

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION MEMORANDUM (ICM)

Open Africa North South Tourism Corridor (OANSTC) Project

Regional (Namibia, Zambia) – P097136

October 27, 12



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A. BASIC TRUST FUND INFORMATION

TF Name:	Open Africa North South Tourism Corridor (OANSTC) Project (Regional: Namibia; Zambia)
TF Number:	092183
Task Team Leader Name/TF Managing Unit:	Jean-Michel Pavy/AFTEN (8107)
TF Amount:	Total financing: GEF: \$540,000
Recipient of TF funds:	Open Africa
Type of TF:	GEF free-standing
Single/Multi Donor:	Multi (TF602001)
Donor Name:	Global Environmental Facility (GEF)
TF Program Source Code:	GEFIA
Purpose of TF:	TA – Technical Assistance
TF Approval/IBTF Clearance Date:	April 28, 2008
TF Activation Date:	August 11, 2008
TF Closing Date:	May 31, 2012
Date of ICM Submission to TFO:	September 18, 2012

1. Cost and Financing Table

Cofinancier	Original	Actual
PDF-A	\$150,000: GEF (\$50,000); Standard Chartered Bank, Engen Petroleum Namibia and Engen Petroleum South Africa (\$100,000)	\$167,165: GEF (\$50,000); OA (\$25,000); Standard Chartered Bank, Engen Namibia and Skorpion Zink (\$92,165)
GEF (MSP)	\$540,000	\$508,262 (94% disbursement)
Recipient	\$632,000 (Open Africa)	\$784,698 (Open Africa)
Other	N/A	\$700,205 (Ford Foundation (\$300,000); Hertz (\$108,000) \$5,205 (DED/GIZ); \$287,000 (SNV)

Total	\$1,339,165	\$2,160,330
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2. Rating summary

Category	Rating
Overall TF Outcome	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Overall Implementation Performance (IP)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Overall Risk to Development Outcome	Moderate (M) to Significant (S)
Bank Performance	Satisfactory (S)
Recipient Performance	Satisfactory (S)

B. TRUST FUND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN

1. Original Trust Fund Development Objectives

1. The original Medium-Size Project (MSP) document defined two project objectives, the development and the global environmental objective. Both remained unchanged throughout implementation.
2. The development objective was to strengthen the ability of community members living within the Open Africa¹ North South Tourism Corridor (OANSTC)² to enter the economic mainstream by leveraging their tourism opportunities.
3. The global environmental objective was to assist in the mainstreaming of biodiversity into tourism by communities along the OANSTC Project routes.

2. Original and Revised Trust Fund Activities/Components

4. The project design was crafted to stimulate tourism development and encourage biodiversity conservation by creating and supporting tourism routes in biodiversity-rich areas. A so-called Open Africa (OA) “route” is a destination-level partnership clustering tourism attractions (accommodation suppliers, tour operators, transport operators, local artisans, tourism guides, and food suppliers), rural communities and local government. The project’s main beneficiary and target group included tourism sector actors, rural communities, national and local government and biodiversity conservation actors.
5. The original MSP document included the following four components.:

Component	Total (US\$)	GEF (US\$)
Biodiversity-focused Routes	455,000	332,000
Targeted Marketing and Communication for Biodiversity-focused Routes	218,000	139,000

¹ Open Africa (OA) is a non-governmental organization based in South Africa that uses tourism as an economic platform to create and sustain jobs for rural communities by developing and marketing a network of self-drive travel destinations (“routes”) in Southern Africa (see www.openafrica.org). The organization was created in 1995 under the patronage of Nelson Mandela. OA supports currently 60 routes in 6 countries (South Africa, Zambia, Namibia, Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland). Its services to local communities and entrepreneurs include development and branding of tourism business products, capacity building as well as networking. OA receives support from media partners, private sector and strategic alliances with international organizations and groups.

² The corridor is defined (see LOA) as tourism clusters called routes loosely forming a “corridor”.

Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation	112,000	47,000
Project Management	378,000	22,000

6. Most of the changes at component and activity level were introduced during the mid-term review process (August 16 to 28, 2010, two years after project launch), discussed and validated by the recipient and the World Bank team as a minor level 2 restructuring approved in February 2011 and are described under each component below. The revisions resulted in a revised project results framework (see section B.3.) and were documented in progress reports and aide-memoires.

7. Component 1: Biodiversity-focused Routes: This core component aimed to develop 8 new and to upgrade 3 existing routes in Namibia and Zambia (total of 11 routes) by mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the Open Africa standard route development and implementation process. The key feature of the approach was the introduction of route specific “flagship species”³ for awareness raising and monitoring purposes. The activities planned for each route included feasibility and baseline studies, stakeholder meetings and workshops, biodiversity data collection, participant certification, installation of computer and internet connection, production of route brochures, participant plaques and signs, establishment and insertion of route website, and organization of a route launching event. The component aimed further to provide follow-up route support through developing a participatory flagship species conservation plan and a tourism route strategy, capacity building for route forums and flagship species information plaques.

8. *Key revisions* - The number of routes to be established was reduced by time of the MTR from 11 to 7 (5 new and 2 up-graded) as the initial target was judged too ambitious and unrealistic. The project design underestimated the support needed to cover the vast distances within each of the two countries within the limited project time frame and human and financial resources. The reduced number of routes to be established was meant to enhance sustainability of each route and to ensure delivery on the project outcomes.

9. Two important activities were added at time of the MTR:

- (i) Conservation fund for implementation of the route flagship species conservation plan. The conservation fund was in reality a budget line for concrete conservation activities requested by route participants (see section C.4. for list of projects).

³ Flagship species do not necessarily have to be threatened, endemic, indicator or keystone species. The term “flagship species” in the OANSTCP context is based on people’s perception of the importance of that species as an emblem around which a community can rally.

- (ii) Route signage to inform and guide travelers passing through an area. Open Africa has never committed to erecting road signage in the past due to difficulties in getting approval from a range of government and roads authorities. At project closure, 5 routes had signage erected.⁴

10. Four activities planned were dropped as judged either not relevant or feasible anymore:

- (i) Installation of PC and internet connection at route forum level
- (ii) Volunteer expert advice
- (iii) Route re-launch event
- (iv) Flagship species information signs/plaques

11. A summary of all changes (addition or removal of activities) of component 1 is provided in Table 1.

⁴ The two that didn't receive signs were Untamed Kafue and Caprivi Wetlands. Untamed Kafue's location in a National Park complicated approvals to the extent that it was not possible and Caprivi Wetlands did not manage to get approval from the Namibian Roads Authority before project closure.

Table 1: Component 1: Planned vs. actual activities during project lifetime

BIODIVERSITY FOCUSED ROUTES (up-graded and new routes)					
Activities	Plan	Actual	Removed	Added	Rationale / Notes
Regional ⁵ : R.1. Road show	x	x			A first roadshow was carried out during preparation in the four initial countries.
Regional: R.2. Route signage		x		x (MTR)	A branded route signage was decided at MTR to increase visibility of routes at local level and budget from dropped flagship plaques and other activities were reallocated to ensure adequate funding.
Regional: R.3. Route conservation fund for conservation projects		x		x (MTR)	The fund was meant to enable routes to pilot projects that can benefit the flagship species and operated on a first come first serve basis.
Regional: R.4. Biodiversity networker	x	x		x	Biodiversity networker position was relocated from OA HQ to Lusaka office to ensure proximity and cost-efficiency. As position became vacant for the 3 rd time, a decision was taken to contract 3 local biodiversity networkers familiar with the OA routes instead. Costs were split between components 3 and 1.
Regional: R.5. Flagship information signs	x		x (MTR)		As the budget for flagship plaques was not substantial and would only provide for limited number of signs generating insignificant impact, funds were reallocated to the added erection of road signage. 2.
1. Biodiversity Introduction Workshop / Stakeholder meetings	x	x			Two separate workshops were supported: community stakeholder WS and conservation planning WS.

⁵ Regional: Across route support and/or activity with no-route specific budget allocation.

2. Community and Biodiversity WS and data collection	x	x			
3. Route launch /Re-launch	x	x	x (MTR)		It was decided that route re-launch (for existing routes) would lead to additional expenses that could be applied on other activities with more impact. Therefore re-launching of up-graded routes was dropped.
4. Participant certification and signage	x	x			
5. Install PC & Internet Communication	x		x (Y1)		It was decided early in the project that the installation of PCs and Internet would be problematic. The maintenance of the PCs would be challenging and internet connections expensive and impossible to maintain after project closure. Further, many of the route forum participants had internet already.
6. Flagship information plaques	x		x (MTR)		As the budget for flagship plaques was not substantial and would only provide for limited number of signs generating insignificant impact, funds were reallocated to the added erection of road signage.
7. Volunteer Expert Advice	x		x (Y2)		Route forum members concluded that they were not able to host volunteers and to provide transport support.
8. Training Biodiversity Monitor & Mentor	x				Initial training was provided to community volunteers together with field guide training. As motivation and results dropped, training was provided to existing tourism operator guides to ensure sustainability of approach.
9. Conservation Planning Workshop	x	x			

10. Tourism route strategy	x	x			Partnership with SNV (MoU signed in 2009) to develop route strategies for each of the routes. SNV experiences budget cuts and had to close down tourism programme resulting in only 2 routes developing five-year strategies. Other routes have developed strategies without SNV support.
11. Route Maintenance	x	x			

12. Table 2 shows the planned vs. actual expenditure for the component. 85 % of the planned amount was disbursed by the project completion date.

Table 2: Cumulated expenditures in ZAR and USD (planned vs. actual expenditures)

	Component 1 costs total ZAR		Variance	Component 1 costs total USD	
	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Actual⁶</i>	%	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Regional	1,278,502	820,011	64	257,364	109,335
Zambia (5 routes)	1,535,156	1,393,003	91	356,084	185,734
Namibia (2 routes)	299,191	433,256	145	69,398	57,767
Total	3,112,850	2,646,270	85	682,847	352,836

(Average exchange rate used throughout implementation 7.5)

13. Component 2: Targeted Marketing and Communication for Biodiversity-Focused Routes:
The component aimed to strengthen the marketing exposure of the routes and their participants through production, printing and distribution of brochures, newsletters and other communication tools; annual route promotion marketing events in Windhoek and Lusaka; advertisement in targeted specialized conservation and travel-orientated journals and inclusion of OANSTC Project routes in international and national conservation and community-based tourism orientated marketing campaigns. The component planned further to develop a database of tour operators and conservation orientated media, conduct promotional route visits for journalists, initiate representation of OA and route members at travel shows, develop a marketing and communication handbook for route forums including web-based marketing, production of interpretation boards for biodiversity and flagship species and optimize and up-grade the OA website. Activities focused on reaching existing and potential new OA route participants, tour

⁶ Figure provided are funds committed at closing and that will be disbursed by the end of the grace period on November 30, 2012

operators, media representatives, tourism offices, local government, travellers as well as development partners.

14. *Key Revisions - Only one activity was added during the MTR:*

- (i) Reprinting of route brochure maps: The brochure maps were popular among visitors and acted as a good marketing tool for the routes. The second print run (2,000 copies) also allowed for the inclusion of participants that joined after the first batch was printed and for general updates and improvements to be made.

15. *Two activities were dropped:*

- (i) Annual marketing promotion tour to Windhoek and Lusaka: The OA team assessed their attendance at travel shows as satisfactory enough to reach out to tour operators;
- (ii) Promotional route visits for journalists and other media: The activity could not be implemented due to logistical difficulties in organizing these trips. However, media coverage was assured through other communication outputs funded by the project such as press releases, newsletter etc.

16. *One activity was shifted to component 1 and later dropped:*

- (i) Flagship species interpretation boards.

17. A summary of all changes (addition or removal of activities) of component 2 is provided in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Component 2: Planned vs. actual activities during project lifetime

II. TARGETED MARKETING & COMMUNICATION					
Activities	Plan	Actual	Removed	Added	Notes
A. Corridor and route marketing					
1. Tour operator focused marketing trips	x		x		This activity was not implemented as the attendance at travel shows were deemed sufficient to target tour operators who could assist in promoting the routes.

2. Journalist Visits	x		x		Due to logistical difficulties in organizing these trips to coincide with Open Africa team visits to the region, the activity was not implemented. The routes nevertheless received good exposure in print and online media.
3. Launch Brochure Print Supply	x	x			
4. Second print brochure supply				x (MTR)	To enable participants that joined later to benefit from the exposure and increase the impact of the brochures as a result of the success of the launch supply.
B. Open Africa Marketing					
1. Supporting network with marketing & communication	x	x			Development of marketing and communication handbook for route forum and other communication and marketing print tools including footnotes, newsletter, monthly releases, advertisement in specialized magazines, database development of tour operators and media were implemented as planned.
2. Exhibiting at local and international travel shows	x	x			Indaba Getaway (Durban), Namibian Travel Expo, Zambian International Tourism Exhibition.. Open Africa attended ITB and WTM in 2008 and decided that the international shows had limited value to the routes as the focus is on mass tourism and therefore a completely different market. Consequently, a decision was taken to focus only on local and regional travel shows.
3. Website optimization and upgrades.	x	x			

18. Table 4 shows the planned vs. actual expenditure for the component. 132 % of the planned amount was disbursed by project completion.

Table 4: Cumulated expenditures in ZAR and USD (planned vs. actual expenditures)

	Component 2 costs total ZAR		Variance	Component 2 costs total USD	
	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Actual</i>		<i>Plan</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Total	1,006,169	1,332,997	132	233,384	177,733

19. Component 3: Monitoring and Evaluation: The component aimed to improve the M&E system at Open Africa and to assist route level tourism and biodiversity conservation monitoring efforts. It planned to support the development of a management information system for the OA network; detailed baseline studies for selected routes; development of biodiversity monitoring tools in particular flagship species at local level; training for biodiversity monitor and biodiversity mentor at local level; development and dissemination of a replication and knowledge management plan, route forum knowledge sharing seminars, up-dating of the mandatory GEF tracking tool and registration of route members through the OA participants tracking system.

20. Key revisions - The changes agreed during the MTR, concerned the biodiversity networker position and location: The biodiversity networker was a new and key position for OA, responsible for the successful introduction of the biodiversity conservation aspect into route development/up-grading, monitoring and management. The first networker was based in Open Africa's HQ office in South Africa. This arrangement was not conducive to engage in a close dialogue with the emerging route forums and participants. As the first networker resigned during year 1, a decision was taken to recruit a local biodiversity networker based in Zambia to increase the ability to interact with routes, cut costs and increase efficacy of support. After one year of service, the second Biodiversity Networker resigned for private reasons. This posed a major risk to the project as there was limited time left and recruitment and training of a new networker would take too long and prevent the project objectives from being achieved in the given timeframe. Therefore, the MTR agreed to replace the biodiversity networker position with three local biodiversity networkers based in Zambia at different locations⁷ using short-term contracts to enable the project to quickly gain lost time. In addition, a local community development expert was introduced at the office in Lusaka, which proved to be highly beneficial for providing route support.

21. A summary of all changes (addition or removal of activities) of component 3 is provided in Table 5 below:

⁷ 1 local position at Kavango: Kavango region, 1 local position at Caprivi: Caprivi and North and South Barotse, 1 local position at Mpika: Munjii Wilderness. In addition 1 volunteer not contracted by the project was based at KNP.

Table 5: Component 3: Planned vs. actual activities during project lifetime

III. MONITORING AND EVALUATION					
Activities	Plan	Actual	Removed	Added	Notes
1. Install and maintain MIS	x	x			Difficulties with route level data collection and transfer did not allow to track visitors but average number of visitors per participants
2. Participant registration	x	x			
3. Development of monitoring tools	x	x			The initial design for flagship species monitoring tested during preparation was based on an adapted Namibian MOMS model. Actual monitoring of flagship species was species and route specific and monitoring booklets were developed. However, it was not supervised by OA as the initial design anticipated supervision by a route mentor on voluntary basis, which did not work.
4. Monitoring of route forums	x	x			
5. Route forum knowledge sharing seminars					
a) National seminars	x		x (MTR)		One seminar was sufficient since the number of routes were reduced.
b) Corridor seminar	x	x			
c). Seminar feedback and compilation of replication plan	x	x			
6. Biodiversity Networker	x	x			In Y1, a local office was established in Lusaka/Zambia to reduce travel costs and time and ensure proximity with the new routes to be established. The office housed the second biodiversity networker and an additional position introduced during implementation - a local community development expert (latter cofunded by DED and OA). By MTR, biodiversity networker position was replaced by three local biodiversity networkers
7. Up-dating SP-2 Tracking Tool	x	x			
8. Baseline studies	x	x			No specific budget was allocated. Baseline assessment was done during the route

					development process.
9. Training of biodiversity monitor and mentor at local level	x	x			

22. The Table 6 shows the planned vs. actual expenditure for the component. 71 % of the planned amount was disbursed by project completion.

Table 6: Cumulated expenditures in ZAR and USD (planned vs. actual expenditures)

	Component 3 costs total ZAR		Variance	Component 3 costs total USD	
	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Actual</i>	%	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Total	328,347	233,450	71	76,161	31,127

23. Component 4: Project Management: The component was meant to supply Open Africa with the necessary resources for goods, equipment, audit fees and operating costs to manage the project including staffing time of website manager, manager, administrator, accountant and operations manager and to support production of financial statement and project reports in line with the legal agreement.

24. No revision was made to this component.

25. The Table 7 shows the planned vs. actual expenditure for the component. 115 % of the planned amount was disbursed by project completion.

Table 7: Cumulated expenditures in ZAR and USD (planned vs. actual expenditures)

	Component 4 costs total ZAR		Variance	Component 4 costs total USD	
	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Actual</i>	%	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Total	4,756,567	5,484,484	115	634,209	731,265

3. Outcome Indicators (OI)

26. Table 8 below provides an overview of the original outcome indicators related to the development and global environmental objectives as stated in the MSP document and of the revised outcome indicators as agreed during the mid-term review in 2010. At that time, the Bank rated achievement of the OI as “Unsatisfactory (U)” as only 35 % of the targets were achieved. The adjustments to the original outcome indicators were needed to make them more measurable and realistic. The revised outcome indicators aimed to improve their attributability to the project design and measure business generated by the project. The two original global environmental outcome indicators were merged into one revised outcome indicator. The revised indicators were used in subsequent project progress reporting by Open Africa.

Table 8: Original and revised Outcome Indicators⁸

PDO	Outcome Indicators	Revised Outcome Indicator	Explanation
Community members living within the OANSTC corridor entered the economic mainstream by leveraging their tourism opportunities.	OI 1: The # of additional part-time/full-time direct jobs within the route participant communities by the end of the project is 253.	OI 1: The annual # of visitors to established and emerging route participants attributable to OA is $x = 430 / y = 560$. (x = emerging / y = established).	Additional employment is related to increased business but has usually, a 1 to 2 years lag and only an unknown portion is attributable to the project.
	OI 2: 60 additional local business operators in newly established/upgraded tourism routes have been established and 30 of those have been operational for more than a year.	OI 2: The annual # of OA website booking to route participants is $x = 430 / y = 560$ (x = emerging / y = established).	The indicator was too ambitious for the project timeframe and local conditions for establishing new businesses were not considered. In addition, at mid-term the number of routes was reduced.
	OI 3: The average # of local business operators issued from the local community is 50%.	OI 3: The # of additional small tourism products attributable to OA is 6.	The definition of local community was lacking and caused confusion (many local people own and run businesses, but are not classified as community members).
GDO	Outcome Indicators	Revised Outcome Indicators	
Biodiversity is mainstreamed into tourism by communities along OANSTC routes.	OI 4: # of routes in the corridor that have identified and are monitoring a flagship species is 80% by the end of the project.	The % of participants from each route that are implementing their portion of the route flagship conservation plan is 50%	4 + 5: Both indicators were too ambitious within given timeframe and considered a route as a homogenous management entity, which is not the case.

⁸ Despite revision of the OI, the final completion report and ICM showed deficiency with OI 1 (not measured by time of completion) and OI 1 (lack of accuracy).

	<p>OI 5: On 40% of the routes the flagship species is benefiting from conservation activities from the community that has an impact on that species by the end of the project.</p>	<p>Merged into revised #4 above.</p>	<p>The adjustments for the revised outcome indicator #4 measure better actual participant involvement.</p> <p>5. Impact on species is long-term outcome beyond the initial time frame of the project (3 years). Further, project did not provide any funds for conservation activities (introduced only by MTR).</p>
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4. Other Significant Changes in Trust Fund Design

27. In addition to the previous changes at outcome indicator, component and activity level, the midterm review mission agreed to the following changes:

- (i) The project's closing date was extended by one year to May 31, 2012. The main reasons being: (a) underestimated time needed for piloting biodiversity route development approach, (b) changes and vacancies related to biodiversity networker position, and (c) operating in OA "new" countries with vast distances. Noteworthy, OA requested a two-year no-cost extension in order to achieve the project objectives, which could not be granted due to the GEF cycle. The initial revised results framework at MTR included targets for a two year extension (until May 2013) which were then adjusted to match a one year extension.
- (ii) The budget and procurement plan were revised to accommodate changes made during MTR with ensuring focus on biodiversity dimension of the project.

C. OUTCOME

1. Relevance of TF Objectives, Design and Implementation

28. Objectives: The project was designed to address global and national policy priorities for sustainable nature-based tourism development. The development objective addressed national and local development priorities to generate employment in remote rural areas, foster CBNRM and private-public partnerships in Namibia and Zambia. Both objectives remained relevant to the end of the project supporting innovative approaches for mainstreaming biodiversity into tourism development. The pre-selection of the project routes during preparation corresponded to recognized areas of biodiversity and tourism value and where nature based tourism is seen as a key industry for economic development and nature based tourism. This is evidenced by inclusion of some OANSTCP routes in the largest Transfrontier Conservation Area Initiative (TFCA) of the World, the Kavango-Zambezi TFCA (launched in March 2012). Two routes in Namibia and three routes in Zambia are included in that initiative.

29. Implementation arrangements: The project's structure and implementation arrangement was designed on the basis of OA's successful innovative route development approach in South Africa focusing on generating tourism-based revenues for rural community members. The original design acknowledged that OA had no capacity and experience with biodiversity conservation and therefore made provision for a biodiversity networker position and capacity building. The preparation phase included multiple consultations and resulted in a documented proposed approach around monitoring and conserving route flagship species. However, the project performance suffered from the modest implementation arrangements (limited and perhaps less qualified biodiversity networker staff, use of unpaid volunteers for biodiversity monitoring and mentoring) and the absence of a local OA office in Namibia and Zambia. A partnership with a conservation actor or a small technical working group as part of the initial or later arrangements could have contributed significantly to the achievement of the project global environmental objectives and outcomes. This was done for the business development aspects. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with SNV⁹ in 2009 and strengthened substantially tourism and business development on the network. Mitigation measures were taken at MTR to refocus the project on biodiversity conservation (i.e. conservation fund, local biodiversity networkers, route signage, partnership with ZAWA).

30. Design: The initial component structure of the project remained relevant to the end of the project. It introduced the concept of flagship-species as a proxy for biodiversity conservation, proposed improvement in OA route network marketing and monitoring and ensured sound project management. This is demonstrated by an implementation that remained close to the initial design. However, considering that this was a highly innovative project, the design team could have defined better the approach to stimulate the conservation of flagship species and

⁹ SNV provided support in: (1) building capacity of route participants; (2) routes community SMME participants to training institutions; and (3) the establishment of SMME that provide services to the route participants through "backward linkages" (e.g. production of vegetables, laundry services, etc.). Multi Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs), facilitated by SNV were on the Barotse Trails and Munjili Routes and the respective fora have been formally registered as tourism associations and have developed strategic plans and websites.

realize earlier that the initial proposal was too ambitious and did not pay sufficient attention to monitoring of outcomes.

2. Achievement of TF Development Objective.

31. The main sources of information for this assessment are: (1) the initial project document approved by the WB/GEF, (2) the MTR Aide memoire, (3) a project completion mission in Zambia and Namibia in June 2012, (4) a final route participant survey, and (5) OA's own completion report. Other documents were consulted (see annex 4).

32. Outcome and development and global environmental objectives. Table 10 shows the achievements of the project objectives through its four outcome indicators. The assessment is positive despite some difficulties in measuring accurately the achievement on the project development objectives due to deficiencies with the m&e framework and its implementation. Two of the outcome indicators proved problematic: number of visitors which was not measured by participants, number of bookings which instead was measured by OA as number of website inquiries which overestimated the value of the indicator. This is likely due to the confidential nature of business information (e.g. employment, revenues, and guests) and weak management capacity at route participant level. In addition, the monitoring of flagship species based on a voluntary system was challenging and needed more attention and support than planned.

33. The project succeeded in putting in place 5 new biodiversity-oriented Open Africa tourism routes in Zambia, one new route in Namibia and upgraded one existing route in Namibia. It implemented mainly successfully innovative approaches to route development, maintenance and biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector. All routes have now adopted a flagship species, conservation plans and in most cases, tourism strategies. A number of conservation projects were developed and implemented. A range of communication and information tools on the new routes and flagship species has been implemented including road signage, posters, maps and brochures. More, route participants have gained knowledge on flagship species and conservation principles and became involved in conservation activities related to selected flagship species. Voluntary community biodiversity monitors and mentors have been trained on all routes and tourism guides are continuing flagship species monitoring. Tourism business along these remote routes appears generally to be improved which contributes to employment and increased revenues for remote rural communities and route participants.

Table 10 Outcome Indicators

Outcome indicators	Baseline	Target established/emerging EOP	Achieved x/y EOP May 31, 2012	Score in %
1. The annual # of visitors to established and emerging route participants attributable to OA		430/560	Not measured	0

(x = emerging / y= established) ¹⁰			(see FN 8)	
2. The annual # of OA website booking to route participants ¹¹	0	415/480	296/213 ¹²	57
<i>Caprivi</i>		110/60	68/35	60
<i>Kavango</i>		60/90	37/82	79
<i>Kafue</i>		30/100	32/25	44
<i>Mpika</i>		50/50	62/22	84
<i>Nsobe Sitatunga</i>		45/45	32/9	46
<i>North Barotse</i>		45/45	47/27	79
<i>South Barotse</i>		30/90	17/10	22
3. The # of additional small tourism products attributable to OA	0	6	8	133
4. The % of participants from each route that are implementing their portion of the route flagship conservation plan	0	50	53	106
<i>Caprivi</i>		50	40	80
<i>Kavango</i>		50	95	190
<i>Kafue</i>		50	11	22
<i>Mpika</i>		50	95	190
<i>Nsobe Sitatunga</i>		50	10	20
<i>North Barotse</i>		50	90	180
<i>South Barotse</i>		50	30	60
Total average score				74

¹⁰ Measurement of the OI#1 was not done due to lack of defined arrangements for record keeping and data return from the route operators to OA. The data collected referred only to website inquiries and was thus identical with data reported under OI #2. It did not include visitors as a result of OA brochures, maps, signage and other marketing activities.

¹¹ OA does not yet provide a booking service. The term booking refers to website inquiries that OA transfers to the route participants. OA tries to follow-up on these inquiries with route participants through paper forms (visitor books) and follow-up phone calls however reliable data return rate is very low.

¹² Data reported reflect 50 % of actual inquiries considered as “bookings”.

34. Intermediary results. Table 11 scores the achievement of each component toward its expected intermediary results indicators. Overall, **85% of intermediary results have been achieved**. The average percentage of 85 does only indicate a proxy for achieving indicator-specific targets. This rating is based on taking the option of using an equal weight for each intermediary result and reflects a broader diversity of results per component. As the evaluation analysis shows, less satisfactory progress towards expected biodiversity conservation related intermediary results (85% of conservation plans developed, 0 % flagship species monitoring reports available) was achieved while good progress was made on project implementation targets (100%) and tourism related marketing initiatives (average 100%). An overview of route specific achievements and characteristics and more details are included in annex 3.

Table 11: Intermediary results

Revised Intermediary results: Revised intermediary results indicators	Baseline	Target EOP	Achieved EOP May 31, 2012	Score: (Average of %)
C1.New and up-graded biodiversity rich tourism routes designed and established:				
# Route launched	0	5 Za / 2	5 Za / 2	100
# Conservation plans developed and initiated	0	Na 7	Na 6	85
C2. Effective marketing and communication tools for 6 new and 1 up-graded biodiversity-rich tourism routes developed and applied:				
# Annual OA website visitors	0	4950	5309	107
<i>Caprivi (up-graded)</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>1500</i>	<i>1584</i>	<i>106</i>
<i>Kavango</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>848</i>	<i>141</i>
<i>Kafue</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>491</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>Mpika</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>501</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Nsoke Sitatunga</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>473</i>	<i>95</i>

North Barotse	0	500	746	149
South Barotse	300	650	666	102
C3. Local level M&E system based on concept of flagship species designed and implemented:				
# Annual flagship species monitoring reports disseminated to route participants.	0	7	0 ¹³	0
# Annual lessons brief disseminated to route participants.				
Replication and Knowledge Management Plan developed by OA and disseminated to all 7 routes participants.	0	4	3	75
	0	1	1	100
C4. Project is implemented according to project documents:				
% Implementation of annual work plan	0	90	99	110
# Positive annual external audits	0	YES	Yes	100
Total average				85

35. Considering (a) that IOI were 85% achieved, and (b) that OI were 74% achieved (with one OI not measured, one OI partially measured and two other OIs were exceeded), the project's relevance and efficiency, the achievement of the PDO and GEO (outcomes) are rated ***Moderately Satisfactory (MS)***.

36. Stakeholder participation: The project's stakeholder participation plan (see annex H of the MSP document) was used to guide implementation at various levels. The project addressed gender-specific needs (e.g. participation as a route member and route forum member, employment opportunities,...). Project implementation was highly participatory and included a

¹³ While flagship species were monitored, route forums failed compiling flagship species monitoring reports aimed for dissemination under the project design. It should be noted that the indicator is dependent on other milestones (such as selection of flagship species, monitoring scheme, monitoring and reporting), which delayed actual progress.

wide range of civil society representatives, private sector, governmental officials and non-governmental groups (as documented to some extent in the progress reports and the final knowledge sharing report). A regular consultation with the two governmental agencies in charge of the environment and tourism was carried out by the OA team. Additional stakeholders from the local community benefitting from and participating in the project's activities included schools, youth clubs and local governmental services.

37. Project management efficiency: The highly committed OA project manager remained unchanged throughout preparation, implementation until completion which contributed positively to the project's achievements and interaction with route participants and other partners. As demonstrated in supervision reports during implementation, the project has been managed efficiently by Open Africa, despite the geographical distances between the project office based in Open Africa's Headquarter in South Africa and the project intervention zone in Namibia and Zamiba. The organization managed to adapt itself quickly and efficiently to the specifics and challenges of the project (e.g. compliance with WB procedures, biodiversity conservation, marketing tools, operating in new countries, biodiversity networker). It further showed proactivity in searching and obtaining partnerships that enhanced project outcomes (e.g. with SMME / tourism support through SNV; KAZA) and pursued successfully fund-raising for its own and project needs.

38. Institutional efficiency: The project's institutional arrangements were designed to be quite efficient and to focus limited resources on activities on the ground. They proved to be adequate but could have been strengthened through stronger involvement of national and/or local environmental and tourism related authorities as well as other conservation or SME tourism actors. The organization operated to some extent in isolation but carried out regular consultations with key stakeholders in Namibia and Zamiba including the national GEF Focal Points. The Finance and Audit Committee requested by the Bank at time of appraisal met regularly as part of OA project meetings and minutes are recorded.

39. Safeguards: The project was classified as a safeguard category C project with no significant social or environmental impact. However, public consultations played an important role in setting up tourism routes and monitoring flagship species. Community members are representatives of route fora. During supervision missions, discussions with public and private tourism stakeholders revealed a satisfactory and close collaboration with all stakeholders and in all phases of route development. The project funded no investment, and led to no land use or behavior that would negatively affect the environment or the communities. Through informal discussion with villagers and route members, supervision mission verified that route members issued from the communities are working within their community and kept them informed.

40. Financial management performance and audits: Four annual audit reports were produced for the past four financial years of the Project (2008-2012). The final audit has been submitted to the Bank within the mandatory six months after the end of Open Africa Fiscal year in October 30, 2011. The audit points to no issue and has been approved by the Bank. Quarterly FMRs, which include the interim financial report (IFR) were produced on time and were reviewed as

positive. The final FMR is due on September 30, 2012 at the end of the grace period. The WB financial management specialist carried out a desk review of the project's financial management performance. The review findings based on the final project audit report and FMRs justify a rating of the financial management as *Satisfactory (S)*.

41. Procurement: Procurement under this project was simple with only “post review” shopping and individual consultant selection procedures being used. The latest report available is the quarterly report for the period ending January 30, 2012 which indicates that 3 items were being procured. Since then, it appears that the procurement plan was 100% completed considering that all services and goods were delivered by May 31, 2012. The procurement plan was updated quarterly and no items were procured outside the procurement plan. Procurement is rated *Satisfactory (S)*.

42. Expenditures: The tables below show total expenditures per component and per expenditure categories for the sum of the GEF and Open Africa (OA) funds. Cumulated expenditures from Project start until the end of the last reporting period on April 30, 2012 are 9 697 201 ZAR for the sum of OA and GEF funds. Disbursement of GEF funds as recorded by April 30, 2012 is 94%¹⁴. A request for a four-month's grace period until September 30, 2012 has been granted.

43. Cost efficiency: While the final FMR still needs to be completed, the final project expenditure will amount to approximately US\$ 1.29 m. Including project management, marketing and other related costs, the project costs for route development and follow-up amounted to an average US\$ 184,000 per route. However, actual expenditures per route varied substantially (emerging / up-grading routes). The cost efficiency of the project related to savings due to provision of parallel support to several routes.

44. While economic returns are difficult to quantify, OA estimates that approximately 500 bookings per year could be attributed by EOP to the project network. This would imply 1,500 bednights with an average tourist expenditure of USD 160/day.¹⁵ Thus, tourism related expenditures on the route network amount to approximately US 240,000 per year¹⁶. Based on this calculation, the project investment (USD 1.29m) would be balanced by tourism related expenditures generated in 5.3 years.

45. The following table 12 shows the project cost-effectiveness using an ex-post incremental cost analysis based on the approved GEF MSP document (annex G).

¹⁴ Average ZAR/USD exchange rate used throughout implementation is 7.5.

¹⁵ Source: World Bank, Report 43373 ZM: Zambia, Economic and Poverty Impact of Nature-Based Tourism, December 2007

¹⁶ Based on 50% of website enquiries (592 for emerging and 425 for established business = 1017) accounting for three bed nights each. Average spend per person per day = US\$ 160.

Table 12 Ex-post incremental cost analysis of GEF alternative scenario

Component	Estimated Expenditures (US \$)	Local Benefit	Global Benefit	Ex-post expenditures (US \$) / assessment of global benefits
1. Biodiversity-focused routes	Baseline (OA) 123,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities are linked to formal tourism markets by means of tourism routes. Capacity of route forum members is enhanced without focus on biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible, minor global environmental benefits may occur due to the indirect relationship between tourism and conservation. 	
	Alternative scenario (OA, GEF) 455,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members living within the OANSTC corridor entered the economic mainstream by leveraging their tourism opportunities. Communities along OANSTC routes have mainstreamed Biodiversity into tourism. New and existing community-owned tourism routes in biodiversity rich areas are stimulating better biodiversity management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A replicable model is established to develop biodiversity-focused tourism routes in other countries. Communities are empowered to take ownership of their tourism related biodiversity resources and manage them effectively. A simple biodiversity monitoring system is established that communities can use elsewhere. Biodiversity conservation is embedded in operations of all participants on OANSTC routes and awareness raised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A knowledge management replication plan is developed presenting lessons learned / recommendations for future biodiversity routes. Principle of a conservation fund for implementation of biodiversity resources established and launched or effective. Biodiversity monitoring of flagship species initiated or implemented. Biodiversity conservation awareness raised amongst all OANSTC routes participants.
Incremental	332,000			352,836 (+20,836)
2. Targeted Marketing and Communication	Baseline (OA) 79,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Products are linked to the global marketplace through the Internet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some global environmental benefits may occur through the indirect relationship between tourism and conservation. 	

	Alternative scenario (OA, GEF) 218,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route participants will see the benefits of increased exposure, which ultimately leads to increased visitor numbers. Participants are encouraged to stay in the system and monitor and conserve their resource base. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of eco-tourism amongst the general public. The number of environmentally responsible tourism operators increases over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OANSTC participants use eco-tourism promotion including flagship species.
Incremental	139,000			177,733 (+38,733)
3. Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation System	Baseline (OA) 65,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M&E system to monitor baseline indicators is running but not regularly updated and excludes anything on biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited knowledge of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. 	
	Alternative scenario (OA, GEF) 112,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of impacts of tourism on the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flagship species centered conservation planning and management. Local level monitoring of flagship species. Reduction of habitat destruction. Increased capacity to make informed decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 7 routes developed a conservation plan for identified flagship species and initiated/implemented related activities. Biodiversity networker provided capacity building to route participants improving planning and monitoring skills. Selected monitoring of flagship species is implemented and in some cases linked to national and international reporting (EIS Namibia, Wetlands international).
Incremental	47,000			31,127 (-15,873)
4. Project Management	Baseline (OA) 365,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Africa continues to develop routes on a demand driven basis. Routes are managed on an individual basis 		

	Alternative scenario (OA, GEF) 387,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is managed effectively and information is fed back to routes that enable them to manage and conserve their resource base. 		
Incremental	22,000			731,265 (+ 709,265) OA (731,265)

46. All routes have now adopted a flagship species, conservation plans and in most cases, tourism strategies. A number of conservation projects were developed and implemented. A range of communication and information tools on the new routes and flagship species has been implemented including road signage, posters, maps and brochures. More, route participants have gained knowledge on flagship species and conservation principles and became involved in conservation activities related to selected flagship species. Voluntary community biodiversity monitors and mentors have been trained on all routes and tourism guides are continuing flagship species monitoring. Tourism business along these remote routes appears generally to be improved which contributes to employment and increased revenues for remote rural communities and route participants.

47. Noteworthy, the project leveraged more cofinancing than anticipated at project design stage (OA 124%, other cofinancing secured during implementation 140%). The following table 14 presents details of the actual cofinancing.

Co-Financing Table 14 for MSP Open Africa North South Tourism Corridor Project (Namibia, Zambia): P097136)*

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Amount Confirmed at CEO endorsement / approval	Actual Amount Materialized at Midterm	Actual Amount Materialized at Closing
Civil Society Organisation	Open Africa	In-kind	\$632,000	\$98,605	\$784,698
Foundation	Ford Foundation	Grant	-	\$200,000	\$300,000
Private sector	Hertz	In-kind	-	\$81,000	\$108,000
Bilateral Aid Agency (Germany)	GIZ (formerly DED)	Grant	-	\$6,360	\$5,205
Civil Society Organisation	SNV	Associated	-	\$287,000	\$287,000
		TOTAL	\$632,000	\$385,965	\$1,484,903

*Excluding cofinancing related to PDF-A.

48. **Deliverables:** 99% of the planned work plan activities were delivered by time of the project. Table 15 shows the percentage completion of each of the components of the project.

Table 15: Completion of work plan by EOP

% Completion of planned activities	
C1. Biodiversity focused routes established	
- Namibia (2 routes)	100%
- Zambia (5 routes)	100%
C2. Targeted Marketing & Communication	99%
C3. Monitoring & Evaluation	99%
C4. Project Management	100%
Total	99%

49. **Implementation rating:** By project closure, the procurement plan was 100% executed and rated satisfactory, the GEF budget was 94% executed, planned activities were 99% completed and the financial and procurement performance was rated as satisfactory. The Quarterly, Annual and Completion Report were delivered on time. However, the assessment detected there were deficiencies in the project and Open Africa's general M&E system (weakness of route-based data collection requirements and arrangements), which impacted negatively the quality of data, collected and evaluated. The monitoring and evaluation performance of the project is rated ***Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)***.

50. Consequently the Implementation Performance is rated **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3. Development Impacts, including those that are Unintended/Unrelated to TF Objectives

51. **Improved biodiversity conservation awareness and monitoring capacity:** It was not intended to achieve actual conservation of flagship species and their habitats during the life time of this project. However, the route conservation plans and conservation funds appear to have had a positive impact on the prospect for conservation outcomes. The impact of the capacity building efforts led by the biodiversity networker(s) is demonstrated by the list of conservation subprojects developed and implemented on each route by the participants (see table 16). The participants got involved either individually or as part of small groups to implement these subprojects. In many cases the broader community was part of the subprojects or was targeted.

Table 16 Completed Route Conservation Subprojects¹⁷

Route	Conservation project
North Barotse Trails	A radio programme that raised awareness of the flagship species
South Barotse Trails	Establishing birding trails in two Important Bird Areas (IBA's) Feedback sessions between lodges and Village Action Groups (VAG's) on conservation activities of the VAG's Bird guide training for guides at the IBA's Supporting a trial visit for tourists to the IBA's
Caprivi Wetlands	Development of a Devil's Claw harvesting and conservation experience Supporting the Caprivi Carnivore Programme with a motion sensor camera and giving conservation talks to schools and lodges in the Caprivi
Kavango Open Africa Route	Awareness campaign with signage and posters on the flagship species Training guides for Wetlands International bird counts Floodplain awareness campaign on flagship species
Nsobe Sitatunga Experience	School visits to Kasanka National Park focusing on the importance of the flagship species Running an art competition among local schools on the flagship species and producing a calendar that will be sold to raise funds for conservation
Munjili Wilderness Experience	Development of hiking trails (Munjili, Bushbuck, Common Duiker and Ground Hornbill) to conserve and inform visitors Mwaleshi River protection and cleanup programme Establishing conservation clubs at local schools Safari guide training for 10 reformed poachers

52. Improved tourism and rural area development. Collectively, route participants are making a difference in a number of ways on their local economies. The process of designing a conservation orientated tourism strategy helped them define a common vision for tourism development in their area. The route forums and/or registered tourism associations gained visibility, political as well as economic recognition and will be able to raise additional funds in the future. The project resulted in the establishment of four new registered tourism associations

¹⁷ Conservation fund: Proposals (up to 4 from each route) were submitted to OA, reviewed and approved or revised or rejected. The average amount per proposal was USD 3,000 to USD 5,000. The total allocation earmarked for conservation projects per route was USD 12,500.

(Kavango, Munjili, North Barotse and Caprivi). While the direct impact of this is difficult to quantify, the organisation of businesses into a collective entity has many benefits, including increased status and bargaining power. For example, the Kavango Open Africa Route has expanded its membership to include associated services such as fuel stations and pharmacies, thus spreading accountability for the route. Important, the Namibian government is apparently committed to design a tourism routes policy based on the approach proposed by Open Africa.

53. Economic benefits through route development: The project appears to have helped strengthen 149 participating businesses thereby securing further the employment of a total of 2,448 people (Table 17). In addition to the economic benefits, the participating businesses now all form part of a collaborative network where they can share business ideas. Emerging businesses in particular benefit from the interaction with more established businesses on the routes. Participants were also able to build their management and marketing capacity through a number of workshops and interactions funded by the project. Many participants benefitted from the partnership with the Dutch NGO SNV who became interested in the approach and joined Project implementation. SNV identified and supported a number of small businesses on the routes in northern and western Zambia, most notably Munjili Wilderness and North Barotse.

Table 17 Project beneficiaries (EOP)

Beneficiaries	Direct	
Route	# Participants	# Employees
Munjili Wilderness	13	178
North Barotse	37	213
Nsoke Sitatunga	17	195
South Barotse	12	75
Untamed Kafue	10	204
Caprivi Wetlands	41	1395
Kavango	19	228
TOTAL	149	2488

D. Risk to Development Outcome

1. Follow-On Results and/or Investment Activities

Activity/Investment:

☒ Recipient/Other Investment; ☐ Grant Project/Program; ☐ Bank Project; ☐ IFC Financial Project/Activity

54. OA has secured funding for two follow-on activities that will enhance the sustainability of the project's results and contribute to the replication potential:

- (i) Follow-up support in form of route maintenance of the 7 project routes.
- (ii) Enhance its route development methodology with a number of lessons learned under the project. They include: (a) use of a local networker/local office if operating outside of South Africa, (b) production of route brochures/maps and route signage as marketing tools; (c) use of a development fund to implement route action plan. The up scaling of such an approach could include Namibia and Zambia.

55. In addition, OA submitted a funding proposal (approximately USD 1.29m to MCA Namibia for developing 3 new tourism routes in Namibia linked to the conservancy program. The proposal has been approved and preparation is underway. These new routes will benefit from lessons learned under the OANSTCP.

56. Also, the recently launched (March 2012) Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area TFCA (KAZA) initiative¹⁸ provides new opportunities. The KAZA secretariat started discussions with OA regarding the development a new regional biodiversity transfrontier KAZA Open Africa route building on the project's achievements and lessons learned.

2. Replicability

57. The Open Africa approach may provide an incremental solution to both tourism development and conservation and could be replicated under specific conditions. In essence,

¹⁸ The goal of the five countries (Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe) stretching KAZA TFCA around the Caprivi/Chobe/Victoria Falls area is the sustainable management of the Kavango Zambezi ecosystem based on conservation and tourism models for the socio-economic wellbeing of the communities. The focus is on conservation as the primary form of land use and tourism being a by-product.

replication of the innovative biodiversity-routes will require that key baseline criteria are met (adequate tourism product, existence of route champion, commitment of route participants) and project's lessons learned are integrated in the project design (strong business and design risk analysis, provision of skilled input, careful cost/benefit analysis and availability of minimal funding for implementation of conservation plans). OA's knowledge management report (annex F of its completion report) includes a detailed assessment of those elements to be considered for replication. The following three aspects outline the replication potential of the project in Namibia and Zambia (scaling-up) as well as in other current (South Africa, Mozambique, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia, Namibia) or new OA countries:

- a) Knowledge transfer: The project supported knowledge sharing seminars involving route participants and other key stakeholders. The contributions of those knowledge sharing events were included in the final knowledge management report that was widely disseminated to project stakeholders including the Government in Namibia and Zambia. The OA's webpage has been constantly up-dated to share information and good practices with the broader tourism community and its media, business, conservation and development partners. More, the project has triggered an ongoing internal learning and reform process within OA's management and business planning. The results will benefit current (60) and new OA's routes throughout the region.
- b) Expansion of OANSTCP: One recommendation to enhance replication of the project's achievements relates to the development of a country-based approach. By time of ICM submission, OA has been selected by the Government of Namibia to develop a streamlined approach for three new routes through its CBNRM Program. Other countries where OA is currently active are expected to benefit from the project's experiences. In addition, a positive economic return on the project's investments (see para. 43), enhances the likelihood of replication.
- c) Capacity building and training: The project's capacity building efforts through the biodiversity networker and route developers as well as regularly follow-up support focused mainly on route participants but spill-over effects to other institutions (local associations, governmental agencies, etc.) have been reported and could result in future requests for additional routes in Zambia and Namibia.

3. Overall Risk to Development Outcome

58. The overall risk for the project's long-term sustainability is **Moderate to Significant (M – S)**. Due to the nature of the innovative approach, the sustainability of the project outcomes will depend on whether OA's can sustain these routes over the coming years. Risks related to the future of projects routes depend on route-specific factors (such as the existence of champion and the commitment of participants). Therefore, there is a risk that some routes may not grow as needed to remain in existence while others, those with committed participants, will continue and expand and become more and more sustainable.

59. A summary of risks to development outcome is presented in Table 18 below:

Table 18 Project risks

Category of risk	Risk to development outcome (short/medium/long-term)*	Risk Rating at ICM	Risk Assessment at ICM
Institutional / Financial	Open Africa is unable to raise funds to sustain its organization and services to route participants particularly in the new countries like Namibia and Zambia.	Short term: M Medium term: M Long-term: M	Open Africa has been operating over the past 17 years and is experienced with fund-raising. Nonetheless, the economic crisis worldwide reduces fund-raising opportunities. Without OA, route maintenance, marketing and booking services would disappear for most participants. OA is undertaking an organization reform focusing on its own sustainability.
Institutional	Route fora will not continue promoting route-specific tourism development.	Short term: M Medium term: M Long-term: M	4 routes have registered as tourism associations other routes introduced membership fees which all indicate a strong institutional commitment. Further, participants have seen positive impact or potential for their business. OA will keep on providing route maintenance support to route forums and assist with implementation of route action plan.
Technical	Monitoring of flagship species will not continue on the 7 routes.	Short term: S Medium term: S Long-term: S	Routes with an environmental champion and some kind of data exchange arrangements (EIS Namibia, Wetlands International, Caprivi Carnivore Programme, Zambian Carnivore Programme) are less exposed to the risk. The risk is nonetheless substantial if no conservation partner provides follow-up support.
	Overall Risk Rating	M – S	

*short-term = 1 year, medium-term = 1 – 3 years, long-term = more than 3 years

E. PERFORMANCE

1. Bank

60. The project task team leader, a senior biodiversity specialist with the necessary needed technical qualification and experiences, remained unchanged throughout project identification, preparation until completion. The continuity of the World Bank's task team based in Zambia has been assessed as effective to guide OA's implementation team throughout implementation. Feed-back on implementation was provided timely and constructive to Open Africa. The Bank's team included a tourism specialist who co-managed the project for about 2.5 years. Annual missions to all routes were carried out. The Bank briefed regularly governmental counterparts in Namibia and Zambia. Procurement and financial management specialists handled all requests in timely fashion and approvals were granted without delays.

61. The recipient's completion report assessed the Bank's performance as satisfactory to highly satisfactory.

62. The ICM's assessment is that the Bank team's efforts related to the MSP preparation and implementation phase were appropriate. Efforts were taken whenever needed to facilitate and speed-up project implementation. The MSP level 2 restructuring introduced at MTR and approved in February 2011 helped to deliver the project outcomes, particularly through granting of a one-year extension. The Bank correctly identified, although relatively late, OA's challenges in implementing the project's m&e framework. The revised results framework helped measuring better the achievement of tourism and conservation outcomes. However, the Bank team should have detected earlier, and addressed, the two outcome indicator deficiencies.

63. Overall, the ICM rating of the Bank's performance is **Satisfactory (S)**.

2. Recipient

64. The OA team implemented this project, its first World Bank/GEF project, fully committed, professionally, in a consultative manner and to a high standard according to the project document and legal agreement. Open Africa managed the project effectively despite logistical challenges posed by the distance from its HQ in Cape Town to the project area. The adjustments made by the recipient such as opening a local office in Zambia, employing a community-development person and engaging SNV in project implementation all helped to strengthen the project's impact. The OA team leveraged more than expected cofinancing and followed a cost-effective approach across all components.

65. It should be recognized that at project start and during the first 2 years of implementation, OA had very limited capacity and experiences in biodiversity conservation. The recruitment of the biodiversity networker helped to improve the situation but ultimately an experienced

conservation partner/actor in the field could have delivered more sustainable impact and stronger results.

66. The project assisted OA in establishing a perhaps too ambitious Management Information System (MIS) that was meant to track results at route and project level. However, OA's capacity in using and adapting the MIS to the needs and challenges of the project during implementation appears to be limited and contributed to deficiencies with monitoring and reporting on project's indicators as identified at MTR and completion.

67. The ICM mission received very positive feed-back from the route participants on the quality of OA's project delivery despite the mentioned human resource limitation.

68. Overall, the ICM rating of the recipient's performance is **Satisfactory (S)**.

F. LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

69. The project was a pilot for Open Africa which expanded its classic concept to include a brand new concept in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in tourism through the innovative flagship species approach. The project implementation generated lessons which are likely to be useful for OA's future modus operandi. OA has started already to re-examine its role and approach towards biodiversity conservation and tourism, its own institutional and financial sustainability and the sustainability of the routes. Most lessons are captured in the knowledge and replication plan developed by OA before project closure.

70. ***Acknowledging the project's innovative elements, the risk analysis should take a more important part within overall preparation.*** The project scope was too ambitious geographically (11 routes in two countries) and in terms of its expected conservation and business outcomes. A lesser number of routes, perhaps even less than the 7 agreed at the MTR, could have enabled OA to provide more professional support (as opposed to volunteers), measure better impact, adapt faster to implementation issues and generate better lessons. Further, a more detailed environmental, tourism and institutional diagnostic coupled with intensive consultations during preparation would have led to more realistic risk assessment, geographic, thematic and operational targets, methodology and final route selection before project implementation start.

71. ***Focus on flagship species as a way of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into tourism can become a limiting factor especially if there is a little fund to support the approach.*** For example some route participants do not have the selected flagship species in their area and thus cannot become actively engaged. Others were already actively involved in conservation and felt distracted by a new approach that was not part of their present plan. Even if there was interest, such as for example for cheetah monitoring in Kafue National Park, there was no dedicated funding for it. After the MTR, funds were reallocated to implement some of the activities proposed in the conservation plan such as community-based birding tours, tree hiking trails, community forest, training of wetland monitoring guides, etc. This helped to a significant

extent. OA drew the following lesson: instead of using a cookie-cutter approach (identification of flagship species, flagship species monitoring, route conservation plan), a more flexible approach, based on supporting already on-going conservation initiatives, with adequate funds for meaningful support to biodiversity conservation is necessary to stimulate buy-in from stakeholders.

72. *Awareness-raising and capacity building achieve better results if coupled with funds for implementation.* As mentioned above, a small funding scheme for local conservation projects on each of the routes was introduced at MTR. This proved to be successful and should be considered for future projects (covering development and/or conservation micro-activities). Some of these small activities were once-off initiatives, but others, such as the training of route participants to participate in Wetlands International Bird Counts, birding trails, school conservation clubs will have longer-term benefits not only for the flagship species, but for the area and conservation of resources in general. These projects also acted as a unifier for route participants and many projects were implemented in small groups or teams. This in turn contributes to the sustainability of the route as cohesive groups are formed with a common purpose.

73. *Building early partnerships with public actors could strengthen the sustainability of (biodiversity) routes and increase impact.* The principle of the OA routes is to engage community stakeholders and tourism actors in a process in order to increase tourism through joint planning and “management/marketing” of a given tourism destination. However, the approach does not differentiate between the type of business, origin, level of education, capacity and information needs of the route participants (e.g. local government, private sector, community-based actors). More, project design and implementation focused clearly on engaging private actors and neglected formalized partnerships and engagement with local and national government. The lessons is that early partnerships and engagement of local/national government could strengthen the sustainability of the route forum/tourism association and provide active participation in area planning and decisions (e.g. fishing licenses, infrastructure developments) depending on insitutional capacity and skills of the partner organisation.

74. *Route development for route participants equate to business development, OA must therefore provide a service which is seen to generate business.* The initial contact between private operators and OA along the proposed route was generally positive with most of them understanding that OA could help them access new markets and realizing that both environmental and social responsibilities are conducive to promote tourism in their area and generate more business. However, OA - even though it developed an attractive and modern internet marketing site where routes are promoted and though it participates in various tourism marketing events - is not yet able to demonstrate a meaningful generation of (additional) business to most operators. As a consequence, the interest of operators to become active route participants tends to diminish over time in the OA network (not only the project). OA has realized this for some time, and not specifically from this project, and is struggling for solutions. A lesson is that OA could consider becoming more commercially oriented through cost recovery schemes, either from clients (e.g. via booking fees) or route participants (e.g. membership fee), in turns, it needs to sharpen its level of services.

G. ICM PROCESSING AND COMMENTS

1. Preparation

TTL at Approval: Jean-Michel Pavy

TTL at Closing: Jean-Michel Pavy

Comment of TTL at Closing: Reviewed and cleared

Prepared by (if other than TTL): Gabriele Rechbauer

Reviewer Douglas J. Graham

Date Submitted to Approving Manager:

2. Approval

Manager: Jonathan S. Kamkwala

Date Approved by Manager:

Manager's Comment:

3. TFO Evaluation of ICM Quality

TFO Reviewer: Gayatri Kanungo (for Paola Agostini)

TFO Rating on the Quality of ICM (Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory): Satisfactory.

Comment and Justification for Rating Given by TFO: This has been a successful MSP. Even though all ratings are not fully satisfactory, the project has successfully developed an innovative model for linking community to the tourism sector in the context of biodiversity conservation. Several good lessons have been drawn which are incorporated in the recipient NGO new approach to tourism route development in Southern Africa. It would be useful that the Bank consider showcasing the project achievements in greater light. The ICR is clearly written and objective in its analysis of the project performance.

Annex 1: Survey OANSTCP experiences

As part of the completion mission in June 2012, a brief survey was conducted amongst all route participants by Open Africa to ensure inclusive participation and feedback to the evaluation process. Overall the feedback received confirms the mission's findings and pointed at the project's achievements such as (i) development of strategic partnerships, (ii) enhancing programmatic planning at route forum level, (iii) strengthening capacity and delivered additional information, (iv) fostering participation, (v) introducing flagship species monitoring, and (vi) supporting road signage and therefore increased tourism in their area. The participants recommended institutionalizing the Open Africa approach at country level with adequate experienced and permanent staff to coordinate network of routes and to ensure regular logging of sightings and tourism data for the OA database. The participants highlighted the need to provide more local route networker support and support follow-up.

All route participants were asked to respond to four questions (see table below):

Route	Q 1: Impact of OA route on tourism business	Q2: Effectiveness of OA method to establish a route	Q3: Knowledge of flagship species and nature of conservation effort	Q4: Improvement of approach for better results
Nsobe Sitatunga: Bangweulu Kasanka Eco-Tourism Route	Kasanka's exposure increased through OA website, video-clips, signposts, ZITE-show stand, flyers/maps. A few bookings were recorded through the OA website.	Excellent approach and good method. Meetings were well attended and information products well designed and distributed. However, our route participants are small local operators without means of communication and funds, which meant that Kasanka was	Kasanka NP main objective is the protection of the Sitatunga antelope.	Need for participants with better capacity and resources to contribute to the process.

		meant to “lead” the route and project. A champion is needed to steer the route development and implementation process.		
Kavango Open Africa Experience Route	Project served as transmission belt and linked tourism entities by common purpose.	Method is perfect and effective.	Cleaning campaigns and mobilization of communities for protection of environment.	Provide for follow-up support and method to include new additional participants.
#2	Only joined but expect huge impact on business			
Untamed Kafue	8 enquiries from OA, 6 camping bookings and 4/5 with OA logos. \$1000 earned.	Effective but some aspects were rushed. Map was inaccurate. Who will reprint it? Emails went down, 2009 109 emails, 6 in 2010 and 8 in 2010 and 5 2012.	Cheetah and reports go back to camp and log. Not clear to whom reports should go. Others are elephant, water buck, sable and wild dog.	More than 3 years, annual meetings suggested.
Kafue Part. 2	Self-driving tourists. OA used to promote Kafue and conservation and monitoring of flagship species. Involvement of local community tourism projects has benefits.	Method effective but the follow-up to maintain momentum did not happen for a number of reasons. Use of a single coordinator for all Zambian routes was not feasible and logistically it was difficult for regular contact and follow-up. The involvement of	Cheetah, Elephant, Wild dog, sable antelope and Defassa Waterbuck are all well known and sort after sightings for tourist. Monitoring of these species by guides and tourist as part of our activities creates a lot of interests and adds	Appointment of local coordinator that has regular contact with guides and monitors and ensuring the regular logging of sightings as well as feedback on the results of information that is fed into the database. This can then be made

		regional or route coordinators would have been preferable but this only came about late in the program. The selected coordinator was not able to dedicate time to the project at the time of the appointment.	value to our efforts in getting to know more about these species, numbers, habitats seasonal movements and likelihood of sightings.	available to the users of the OA network.
Barotse Trail (South and North routes)	Impact through stronger partnerships. Potentials for further developments developed. Lessons from OA have provided a window for enhanced planning. Additional information and capacity generated.	Yes because participatory and inclusive.	South: African Fin foot and Tiger Fish, North: Southern Ground Horn bill: Working with community group in Mpika in conserving the habitat for the Ground horn bill. In South running a small project aimed at conserving Black-cheeked lovebird near endemic with great potential for avian tourism. Proposal to include this as flagship species.	Further increasing collaboration and communication amongst players. Creating platform for information and experience sharing. Consider employing experienced ad permanent staff to coordinate country routes. Institutionalize operations at country level. Registration at country level would enhance further.
Caprivi Wetlands Paradise Route	Not yet any significant impact.	Yes but more visibility in tourist information center, border post, airports, car hire etc is needed.	No.	Map of the routes and distribution.
Munjii Wilderness Experience	Sign on road has alerted number of people who would have	Yes, signage is very useful.	Yes but no warthogs in our region. We intend to buy some.	Mpika hub better supported with tourism information. Wildlife conservation

	normally just passed by they have stopped and come down.			and tourism info center to establish.
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Annex 2: Expenditure tables

Cumulated expenditures per components (until July 31, 2012) in Rand (OA / GEF funds)

	Total										
	Local currency (Rand)		US Dollars			GEF			Open Africa		
	<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Variance %</i>	<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Variance %</i>	<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Variance %</i>
C1. Biodiversity focused routes	3 112 850	2 646 270	682 847	352 836	85	2 715 484	2 245 522	83	397 366	400 748	101
- <i>Regional</i>	1 278 502	820 011	257 364	109 335	64	881 136	419 263	48	397 366	400 748	101
- <i>Zambia (5 routes)</i>	1 535 156	1 393 003	356 084	185 734	91	1 535 156	1 393 003	91		-	
- <i>Namibia (2 routes)</i>	299 191	433 256	69 398	57 767	145	299 191	433 256	145		-	

C2. Targeted Marketing & Communication	1 006 169	1 332 997	233 384	177 733	132	1 006 169	1 332 997	132		-	
C3. Monitoring & Evaluation	328 347	233 450	76 161	31 127	71	328 347	233 450	71		-	
C4. Project Management	4 756 567	5 484 484	634 209	731 265	115	-	-	-	4 756 567	5 484 484	115
TOTAL	9 203 933	9 697 201	1 626 601	1 292 960	105	4 050 000	3 811 969	94	5 551 299	5 885 232	114

Expenditures per Expenditure categories (until July 31, 2012) in Rand

	Total (Rands)		Total (US Dollars)		% Completion	GEF		Open Africa	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual		Rand	Dollar	Rand	Dollar
Goods	567 902	732 971	75 720	97 729	97%	26 378	3 517	706 594	94 213

Consultants	2 954 362	3 696 074	393 915	492 810	87%	453 966	60 529	3 242 108	432 281
Operation costs	5 681 669	5 268 155	757 556	702 421	60%	3 331 624	444 217	1 936 531	258 204
TOTAL	9 203 933	9 697 200	1 227 191	1 292 960	105%	3 811 968	508 262	5 885 233	784 698

Annex 3: Summary of OANSTCP routes / Profiles

The table below provides a summary of the different status and level of progress within the project route network at time of project closure.

Route	Launch year	# of participants	Type of participants	Distance covered ¹⁹	Flagship Species	Conservation Plan pilot projects	Monitoring activities	Sustainability	Route Forum	Route Signage
Namibia										
Kavango Open Africa Route (new)	2011	23	Mostly established lodges and a few community campsites	Approximately 250km	African Skimmer Hippo Grey headed parrot Nembwe Mukwa	Awareness campaign with signage and posters on the flagship species Training guides for Wetlands International bird counts Floodplain awareness campaign on flagship species	All participants are involved in monitoring one or more of the flagship species through a sighting index and transect monitoring Participants are undergoing training to conduct	The Route Forum is active in managing both the route and conservation activities Linkages with Wetlands International will also ensure sustainability Route has clear goals and action	Registered as a voluntary association Regular meetings Charge membership fees Invites guest speakers to AGM Strong	Yes

¹⁹ Distance covered is indicative of the distance travelled between the two furthest nodes of the cluster

						School awareness activities	wetland bird counts	plan	conservation champion as forum leader Strong linkages with Hospitality Association of Namibia (HAN) Two government departments attend meetings regularly	
Caprivi Wetlands Paradise (up-dated)	2005	39	Wide variety consisting of established lodges, community campsites, arts & craft projects and NGO's	Approximately 320km	Hippo Schalows turaco African fish eagle Spotted hyena	Development of a Devil's Claw harvesting and conservation experience Supporting the Caprivi Carnivore Programme with a motion sensor camera and giving conservation talks to schools and lodges in the	Participants are monitoring flagship species through a sighting index developed for lodges Data is now being included in the Environmental Information System (EIS)	Linkages with research programmes such as the Caprivi Carnivore Programme and the EIS system (www.the-eis.com) will encourage on-going monitoring	Forum not meeting regularly The route is in the process of registering an association Distances between participants affects attendance at	No

					Elephant	area	for Namibia		meetings	
					Tiger fish				No conservation champion on route	
									No government representation on route	
• Zambia										
Munjili Wilderness Experience (new)	2010	14	Mostly urban accommodation establishments, not well established	Approximately 200km	Warthog Ground hornbill Bushbuck Emperor Moth Common Duiker	Development of hiking trails (Munjili, Bushbuck, Common Duiker and Ground Hornbill) to conserve and inform visitors Mwaleshi River protection and clean-up programme Establishing conservation clubs at local	Community members were trained as flagship monitors, but data is not collected regularly Difficulties with the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) has prevented data	The Route Forum is active in managing both the route and conservation activities Route has a five year strategic plan	Registered as a voluntary association Regular meetings Strong conservation champion as forum leader Active participation of members at meetings	Yes

						schools Safari guide training for 10 reformed poachers	collection			
Nsoke Sitatunga Experience (new)	2010	17	One National Park (Kasanka National Park) as core attraction, with a few less developed products such as community camps and traditional villages	Approximately 235km	Sitatunga Shoebill Wattle crane Black lechwe Elephant	School visits to Kasanka National Park focusing on the importance of the flagship species Running an art competition among local schools on the flagship species and producing a calendar that will be sold to raise funds for conservation	Kasanka National Park is the only participant that is actively monitoring flagship species	Kasanka National Park plays a key role in the sustainability of the route and conservation activities There is some concern around the sustainability of the route currently, but a new management at KNP is likely to contribute	Forum not active in arranging meetings Kasanka National Park plays key role in driving the route Forum lacks direction and goals Other participants lack capacity to manage route effectively	Yes
Untamed Kafue (new)	2010		All well-established lodges around and inside the	Approximately 400km	Cheetah		The flagship (cheetah) is being monitored by	The Kafue Park Operators Association (KPOA) is the	Regular meeting through KPOA KPOA has	No

			park		Elephant Sable Waterbuck Wild dog		the Zambian Carnivore Programme Other participants are monitoring transects at lodges	management body for the route KPOA has not been effective in the management of the route to date KPOA has now delegated one member to drive the activities of the route	many other issues to deal with Route is secondary objective of the association	
North Barotse (new)	2011	37	Majority are urban accommodation establishments with a national park on the outskirts of the route as main attraction	Approximately 200km	Wildebeest Open billed stork White Pelican	A radio programme that raised awareness of the flagship species	Monitoring is done by Liuwa National Park Most participants are urban- based and can't monitor as a result	The Route Forum is active in managing both the route and conservation activities Linkages with Liuwa National Park and the African Parks Network will also	Registered as a tourism association Active participation from route members Regular meetings	Yes

					Hippo			ensure sustainability	Strong linkages to Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE)	
					Tigerfish			The Open Africa route networker has taken a position with African Parks and will play a key role in the future activities of the route	No strong conservation champion, but African Parks has shown interest in playing this role	
					Red breasted bream					
South Barotse (up-dated)	2005	12	Majority are established lodges on the Zambezi, but they are all struggling to stray in existence	Approximately 240km	African Finfoot	Establishing birding trails in two Important Bird Areas (IBA's)	Monitoring is done through Village Action Groups (VAG's) in selected locations along the route	The viability of this route currently is being questioned. A number of lodges have closed down	Route Forum is not active	Yes
					Sable				Key members of the forum have left the country	
					Antelope	Feedback sessions between lodges and Village Action Groups (VAG's) on conservation activities of the VAG's			Route is not registered	
					Elephant		Zambian Bird Watch is monitoring bird species in the two IBAs on the route	The route has strong linkages with Caprivi Wetlands and this could still assist with overall sustainability		
					Giraffe	Bird guide training for				

					Tigerfish	guides at the IBAs		The involvement of Zambian Bird Watch will contribute to the sustainability of the conservation activities of the route		
						Supporting a trial visit for tourists to the IBA's				

Annex 4: Documentation used

Aide memoire MTR

Aide Memoires (annual)

Aide-memoire completion mission June 2012

Annual Work Plans including Procurement Plans (annual)

GEF CEO Request MSP document 2008

Grant reporting and monitoring report (GRM) (annual)

ICM mission survey results

Letter of Agreement May 30, 2008

OA Annual Reports

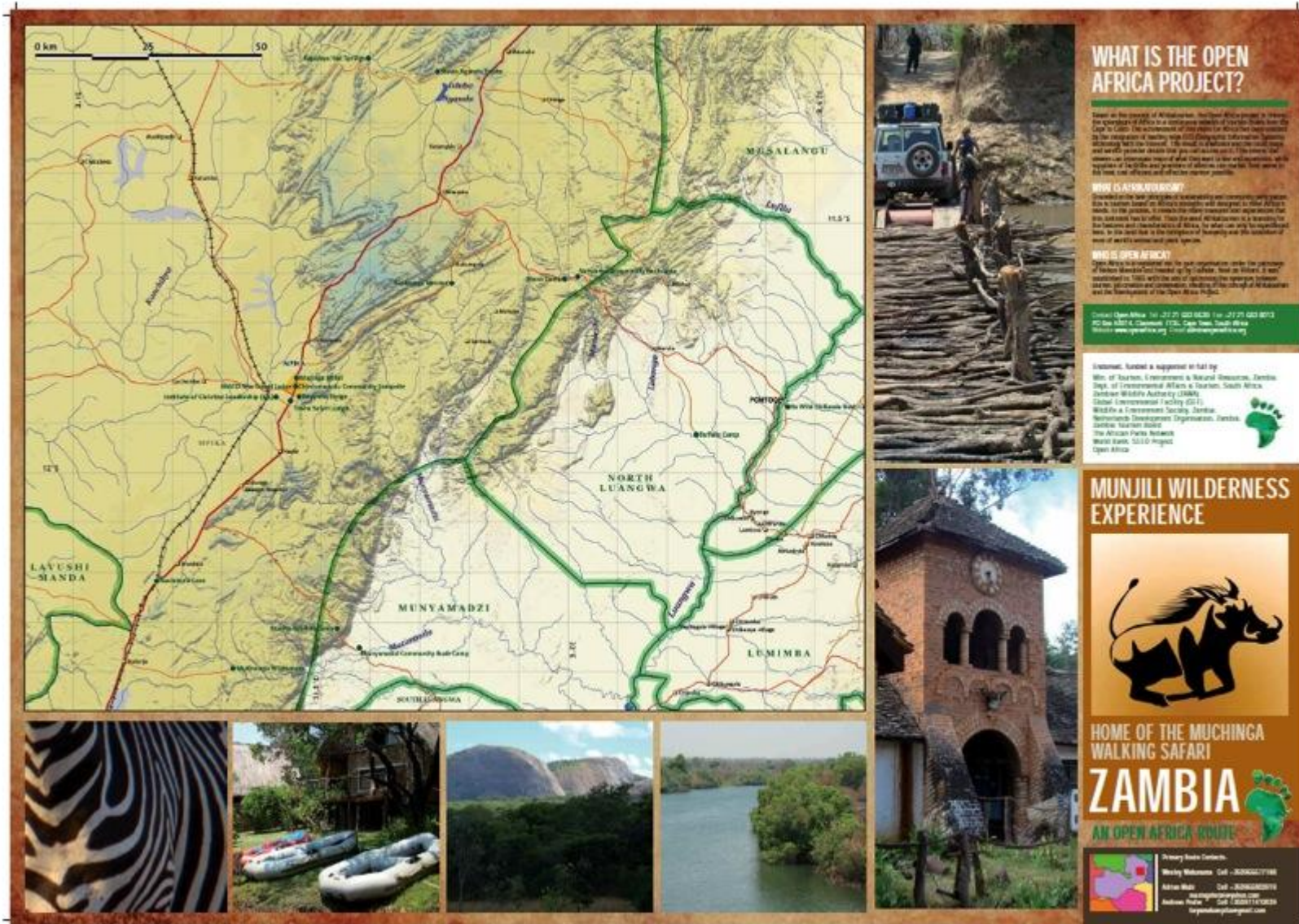
OA completion report, Sept. 2012

OA Quarterly Report including FMR

Restructuring memo January 2011

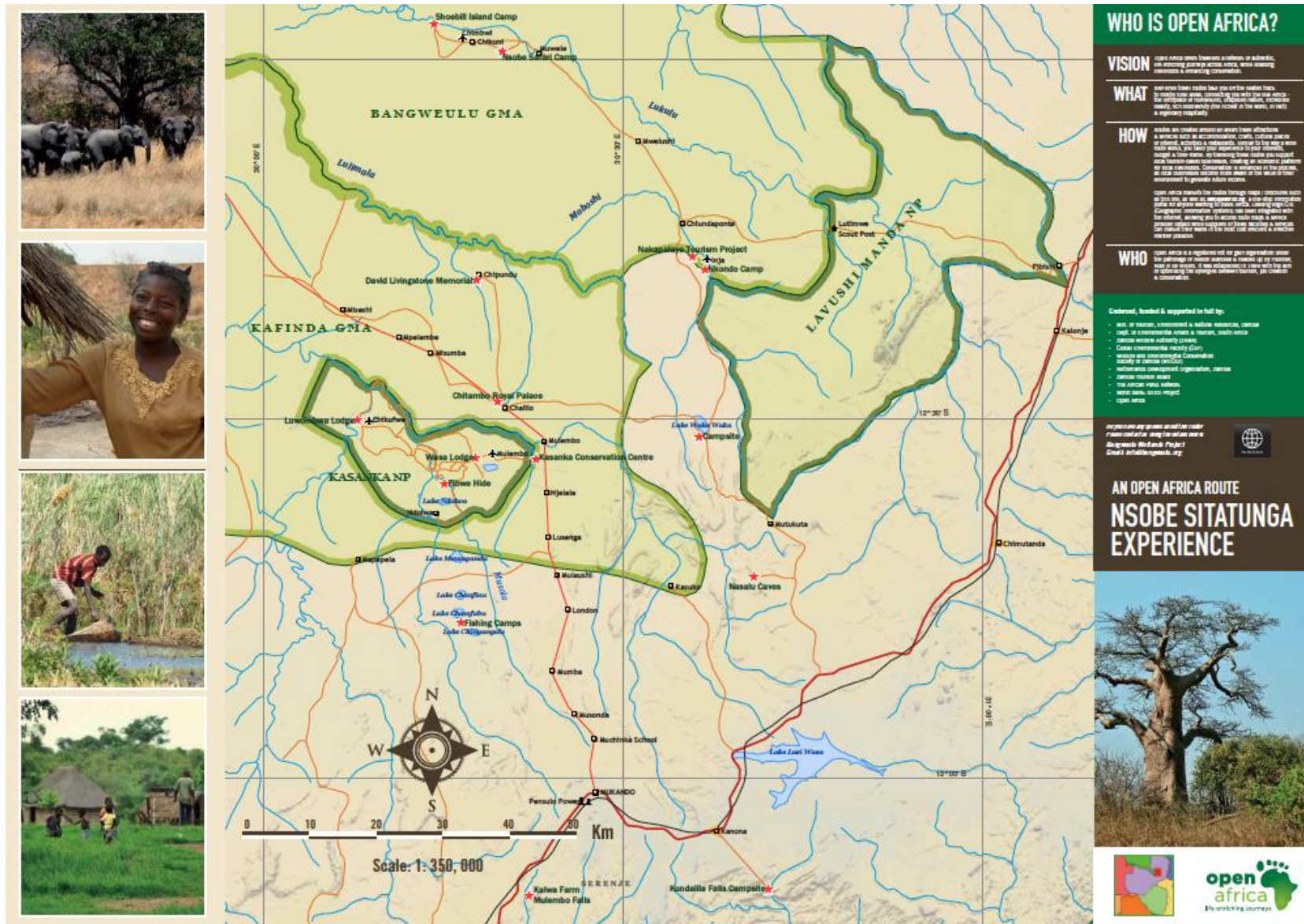
Annex 5: Sample maps of OA routes

1. Munjili Wilderness Experience Route Zambia 1/2

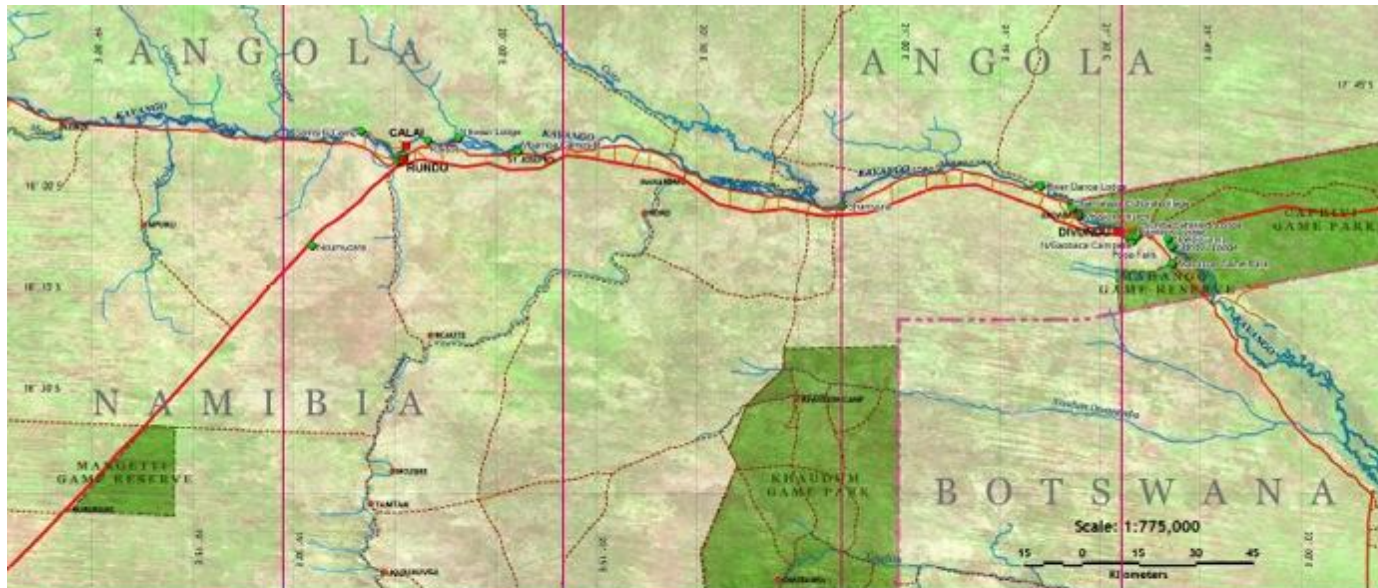




2. Nsobe Sitatunga Experience Route Zambia 2/2



2. Kavango Open Africa Experience Route Namibia 1/2



WHO IS OPEN AFRICA?

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HOW

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Email: info@openafrica.org
Website: www.openafrica.org

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Email: info@openafrica.org
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• RIVER DANCE LODGE

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• NGWAGAGA COMMUNITY CAMPSITE

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KAVANGO OPEN AFRICA EXPERIENCE



AN OPEN AFRICA ROUTE NAMIBIA

2. Kavango Open Africa Experience Route Namibia 2/2

[illegible]

The KwaZulu Open Africa Experience roughly stretches from Mpiyane in the west to Durban in the east, and incorporates Matanga and the KwaZulu Game Park in the south. The extensive wetlands area which includes this route from the west of Durban is possibly the major reason why this area was only discovered by early explorers very late during the nineteenth century, and remains undisturbed by tourists in many ways still today.

ACCESS

CURRENCY

An aerial photograph of a large, winding river system, likely the Amazon, flowing through a vast, green, forested landscape. The river is surrounded by dense vegetation and is bordered by a road or path in the foreground. The image is overlaid with a red grid, suggesting it is a composite of multiple images.

