|---|
| | | management. | | |
| | | B.2.3 Re-issue Range management guidelines incorporating biodiversity | Not done. | Revision of guidelines not finalized. |
| | | B.2.4 Put fire management demonstrations in place. | Not done. | This was due to slow project implementation. |
| | | B.2.5. Analyse user rights options affecting BD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TOR for UNOPS consultancy on user rights for BD developed in April 2003 - Consultancy hired in July 2003 - Together with consultant, the project gave a report-back to communities on findings on the user rights affecting biodiversity conservation during Nov. 2003. | Consultancy findings were not used to direct project activities and inform policy on BD conservation. |
| | | B.2.6. Promote preferred user rights options | Not done. | Project did not meet to discuss how to implement the recommendations of the user rights consultancy. |
| | | B.2.7. Build awareness on ecological economics & valuation of biodiversity | Partly done through training in the wellbeing assessment framework; and training on valuation of biological resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training workshop on ecological economics for district implementing teams and district project officers was not undertaken due to financial constraints. - Knowledge gained was not applied to implement project activities on the ground. |
| | | B.2.8. Develop incentive packages for BD conservation on community land | - TOR for UNOPS consultancy on incentive packages for BD developed | Consultancy findings were not used to direct project activities and inform policy on BD |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|--------|---|---|---|
| | | | <p>in April 2003</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultancy hired in July 2003 - Together with consultant, the project gave a report-back to communities on findings on the incentive packages to promote BD conservation during Nov. 2003. | conservation |
| | | B.2.9. Implement developed incentive packages | Not done. | Project did not meet to discuss how to implement the recommendations of the incentive packages consultancy. |
| | | B.2.10 Conduct training on new regulations and policies at institutional level | Not done. | Project did not meet to discuss how to implement the recommendations of several project consultancies. |
| | | B.2.11 Promote new resource use regulations for BD conservation at institutional level | Not done. | Project did not meet to discuss how to implement the recommendations of several project consultancies. |
| | | B.2.12 Strengthen Biodiversity Unit at NES | Project worked closely with the BD unit at NES | However, for the last nine months of the project, the unit did not work closely with the project. |
| | | B.2.13 Develop advisory group for Environment Council | Not done. | - |
| | | B.2.14 Strengthen Resource Economics Unit at NES | Project had a government environmental economics (EE) counter-part who worked with the project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For about 50% of the time the counter-part worked on the project which was not good enough to strengthen capacity. - During the last 10 months of the project there was no government EE |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|---|--|--|---|
| | | | | counter-part since the counter-part resigned. |
| | B.3. Local communities and CBOs (including Grazing Associations (GA) empowered to regulate access to grazing resources or Range Management Areas (RMAs) and utilization in the project areas | B.3.1 Incorporate BD issues within GA & RMA management plans. | Range management guidelines were revised to incorporate BD issues. | The revision was not finalized. |
| | | B.3.2. Develop model RMA plans with BD issues | Not done. | - |
| | | B.3.3 Conduct training on new regulations and policies at institutional level | Not done. | No new policies were developed through the project. |
| | | B.3.4 Promote new resource use regulations for BD conservation at institution | Partly done. A number of communities formed CBOs (VGAs) which are effective in controlling grazing and resource use. | - The communities seem to be sustainable and self-motivated, although they still wanted the promised development assistance from the project. - Many new resource use regulations were not enforced by the project though these were developed through the project consultancies work. |
| | | B.3.5 Compile best practice information | Not done. | - |
| | | B.3.6 Document/disseminate traditional knowledge | Not done. | - |
| | | | | |
| | B.4. Communities and local authorities with increased | B.4.1 Assess community empowerment/participation status and promote their enhancement | A community empowerment workshop was held for community | Some communities empowered as that can make independent |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|---|--|--|---|
| | knowledge on biodiversity issues and regulatory procedures and measures | | committee members for all the three districts during mid March 2004. | decisions on BD conservation. |
| | | B.4.2 Conduct relevant BD related training at community and local government levels | Community committees and District implementing teams trained on rangeland and protected area management and community-base M&E | Training not done for the broader communities due to project closure. |
| | | B.4.3 Conduct look and learn tours for communities and local government officials | Some look and learns were undertaken. | Awareness of BD issues by communities & districts was greatly increased |
| | | B.4.4 Support NGOs and CBOs to develop BD related inputs for the project area | - The Quthing Wildlife Development Trust supported to establish vulture restaurants in Seeming and Severing - Several CBOs were supported by the project. | - NGO community in the project area is limited. - CBO activities were not supported to completion due to project closure. |
| | | B.4.5 Disseminate Biodiversity awareness information at community/local agency level. | Partly done. A project brochure was printed and distributed widely. | Follow-up fact sheets with information on BD were not developed. |
| | | B.4.6 Develop BD education centres (information centres) at key PAs in Lesotho | Not done. | - |
| | | | | |
| | B.5. Viable community projects prepared and approved for funding | B.5.1. Conduct planning meetings | Initial community meetings to identify potential tourism enterprises undertaken during May in Qachas Nek and Mohale's Hoek and July in Quthing | - Project did not use –eco-tourism consultancy report findings to concretize on the potential tourism enterprises that could be undertaken by the communities. - Potential eco-tourism enterprises not |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| | | | Initial planning meetings on identified potential community micro-projects were done in November 2003 and early February 2004. | followed-up due to project closure. |
| | | B.5.2. Conduct field visits to relevant and functional projects | Not done. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No functional eco-tourism projects were developed. - The Qobong community built tourist rondavels that are not yet functional. |
| | | B.5.3. Assist in preparations of project proposals | Two proposals were developed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Qobong botanical garden, and ii. Mosaqane spring water bottling proposal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Qobong botanical garden proposal was partly implemented by the project. - The Mosaqane water bottling project never took off. |
| | | B.5.4. Review project proposals | Not done. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No other proposals were prepared for funding from the districts |
| | | B.5.5 Submit project proposals for funding | No proposals were submitted for funding | |
| | | | | |
| Purpose C: An integrated bioregional approach (also trans-border) to biodiversity conservation and watershed management is established. | C.1. Network with other biodiversity projects within Lesotho established and strengthened | C.1.1 Prepare strategy for networking with local partners | Not done. | |
| | | C.1.2 Adopt strategy for networking with local partners | Not done. | |
| | | C.1.3 Organize network meetings | Not done. | |
| | | C.1.4 Prepare joint implementation plans for common projects | Not done. | |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|---|---|--|---------|
| | | C.1.5 Create linkages with private sector/govt/NGOs to promote eco-tourism in project areas | Not done. | |
| | | | | |
| | C.2. Network with South Africa (SA) on cross-border biodiversity conservation established and strengthened | C.2.1 Prepare and adopt strategy for networking with SA agencies working on similar projects | Not done. | |
| | | C.2.2 Network with SA on biodiversity conservation for joint planning of PAs | Not done. | |
| | | C.2.3 Establish joint management of biodiversity resources and projects across borders | Not done. | |
| | | C.2.4 Organise study tours to projects and institutions in SA | Not done. | |
| | | C.2.5 Exchange literature and project experiences with SA partners | Not done. | |
| | | | | |
| | C.3. Network with regional organizations established and strengthened | C.3.1. Prepare and adopt strategy for regional networking with like-minded projects | Not done. | |
| | | C.3.2. Exchange literature and project experiences with regional partners | Not done. | |
| | | C.3.3 Attend regional meetings on BD conservation-related issues | No progress. One workshop was attended in 2002 | |
| | | | | |
| | C.4. Methodologies for a bioregional approaches developed, approved and adopted by the relevant parties | C.4.1 Assess the relevance of bioregional approaches to Lesotho | Not done. | |
| | | C.4.2 Prepare methodology for bioregional approaches to BD conservation | Not done. | |
| | | C.4.3 Solicit/obtain approval of the approach | Not done. | |
| | | | | |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| | C.5. Integrated bioregional plans implemented | C.5.1 Circulate literature/materials on approved bioregional approaches to implementing partners/institutions | Not done. | |
| | | C.5.2 Obtain consensus for integrating the approaches into BD conservation in Lesotho | Not done. | |
| | | C.5.3 Review experiences obtained from implementing the new approaches and adopt recommended action from the review | Not done. | |
| | | | | |
| Purpose D: A functional project organization, management and coordination system for the implementation of biodiversity conservation programs established at central, district and community levels. | D.1. Project facilitation services operational at national and district level | D.1.1 Identify and recruit qualified project administrative staff | Qualified project administrative staff recruited | |
| | | D.1.2 Identify and recruit qualified local project consultants | Local project consultants recruited. | - The first National Project Manager was only recruited after 2 years of project commencement - High staff turnover affected project implementation. - Some of the staff not adequately competent given the nature of the project. |
| | | D.1.3 Identify and recruit qualified international consultants | Qualified international consultants recruited. | - The first Project CTA was only recruited after 2 years of project commencement |
| | | D.1.4 Establish, maintain and operate offices and vehicles at national and district level | Done. | |
| | | D.1.5 Establish internal project control/management system | Done. | |
| | | D.1.6 Attend project | Partly done. | For 2003 and |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|---|--|---|---|
| | | meetings (all steering committee and management meetings) | | 2004 monthly project meetings were not held for 4 – 5 months of the year. |
| | | D.1.7 Facilitate training for project staff and staff from implementing agencies | Staff trained on several aspects of BD conservation and project management. | |
| | | D.1.8 Conduct staff appraisals | Done every year. | |
| | | D.1.9 Conduct team-building workshops | One team building workshop conducted. | Acquired knowledge not applied to project work. |
| | | D.1.10 Maintain high-level liaison with UNDP, GOL and other donors and stakeholders at all levels | Liaison level low. | |
| | | D.1.11 Prepare and adopt National Execution Modalities | NEX modalities prepared. | Modalities not fully implemented. |
| | | | | |
| | D.2. Documents / guidelines prepared on project management and organization | D.2.1 Collect relevant information from different levels of stakeholders | Done. | |
| | | D.2.2. Review documents | Done. | |
| | | D.2.3 Hold consultative workshops | Not done. | - |
| | | D.2.4 Prepare project documents timely and of acceptable standard | Project management and organization document prepared. | However, it was only finalized during late 2003. |
| | | D.2.5 Distribute documents to project partners | Document disseminated to all project partners for comments. | Implementation of the guidelines weak in some places. |
| | | | | |
| | D.3. Project staff and implementing agencies staff with increased knowledge on project management and organization | D.3.1. Conduct training courses/workshops on project management/organization | One workshop on project management was conducted in July 2003 | Acquired knowledge generally not fully applied to project activities. |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|--|---|--|---|
| | | D.3.2 Conduct look and learn/study tours for project and implementing agency staff | Not done. | - |
| | | D.3.3. Conduct on-the job training | Done. | Acquired knowledge generally not fully applied to project activities. |
| | | D.3.4 Organize biodiversity awareness campaigns through media and training | Not done. | - |
| | | | | |
| | D.4. Long-term project funding ensured | D.4.1. Develop Trust Fund Mechanisms with LHDA/Govt for mountain BD | Consultancy on Trust Fund mechanisms completed. | No project meetings were held ye to implement the recommendations. |
| | | D.4.2. Prepare project proposals for additional funding | A draft proposal for additional funding was developed by end of August 2004. | However, no comments were made on the draft from project management, the ministry and UNDP. |
| | | D.4.3 Solicit funding from potential donors for additional funding | Not done. | No proposals for soliciting additional funding were fully developed. |
| | | | | |
| | D.5. Project annual planning and budgeting system operational at national and district levels | D.5.1. Prepare Inception report of acceptable standard | Inception report prepared and submitted on time. | |
| | | D.5.2 Prepare/review Project Strategic Plan of acceptable standard | Project Strategic plan prepared. | However, the plan was not constantly reviewed with project implementation progress. |
| | | D.5.3 Prepare Annual Work Plan and Budget of acceptable standard | Done. | |
| | | D.5.4 Obtain approval for planning and budgeting documents | Done. | |
| | | D.5.5. Review Annual work plan and Budget | Annual work plans and budgets were reviewed for each year. | |
| | | D.5.6 Compile Annual Work Plan and Budget of | Annual work plans and | The annual work plans for 2004 |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|---------|--|--|--|--|
| | | acceptable standard | budgets were prepared for each year. | were not submitted and approved on time. |
| | D.6. Project monitoring and evaluation systems operational at all levels (national, district and community) | D.6.1. Hold monthly, quarterly and annual progress review meetings/workshops | - Project monthly meetings were held as scheduled. | However for 2003 and 2004 project did not convene meetings for 4 -5 months. |
| | | D.6.2. Prepare monthly, quarterly and annual progress reports timely and of acceptable standard | - Progress reports were prepared quarterly and annually for the overall project and semi-annually for EE. | EE Progress and Annual reports prepared timely. However, overall project monthly, quarterly and annual reports were not prepared timely for 2003 and 2004. |
| | | D.6.3. Prepare progress review reports (PIR, PPER, TPR, MTR and TR) of acceptable standard | Progress review reports prepared. | Some of the reports were not of acceptable standard. |
| | | D.6.4 Prepare reports for steering committee meetings | Reports were prepared. | Some of the reports were not of acceptable standard. |
| | | D.6.5 Conduct field visits to monitor field activities (activity monitoring) | Done jointly by UNDP and NES. | Visits were not used to provide the required direction to project implementation. |
| | | D.6.6. Carry out baseline surveys | Socio-economic and biophysical baseline surveys were undertaken. | Bio-physical surveys were not completed. |
| | | D.6.7. Carry out tracer studies | No tracer studies were undertaken. | - |
| | | D.6.8. Establish participatory M&E system (e.g. use of local plant collectors and resources monitors) in the project area | A community-based M & E system developed together with community representatives. - Training how to use the M & E tool done in mid-June 2004. | The M&E system not implemented to assess its effectiveness. |
| | D.7. Project | D.7.1 Identify and maintain | Done. | |

| Purpose | Output | Planned Activity | Achievements | Remarks |
|----------------|---|--|-----------------------------|---|
| | procurement system operational at national and district levels | a register of potential supplier of goods and services for the project | | |
| | | D.7.2 Prepare tender/bid documents | Done. | |
| | | D.7.3 Evaluate and award tenders | Done. | |
| | | D.7.4 Procure goods and services timely, effectively and efficiently | Done. | For the last four months of the project payments were delayed due to the unavailability of funds from UNDP. |
| | | D.7.5 Prepare simple procurement guidelines for the project in line with NEX modalities | Done. | |
| | | | | |
| | D.8. Project financial management system operational at national and district levels | D.8.1 Open project accounts with reputable bank(s) | Done at the National level. | Not implemented at the district level, though initial attempts were made. |
| | | D.8.2 Make timely payments for goods and services to the project | Done. | For the last four months of the project payments were delayed due to the unavailability of funds from UNDP. |
| | | D.8.3. Prepare financial reports of acceptable standard on time | Done. | The reports did not track on project financial balances. |
| | | D.8.4 Ensure sufficient funds for project activities in the project account | Done. | For the last four months of the project payments were delayed due to the unavailability of funds from UNDP. |
| | | D.8.5 Prepare for and assist auditing of project accounts | Done. | |
| | | D.8.6 Implement audit recommendations promptly | Done. | |

Annex 5

LIST OF PEOPLE WHO WERE MET

MASERU

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Paul Maluke Nkofo | Former DPO, Qacha's Nek |
| 2. Teboho Maliehe | Former NPM |
| 3. Malefane Mokuoane | Former NPM |
| 4. E. Sekaleli | Director, Forestry |
| 5. Stanley Damane | Director, NES |
| 6. J.T. Metsing | PS, MTEC |
| 7. Thulo Qhotsokoane | Former Biodiversity Officer, NES |
| 8. Liphho Motanya | NCSA |
| 9. Lineo Mdee | SDA, UNDP |
| 10. Chaba Mokuku | Coordinator, MDTP |
| 11. Leonia Thulo | Director, Range Management |
| 12. Bore Motsamai | Coordinator, HENRRIEP |
| 13. Edward Kairu | Former CTA |
| 14. Motselisi Ramakoae | Former Programme Officer, UNDP |
| 15. Ernest faster | Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP |
| 16. 'Mathabo Chaoana | Programme Assistant, UNDP |

QACHA'S NEK

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Khotso Mohapi | Environment Officer |
| 2. 'Manthati Sehahle | Chief, Mosaqane |
| 3. 'Manepo Makatjane | Rural Development Officer |
| 4. Thoriso Mpeke | Rural Development Officer |

Southern Mountain Association for Rural Transformation and Development (SMARTD)

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|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Palo Mochafo | Managing Director |
| 2. Jongilanga Lebafa | Deputy Managing Director |
| 3. Mark Mehrlander | Agriculture Advisor |

MOSAOANE

1. Ramateka Molikeng
2. Nkejane Radebe
3. Mphatsoe Rametsi
4. 'Mathabang Taabi
5. 'Majakobo Ratikane
6. Sam Mokhoetlelele
7. Nosaenet Kuphiso
8. Tsietsi Thakalekoala
9. Kika Maduma
10. Makeke Nkoi
11. LehlohonoloNokoli
12. Ndlalaebuzoa Taemane
13. Mokobeli Motholi
14. 'Malebajoa Monanatsa
15. Thabang Lekhahlela
16. Khanya Makeoane

PHELLONG

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Mokhethi Hoody | Chair of the RMA |
| 2. Motseko Moakhi | Member of Committee |
| 3. 'Malipuo Khoalenyane | Member of Committee |
| 4. Mokameli Mosola | Member of Committee |
| 5. Moitheri Koele | Member of Committee |

HA SEKAKE

1. Makapari Mosothoane
2. Tsebo Lerotholi
3. 'Mamotheba Tautona
4. Thabo Daniel Kose
5. 'Makhotsotalang Sebako
6. 'Mantoa Mohale
7. 'Mathabiso Thamae
8. 'Malikeletsane Mosothoane
9. 'Mantelile Mojaki
10. Nthabiseng Makhatha
11. Phatela Ramotsoene
12. Moleleki Chabana
13. Masie Khalihae
14. Tseko Lethola
15. Mphobe Ntsoane
16. Nombulelo Makeka
17. 'Matsepo Mothepu

MAKHOARENG

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| 1. Moleleki Rantle | |
| 2. Mohlapiso Makhaola | |
| 3. Majara Makhaola | Chief |
| 4. Lehlohonolo Nkalai | |
| 5. Hlomelang Taunyane | |

QUTHING

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|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Naleli Marake | Local Government |
| 2. Lisebo Makoele | National Environment Secretariat |

QUTHING WILDLIFE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

1. Teboho Mokau

MEETING WITH QUTHING DSC (FTC)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Makhabane Letsei | Representative of the chiefs on DSC |
| 2. Mareka Leokana | Member, DSC |
| 3. Morero Mohale | Ha Motjoli |
| 4. 'Masehloma Tsepane | Ha Tsepane |
| 5. 'Makhotsa Sebeso | GCS Forestry |
| 6. Teboho Tsematsi | GCS Forestry |
| 7. 'Mamoeti Mahase | Councillor, C09 |

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|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 8. Thesele Peete Nkuebe | Chief, Tebetebeng Ha Peete |
| 9. Matela Ramatsie | Member, DSC |
| 10. Mpiti S. Letsie | Chief, Qhoali |
| 11. Ntja S. Moepi | Qhoali-Seforong RMA |
| 12. Motebang Sekhobo | Member, DSC Ha Jobo |
| 13. Mahlomola Letsie | Chief, Ha Jobo |
| 14. Pitso Makabe | Ha Lebelonyane |

LE TSA-LA-LETSIE

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| 1. Mzwake Katala | Councillor |
| 2. Tseliso Matlokotsi | |
| 3. Papi Qola | |
| 4. Lebabo Lethena | |
| 5. Mohlolo | |
| 6. Noamen | Ha Lazaro |
| 7. Mamalephane | Ha Lazaro |
| 8. Nobongile | Ha Lazaro |
| 9. 'Mathabiso | Ha Lazaro |
| 10. 'Mamoliehi | Ha Lazaro |
| 11. Manepo Liphoto | Ha Lazaro |
| 12. Nolindile Khonzaphi | Ha Lazaro |
| 13. Nofezence Khonzaphi | Ha Lazaro |
| 14. Nolasi Khonzaphi | Ha Lazaro |
| 15. 'Mamahlapane Malephane | Ha Lazaro |
| 16. Nowasam | Ha Lazaro |

TSATSANE

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. 'Mantsoaki Mokebe | Ha Chooko |
| 2. Tholang Mosieane | Ha Liphapang |
| 3. Mamalo Letsie | Ha Liphapang |
| 4. Phakoe Mohajane | Ha Liphapang |
| 5. 'Makhositlile Letsie | Ha Liphapang |
| 6. 'Masamoele Makhube | Ha Liphapang |
| 7. Letsema Letsie | RMA, Seboba |
| 8. Khana Poulo | Morataleng |
| 9. Theohang Moteuli | Matselahabeli |
| 10. Nofikile May | Chairperson, Tsatsane CNR |
| 11. Mahlatsi Sekonyela | Ha Sekonyela |

SEFORONG

- | | |
|----------------------|----------|
| 1. 'Mamookho Tsephe | Seforong |
| 2. 'Malebohang Pitso | Seforong |
| 3. Moeletsi Tsephe | Seforong |

MOHALE'S HOEK

QOBONG

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. Tseliso Leluma | Member |
| 2. 'Matebello Ranyali | Councillor |

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 3. Rathatso Lefuma | Treasurer, CNR |
| 4. Ramabanta Ranyali | Secretary, CNR |
| 5. Masopha Moshoeshoe | |
| 6. Fusi Makhetha | Chief (acting) |
| 7. Molaponyane Ranyali | Chief (substantive) |

KETANE

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Salemane Rankuatsana | Member VGS, Tlhabeli |
| 2. Nyatso Mosiea | Member RMA, Ha Thaba Ketane |
| 3. Mamphoko Mokotjo | IEC |
| 4. 'Manthatisi Khiti | Member, Qomoqomo Ketane |
| 5. Makhala Malla | Member, Malehloana |
| 6. Malime Moratekane | Member, Ha Phale |
| 7. Bonang Sefoboke | Member, Nohana Ketane |
| 8. Tahlaho Matla | Member Nohana |
| 9. Sekhobe Karabo | Member, Tiping |
| 10. 'Makhumamang Leteba | Treasurer, Ketane |
| 11. 'Machabane Mokone | Secretary, Ketane |
| 12. Tseliso Kotelo | Member, Ha Thaba |
| 13. Chabaseoele Khosi | Chair, Ha Lephoto |
| 14. Nkukuli Karabo | Member, Qomoqomo Ha Khophane |
| 15. Tlala Lephupuhloana | Vice-Chair, Qomoqomo |
| 16. Lesole Mohale | Chair, Ha Tlhabeli |
| 17. Thato Posholi | Member, Ha Tlhabeli |
| 18. Matlalang Phofoolo | Member, Malehloana |
| 19. Malebanye Posholi | Member, Khojane |
| 20. Sehobe Khiba | Member, Malehloana |
| 21. 'Marethabile Ramoshobane | Member, Malehloana |
| 22. 'Malineo Sethobane | Member, Motelisong |
| 23. Majele Lebakae | Member, Mafikeng |
| 24. Letletse Khoabe | Member, Malehloane |
| 25. 'Matumelo Tsepiiso | Member, Thabaletu |
| 26. Mojela Mososoana | Member, Malehloana |
| 27. 'Mabokaako Lerotholi | Member, Malehloana |
| 28. Tsepo Mohapi | Member, Mafikeng |
| 29. 'Mamoliehi Khasipe | Member, Malekholo |
| 30. Tsalane Mphasi | Member, Malekholo |
| 31. Motlatsi Letsie | Chief, Borakatau |
| 32. Ralebakae Letsie | Chief, Qhoasing |
| 33. Malera Lerothoe | Chief, Malehloana |
| 34. Sello Lerotholi | Local Government |
| 35. Lehana Seutloali | Local Government |
| 36. 'Mamokete Mochochoko | Local Government |
| 37. Mokete Berente | IEC |
| 38. 'Mantho Letsie | Qobong, Local Government |
| 39. Masilo Mokhala | Member, Qomoqomo |

MAPOTSANE

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. 'Matheko Malebanye | Member of Committee |
| 2. 'Maitumeleng Tsalau | Member |
| 3. 'Maphomolo Moramotse | Member |
| 4. 'Masajene Setefane | Liaison |

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 5. Nako Mohale | Member |
| 6. Sechele Sechele | Member |
| 7. Lehlohonolo Cheka | Member |
| 8. Voeswoa Vena | Member, Youth |
| 9. Matseliso 'Moso | Member, Youth |
| 10. Moeketsi Makhetha | Councillor |
| 11. Chopho Tenki | Member, Publicity |
| 12. Jerefabteng Malebanye | Chief |
| 13. Mosoaboli S. Mokaloba | Chair |

OTHER

| | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. Nik Sekhran | UNDP/GEF Regional Coordinator, Pretoria |
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