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# **TERMINAL EVALUATION OF THE MOUNTAIN AREAS CONSERVANCY PROJECT (MACP)**

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## **CONTENTS**

<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>14</b>
1.1 Background	14
1.2 The Project	14
1.3 The implementing agency	16
1.4 The Evaluation Mission	17
1.4.1 Mission Team composition and activities	17
1.4.2 Evaluation objectives	18
1.5 Methodology of the evaluation	18
1.5.1 The approach adopted	18
1.5.2 Documents reviewed and consulted	19
1.5.3 Consultations with key stakeholders and government officials	19
1.5.4 Field visits	20
<b>2 FINDINGS</b>	<b>21</b>
2.1 Project design	21
2.2 Project implementation and management	23
2.2.1 The project implementation framework	23
2.2.2 Project policy and guidance	24
2.2.3 The PMU and central management	26
2.2.4 Management in North West Frontier Province	27
2.2.5 Management in Northern Areas	28
2.2.6 The role of Government	28
2.2.7 Financial management	29
2.3 Monitoring and evaluation	31
2.3.1 The Logical Framework Matrix and performance indicators	31
2.3.2 Project performance monitoring	32
2.3.3 Compliance monitoring	34
2.3.4 Species and ecosystems monitoring	34
2.3.5 Monitoring of CMPs and other plans	36
2.4 Results achieved	38
2.4.1 Output 1 Community Organisation & Planning	38
2.4.2 Output 2 Education and Awareness	41
2.4.3 Output 3 Monitoring & Evaluation	43
2.4.4 Output 4 Village Eco-Development	43
2.4.5 Output 5 Sustainable Resource Use & Livelihoods	45
2.4.6 Output 6 Enabling Policy Framework	48
2.4.7 Output 7 Financing Mechanism	50
2.4.8 Project Objectives	51
2.5 Stakeholder participation	55
2.5.1 Participation during project formulation	55
2.5.2 Participation in project implementation	56

## ***Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION***

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2.6	Gender and empowerment	58
	2.6.1 The gender strategy of MACP	58
	2.6.2 Gender in project implementation	59
	2.6.3 Empowerment	61
2.7	Project impact	62
	2.7.1 Global environmental impacts	62
	2.7.2 Socio-economic and environmental impacts	63
2.8	Sustainability	64
	2.8.1 Institutional sustainability	64
	2.8.2 Financial sustainability	65
	2.8.3 Knowledge management	66
	2.8.4 Exit strategy	66
2.9	Replicability and follow-up	67
	2.9.1 Replication	67
	2.9.2 Follow-up	68
2.10	Experience gained and lessons learnt	69
<b>3</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>71</b>
3.1	Project concept and design	71
3.2	Project implementation	71
3.3	Project monitoring and evaluation	71
3.4	Project management	72
3.5	Achievement of targeted outputs and objectives	72
3.6	Stakeholder participation	73
3.7	Gender and empowerment	73
3.8	Project impact	74
3.9	Sustainability	74
3.10	Replicability	75
3.11	Exit strategy	75
3.12	Follow-up	75
<b>4</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>76</b>

### **ANNEXES**

1	Evaluation Terms of Reference
2	Mission Schedule
3	Persons consulted
4	Documents reviewed
5	Project publications
6	Notes from field visits
7	Project management and implementation frameworks
8	Valley Conservation Plans and date of approval
9	Report on the Mountain Areas Conservancy Fund (MACF)
10	MACF Board membership

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

A&E	Awareness and Education
AKDN	Aga Khan Development Network
AKRSP	Aga Khan Rural Support Programme
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCB	Community Citizen Board
CMP	Conservancy Management Plan
CMC	Conservancy Management Committee
CSO	Cluster Support Organisation
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DCC	District Conservation Committee
DG	Director-General
D/RR	Deputy/ Resident Representative
E&A	Education and awareness
EMC	Executive Management Committee
EU/EC	European Union / European Commission
FD	Forest Department
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IC	Intercooperation
IUCN-P	World Conservation Union (Pakistan)
KIDP	Kalam Integrated Development Programme
MACF	Mountain Areas Conservancy Fund
MACP	Mountain Areas Conservancy Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRDP	Malakand Rural Development Project
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NAs	Northern Areas
NEX	National Execution (of UNDP projects)
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NP	National Park
NPD	National Project Director
NPM	National Project Manager
NRM	Natural Resources Management
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PCDP	Palas Conservation and Development Project
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Project Management Unit
PRIF	Pre-Investment Facility
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RPM	Regional Project Manager
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SGP	Small Grants Programme
TPR	Tri-Partite Review
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme (Pakistan)
VCC	Valley Conservation Committee
VCF	Valley Conservation Fund
VCP	Valley Conservation Plan
VO	Village Organisation
WCC	Women's Conservation Committee
WCF	Women's Conservation Fund
WG	Women's Group
WO	Women's Organisation
WS	Wildlife Sanctuary
WWF-P	World Wide Fund for Nature - Pakistan

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

This is the Terminal Evaluation Report for the Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) which started in mid-1999 and will end in December 2006. The MACP followed on a four-year pilot phase (GEF-PRIF) which successfully tested the communities-based approach to biodiversity conservation. The total cost of MACP was almost US\$19 million of which US\$10.6 million is from GEF if the PRIF phase is included.

The project has been implemented in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Northern Areas (NAs), in situations which presented the project teams with innumerable hurdles. The targeted locations possess unique and high biodiversity values of global significance, on which the communities often depend for their livelihoods because economic opportunities are extremely limited. The areas are prone to natural disasters of various kinds, and are very remote, with difficult road access and weak communication infrastructures. Land tenure in the project areas is complex, resulting in complex relationships between stakeholders. Climatic conditions create a short access season to most of the valleys where the project has been implemented. The project operated in well known 'poverty pockets' and some of the rural communities in these areas are also very conservative and extremely wary of "outsiders". The project field staff are to be commended for their commitment and the hard work required to take the project to these locations.

The Project has been implemented by IUCN-Pakistan, together with the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries of NWFP and the Department of Forests, Parks and Wildlife in NAs. Collaborative partners were the Worldwide Fund for Nature in Pakistan (WWF), the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) and the Himalayan Wildlife Foundation.

### **Project design**

The project design set out to empower, organize and boost the capacity of local communities to conserve biodiversity at an ecological landscape level; to enhance the relative values of wild resources (as a conservation incentive) by promoting their sustainable use; and, to create a conducive policy, legislative and financial framework for community-based conservation. Project activities were undertaken on a 'conservancy' basis, which engenders a sense of ownership and encourages communities to adopt a protective stance of their natural "assets". At the same time, by addressing the community's needs, the approach enhances livelihood security and enables the community to reduce its reliance and stress on the natural environment. The outcome of the conservancy approach is expected to be the conservation of biological diversity.

There was a reliance on partners for a crucial element of the project design, namely the parallel social development projects to provide the incentives for those communities that were prepared to reduce their reliance on natural resources. According to the Project Document, this was necessary because "*Such activities, aimed at meeting the basic needs of local communities, can be justified in Pakistan's own sustainable development interests and are not eligible for GEF financing based on the incremental cost criterion*". The GEF has since relaxed this strict criterion.

In the event, the partners had their own objectives and priorities to pursue and the collaboration fell short of MACP requirements. This was recognized by the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) and in following their advice, MACP was re-designed to assume responsibility for the social development aspects of the project at a cost of \$350,000 which is about 4% of the GEF funds committed to MACP. The mission accepts that in doing so, the project was still in harmony with the original project concept and design.

## **Project governance and management**

MACP was steered by a Project Steering Committee (PSC) comprising very important functionaries fully capable of addressing issues pertaining to policy, institutional collaboration, conflict resolution, project performance, efficiency, etc. The PSC has been instrumental in fulfilling several tasks on a timely basis. However, the view of the PSC from the field level is that of a potential source of advice and guidance which did not materialize.

Day-to-day management of the project was entrusted to a Project Management Unit (PMU), headed by the National Project Manager (NPM) and established for the purpose by the Ministry of Environment and IUCN-P. The PMU has suffered from a high staff turnover. In the six years of MACP there have been four different NPMs and this lack of continuity may have contributed to some of the concerns expressed about the PMU. For example, in spite of the PMU's impressive training effort, the mission was told that more structured learning opportunities needed to be provided for younger staff in the regions.

MACP has a regional office headed by a Regional Project Manager (RPM), in each of NWFP and NAs. In NWFP, the Wildlife Department is a great influence on MACP because the RPM and other key members of the team are on secondment from the NWFP Wildlife Department. This closeness has both positive and negative repercussions. In NAs, the new RPM was only recruited about six months ago and the position had been filled by an Acting RPM for three and a half years. There is no doubt that MACP in the NAs has suffered through this leadership crisis.

The fact that the project is largely focusing on wildlife species rather than habitat, together with the complexity of land tenure in northern Pakistan, has created a situation where some of the important government actors are missing from the scene altogether – e.g. the Forest Department in NWFP.

Project governance and management is rated as marginally satisfactory.

## **Financial aspects**

For a complex project such as MACP, with a duration of seven years, budget revisions have been surprisingly few and comparatively small. The original estimates of cost were pretty accurate and the most substantial increases compared to the original budget took place in two categories. The first was an increase of 400% in the amount allocated for Policy Reform on the recommendation of the MTE and duly approved by the PSC and TPR. The amount was increased to provide additional support to the three government administrations namely Federal, NWFP and NAs to help them engage in the management of project initiatives, as well as to fund the consultative process for preparing the draft Model Wildlife Law. The other significant increase was an amount of more than \$350,000 for "Productive Infrastructure", which did not appear at all in the original MACP budget and which was required for the community development works that serve as an incentive and motivation for the Conservancies to adopt more sustainable natural resource management practices or to compensate them for giving up the use of some natural resources. MACP was advised by the MTE to fill the gap, hence the additional expenditure.

## **Monitoring**

In its attempts to assess monitoring and evaluation by the project, the mission had difficulty obtaining clear, definitive answers regarding the LogFrame Matrix, which did not appear to have been used very much by project management. The PIRs were only marginally better in helping to measure progress - the PIRs between 2000 and 2004 did not go down to the level of Output/Outcome and while PIR 2005



did, the indicators it used were those from the original LogFrame Matrix as in the Project Document, instead of the revised version of the LogFrame Matrix.

IUCN-P and PMU, very helpfully prepared and shared with the mission, a Summary Report which was seen by the mission as the most comprehensive and up to date assessment by the project of its own progress. The report listed achievements against indicators, at the Objective as well as the Outputs/Outcomes level. However, the indicators used in the Summary Report are also from the original LogFrame Matrix instead of the revised version. These inconsistencies and confusion indicated to the mission that the value of the LogFrame Matrix was not fully appreciated by MACP management as a tool for project performance monitoring and the mission found project performance monitoring by MACP as only marginally satisfactory.

On the other hand, compliance monitoring, which involved local communities trained by MACP, has been highly satisfactory.

The mission cannot be so positive about species surveys and monitoring. We accept that IUCN-P has made every effort to standardize the wildlife surveys to reduce the potential for variability, and that the direct count method may be the only one available to MACP, however, the mission concluded that while the surveys and monitoring undertaken by MACP is satisfactory to determine the potential for trophy hunting; the results are not sufficiently reliable to gauge the project's success in the protection of endangered species and this aspect is deemed unsatisfactory.

It is too early for the mission to determine how successful the monitoring of CMPs and VCPs is going to be, but with the proposed refinements and if the proposed strengthening and capacity building is undertaken as part of the exit strategy, it should be successful.

The mission concluded that taking into account the various facets of monitoring, MACP has been marginally satisfactory in its efforts towards monitoring and evaluation.

## **Outputs**

From the information provided, the mission concluded that *Output 1 : Community Organization and Planning* has only been partly achieved in NAs and the achievements in NWFP are unknown. But the mission is aware of the amount of work done under this output and considers the enthusiasm and interest generated at the community level as admirable.

However, and in spite of the obvious signs of success, the mission has some lingering concerns about the sustainability of VCCs after MACP ends. The funds accumulated in Valley Conservation Funds are rather meagre, and while all the VCCs met during the mission expressed their willingness to remain active for at least a year when a possible follow up of the project is finalized, they may be somewhat over-optimistic. The mission believes that unless the exit strategy addresses this issue and puts in place adequate support systems, VCCs may not survive much beyond the project.

The mission concludes that the results of awareness and motivation work by the project are excellent, in spite of the failure to report the achievements accurately. However, ecological principles are not always well understood by the communities and more work still needs to be done. This task has been made easier since the communities are now receptive.

*Output 2 : Education and Awareness* was sub-contracted to WWF-Pakistan and implemented as a parallel project which finished at the end of 2005 and a final evaluation has been completed. In the opinion of that evaluation the overall rating for this component was "good". The mission therefore did not attempt to deliberate on this Output in detail.

*Output 3 : Monitoring and Evaluation* was dissolved and its activities were meant to be distributed as cross-cutting to other outputs following the recommendations of the MTE. In the event, this distribution was not entirely successful and M&E was not integrated fully into the logic of the project framework

*Output 4 : Village Eco-Development* - The reliance by the project on other parallel projects for such a crucial component has already been discussed as a design flaw and following the MTE, the project was redesigned to assume direct responsibility for as many of these social development activities as possible. In spite of mis-reporting, the mission is confident that satisfactory progress has been made towards this Output in its revised form.

*Output 5 : Sustainable Resource use and Livelihoods* has a focus on trophy hunting and this is of concern to the mission mainly because of the inequitable distribution of the benefits. For example, the mission gathered from the stakeholders in NAs that only eight valleys had the opportunity for trophy hunting in the PRIF and MACP phases. The mission concluded that there is an urgent need to diversify the economic potentials for VCCs; otherwise, their interest in project objectives will die out sooner or later. The project has made a commendable effort in training selected communities on sustainable methods for harvesting and processing medicinal and aromatic plants, but the mission is not aware of any moves by MACP to address the next step, namely marketing. There are also some very good ideas for milk marketing and processing, value-adding in non-timber forest products, wool processing, etc. However, none of these have materialized yet. But the mission is well aware of the numerous good initiatives taken by MACP under this Output. If the time permits, these should now be taken to their next steps using the best available expert advice.

The mission believes that *Output 6 : Enabling Policy Framework* and the Indicators selected for it may have been somewhat ambitious since the results targeted are beyond the influence of the project – it is only governments that can adopt policy, enact laws and promulgate rules and regulations. The mission acknowledges the work done by MACP in drafting various legal instruments and training Government personnel, and there are many signs within the federal and provincial government set-ups that could make the MACP team optimistic about the eventual acceptance of the project's proposals for legislation and similar instruments. However, we are not optimistic that the new legislation, regulations and procedures will be adopted by Government before the end of MACP and this places many of the project's outcomes in jeopardy.

The indicators for *Output 7 : Financial Management*, have been changed totally from four indicators which focussed on MACF and sustainability to two indicators focussed on recurrent costs. The mission is quite sceptical about the new indicators since they can only be ascertained some six months after the project has been terminated. Much remains to be done in order to achieve this Output.

## **Objective**

If the indicators selected for the Objective had to be relied upon, the mission has to conclude that the Objective has not been reached and is unlikely to be reached by the time the project ends. However, the mission is aware that this is not the case, and it adopted other approaches to determine progress towards the Objective. The mission is of the opinion that regardless of the indicators selected, MACP has achieved good progress towards its Immediate Objective overall, and at the time of writing, this is seen as satisfactory. We believe that with a concerted effort in the remaining four months it might be possible to upgrade this rating.

### **Stakeholder participation**

In the opinion of the mission, public participation during the MACP formulation stages was only marginally satisfactory and during implementation, it could have certainly done better in relation to its implementation partners. However, it has been very successful in providing meaningful participation opportunities at the community level. It is true that women are under-represented in the decision-making process and more work is required in this respect, but even in the case of women (where engaged) and other disadvantaged groups, MACP has made significant progress towards meaningful participation.

The mission concludes that MACP achieved a satisfactory level of stakeholder participation during the implementation phase, overall; whereas at community level, participation was highly satisfactory.

### **Gender mainstreaming**

No formal gender mainstreaming strategy was adopted by MACP in spite of a Workshop dedicated to this purpose. However, according to IUCN-P, MACP has developed a gender action plan which incorporates aspects related to gender in all the outputs, thus making gender an integral part of project implementation. The mission did not see any evidence of this.

The mission recognized the difficulties that MACP was operating under in this respect. Conservatism of some communities is certainly a barrier and one which project staff had to overcome. But it seems that the project team gave up too easily and became conservative itself and hesitant, for fear of touching a 'sensitive nerve'. The mission concluded that the MACP perspective on gender mainstreaming was more conservative than it needed to be and that this should be corrected to the extent possible in the remaining time.

In addition, the mission recommended a thorough analysis of power dynamics at community level in an effort to safeguard the livelihoods of the landless and poor sections of communities. The project must make sure that it is not making the powerful more powerful and the rest more powerless.

### **Project Impact**

The project has produced satisfactory global biodiversity benefits by virtue of the environment where it has been working and since benefits have accrued to species and ecosystems which are endemic or in some other way unique to the mountains of Pakistan.

MACP has also had an impact at community level – it has raised awareness of the value of natural resources such that perceptions among the communities have changed radically; village communities are now thinking about sustainability of the resource rather than simply their immediate needs; they are also more amenable to balancing their needs with those of the ecosystem so as to ensure the latter's survival. The project has also had an impact on the mountain environment of Pakistan and, if the project activities are continued, this is likely to improve. High country pastures are being rested, stock numbers are being reduced, forests are not being cut down for firewood, habitat is being protected, the environment is being protected. Other impacts include - the spread of the VCC and the conservancy approach to other valleys; the model wildlife legislation for NWFP which stands to be emulated in other jurisdictions; the commitment by the Government of Pakistan to fund a US\$8 million project to consolidate and follow-up on the work of MACP; the improved relations between communities and Government agencies.

The project has achieved impacts and outcomes at a highly satisfactory level.

## **Sustainability**

The mission feels that in both NWFP and in NAs, capacity is lacking and institutions are weak and these cannot be built overnight, and financial resources alone will not remedy the situation. It is acknowledged that capacity is better in NWFP, however, a capacity needs assessment is required in both NWFP and NAs, and this should be undertaken as part of the exit strategy to enhance the prospects for sustainability.

The sustainability of community institutions is very much linked with the proposed legislation which has yet to be adopted formally, and with the follow-up programmes. As such, it is not yet secure.

Financial sustainability is not assured yet either – MACF requires a further US\$2 million before it can become operational and the VCF resources are inadequate to sustain the same level of activity without the MACP.

In terms of institutional and financial sustainability, the mission feels that MACP is not satisfactory.

With regards to the knowledge generated by MACP, the mission concluded that while the knowledge base is satisfactory, knowledge management is currently unsatisfactory, and may not be sustainable. However, this can be remedied in the next few months.

## **Exit Strategy**

It is widely acknowledged that if there is a follow-up project, it is unlikely to start right away and the gap could be substantial. The mission therefore believes that in addition to the usual provisions for the handing over of project assets, the Exit Strategy for MACP must prepare the way for “life after MACP” without the support of a project. The Exit Strategy must also focus on the outstanding financial resources issues to ensure that to the extent possible, all the funds are operational by the end of the project. As noted elsewhere, without the funds there is no financial sustainability for the products of MACP.

The mission felt that no one among communities, partners and even project teams, is thinking seriously about the project termination and what will happen then. When asked whether there is a will to continue the interventions on the ground after MACP finishes in December 2006, all the communities were adamant that they will continue. However, the mission detected a general expectation that a follow-up will happen. In effect, the project is seen as continuing and this is leading to a false sense of complacency. No serious efforts have been made to consolidate results, manage knowledge and adopt a strategic approach to the project’s closure. The mission feels that a number of project activities remain to be completed and a strategy needs to be put in place right away to ensure that this is done before the project is closed.

The current situation regarding project closure and exit is unsatisfactory.

## **Replicability**

IUCN-P advised the mission that MACP has already been used in several ways for replication in other areas. If the identified lessons can be learnt and applied, and the mistakes avoided, the approach devised by MACP can, and maybe should, be replicated even wider in Pakistan, in the region, and even in mountain areas globally.

### **Follow-up**

The mission agrees with those consulted that if there is no follow-up there is a risk that the investment made by MACP will slowly disappear. However, a follow-up should not be a simple extension of the current project and the design will need to be altered to reflect the experience gained from MACP.

### **Ending**

The report ends by identifying a number of lessons that can be learnt from MACP. Conclusions, which have been drawn throughout this report, are then gathered in a final section for ease of action. Finally, recommendations are made with the emphasis on future follow-up interventions.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Environment is one of the thematic areas under the broad framework of the UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) for Pakistan. Interventions focus on various aspects including natural resources management; improvement of living conditions in urban centres; capacity building for decision-making; mainstreaming environment into the development process; and information dissemination and advocacy. A number of projects are under way in response to Pakistan's commitments as signatory to multi-lateral environmental agreements including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) is one of the major initiatives that respond to the Government's commitments under the CBD. It has been funded jointly by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP, the Government of Pakistan, the Government of North West Frontier Province and the Northern Areas Administration.

GEF is a mechanism for international cooperation to meet the incremental costs of measures to achieve agreed global environmental benefits in one of the focal areas of biological diversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, ozone layer depletion and persistent organic pollutants.

The UNDP GEF Programme in Pakistan is mainstreamed with UNDP's Country Programme for Pakistan (2004-08). It was introduced in the early 1990s by way of workshops and seminars outlining the GEF funding mechanism and identifying focal areas. In early 1995, field implementation of the first GEF project in Pakistan began in the area of biodiversity conservation with the initiation of a rural community-based biodiversity conservation project in the northern mountainous areas. Since then, GEF-supported initiatives in Pakistan have achieved considerable momentum and the current portfolio is worth US\$42 million while there is a pipeline of US\$25 million.

In accordance with UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policies and procedures, all regular and medium-sized projects supported by the GEF must undergo a final evaluation. This is particularly necessary before a concept proposal for additional funding (or subsequent phases of the same project) can be considered for inclusion in a GEF work programme.

### **1.2 The Project**

The Project Document argues that population numbers of threatened species in Pakistan's mountain areas continue to decline and identifies the threats to biological diversity as –

- *Degradation of rangelands by domestic livestock, leading to a loss of habitat quality for wild ungulates*
- *Hunting of Ibex, Markhor and other wild ungulates for food by local villagers and for sport by outsiders without legal permits*
- *Hunting of Snow Leopard, Lynx, Otter, Grey Wolf and other predators for pelts and in retaliation against livestock predation*
- *Forest loss through the unsustainable harvest of fuelwood, trees for the construction of shelters and fodder for livestock*
- *Overharvesting of medicinal plants and other economically useful flora*
- *Disease transmission from livestock to wild fauna, particularly closely related species*

The problem is seen as being rooted in the absence of ownership, on the part of local communities, of conservation efforts. Local communities have often been alienated from conservation programmes and

many programmes are simply untenable because they do not provide communities with alternative means of livelihood while they expect them to forego resource use.

The Project Document proposes that a cost-effective solution to managing wild resources is to devolve responsibilities for conservation to the community level. It argues that in order to achieve this, local communities will need to be accorded a utilitarian stake in the management of wild resources. In part, this may be achieved through an education campaign aimed at sensitising villagers to the non-monetary values of biodiversity, including benefits accorded by consumptive uses of flora and fauna and those captured through the flow of ecological services. But this alone will be insufficient and monetary incentives will also be needed. Opportunities for catalysing productive uses of wild resources on a sustainable basis need to be found in order to increase their relative values and to provide a direct conservation incentive. The Project Document concludes that the objective must be to secure a nexus between the development objectives of local communities and the objectives of sustainable ecosystem management.

The Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) is a seven-year project funded by GEF, UNDP, and the Government of Pakistan which commenced in 1999. It aims to address the identified threats to the biological diversity of Pakistan's mountain regions. The Project builds on a successful four-year pilot (1995-1998), the GEF Pre-Investment Facility Project (PRIF), entitled Maintaining Biodiversity in Pakistan with Rural Community Development, focusing on the mountain environment in the Northern Areas and the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. A major objective of the PRIF was the promotion of sustainable use of wild resources by encouraging conservation of wild species and contributing to local community development. A community-based trophy hunting programme, involving markhor and Asiatic ibex, was developed to provide an economic incentive for communities to conserve biological diversity, including wildlife habitats.

MACP is based on the premise that conservation activities are unlikely to be sustainable over the long term unless local communities are actively involved. The Project aims at mitigating threats to biological diversity in an environment identified by GEF as meriting special attention, namely, the Western Himalayan, Karakoram and Hindu Kush ranges of northern Pakistan. The focus is on empowering local communities to manage ecosystems and wild resources. The Project Document targets a representative sample of biomes which will be protected through the creation of four Conservancies managed by local communities in partnership with Government as multiple-use areas. Within the Conservancies, activities were meant to engender the in-situ conservation of habitats and species and promote sustainable use of biological resources. The Project had three principal thrusts - first, to empower, organize and boost the capacity of local communities to conserve biodiversity at an ecological landscape level; second, to enhance the relative values of wild resources (as a conservation incentive) by promoting their sustainable use; and third, to create a conducive policy, legislative and financial framework for community-based conservation.

The project has been implemented in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and in Northern Areas (NAs), in situations which presented the project teams with innumerable hurdles. The targeted locations possess unique and high biodiversity values of global significance, on which the communities often depend for their livelihoods because economic opportunities are extremely limited. The areas are prone to natural disasters of various kinds, and are very remote, with difficult road access and weak communication infrastructures. Climatic conditions create a short access season to most of the valleys where the project has been implemented. The project operated in well known 'poverty pockets' and the rural communities in these areas are generally poor and vulnerable. Many are also very conservative and extremely wary of "outsiders". In many of these areas it is the women and the landless who are engaged in the collection of herbs and other non-timber forest products and in rearing livestock for their families' livelihoods. The project field staff are to be commended for their commitment and the hard work required to take the project to these locations where no previous conservation initiative had operated with objectives similar to that of MACP in the past.

Land tenure in the project areas is complex, resulting in complex relationships between stakeholders. In the NWFP, the project has been operating mostly in *de jure* protected forest lands<sup>1</sup>. Wastelands and pastures are used and (at times) “managed” by communities with little involvement of the Forest Department, and likewise for the harvesting and use of non-timber forest products. On the other hand, timber production is managed by the FD. Proprietary rights of the FD are not pursued with any vigour especially in relation to high altitude pastures, the use of “wastelands” and the collection of medicinal plants. In NAs all the areas under conservancies (including wastelands) are protected lands<sup>2</sup>. As in NWFP, pastures are often confused as communal lands; however, the land use by the community is only *de facto*.

According to the summary page of the Project Document, the GEF contribution to the project was US\$10,600,000 (which includes US\$2.5 million for the PRIF Phase). Co-funding was expected to bring the total project cost to US\$18,850,000. Associated and other baseline initiatives were estimated to be worth US\$91,763,260. A slightly different (though not incompatible) calculation is given in Annex 5 of the Project Document which states *“Incremental costs to be financed by the GEF amount to US\$8,100,000. Baseline expenditures amount to US\$91,763,260 and the alternative strategy has been costed at US\$ 108,113,260. Funding from non GEF sources amounts to US\$8,250,000, of which US\$3,650,000 has been committed for complementary activities, and the remainder (US\$4,600,000) for substitutional ones. GEF financing amounts to 7.5% of the cost of the alternative strategy... Co-funding has been leveraged from UNDP, the GoP, local communities and a number of donor agencies to cover the costs of sustainable development activities that will generate mostly local benefits”*.

### **1.3 The implementing agency**

The Project has been implemented by IUCN-Pakistan, together with the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries (known as Environment Department) of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the Department of Forests, Parks and Wildlife in Northern Areas. Collaborative partners were the Worldwide Fund for Nature in Pakistan (WWF), the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) and the Himalayan Wildlife Foundation.

As the lead implementing agency, IUCN-P is fully behind the MACP concept which it sees as based on a participatory and community-based approach to natural resource management and facilitated by developing an enabling policy and legislative environment that can support community empowerment. IUCN-P believes that while governments are responsible for implementing the necessary policy and legal reforms, existing institutions in Pakistan are weak and there is a long history of distrust between communities and government agencies. IUCN-P has therefore tried to bridge this divide by being an intermediary and developing “co-management” bodies (e.g. the DCCs) where communities can influence decision making and sit at the same table as government officials. As a membership organization (with

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<sup>1</sup> In NWFP, after the merger of the princely states of Swat, Dir, Buner and Chitral, the wastelands, pastures and forests in these areas were notified as protected forest lands and the management responsibility was delegated to the Forest Department.

<sup>2</sup> Rao, A.L. and Marwat, H.A., 2003. Northern Area’s strategy for sustainable development. Background Paper for Forestry, The World Conservation Union (IUCN). Gilgit. Pakistan.

Gohar, A., 2002. Competing Interests and Institutional Ambiguities: Problems of Sustainable Forest Management in the NAs of Pakistan. PhD thesis. University of Bath. UK.

Sheikh, M.I. and Aleem, A., 1975. Forest and forestry in Northern Areas (part 1 and 11). The Pakistan Journal of Forestry. Government of Pakistan (1965). (Modified) The Forest Act, 1927, XVI of 1927. Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs (Law Division).

Government notification of 9 May 1983 referring to section 29, chapter IV of Forest Act 1927 states: “as implemented in the NAs, the Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of chapter IV of the said Act shall apply to forest-land and waste-land in the NAs and such forest-land and waste-land shall henceforth be called the “Protected Forest” of the NAs”.



both State and NGO members), IUCN-P sees itself as uniquely positioned to act as “an honest broker” and able to convene platforms for dialogue where communities and civil society have a voice. As a knowledge-based organization, IUCN-P claims that it has also been able to bring in outside expertise (both national and international) where governments have little or no internal technical capacity. Finally, IUCN-P advised the evaluation mission that a number of MACP partners would not willingly have participated if MACP had been implemented directly by government (under the NEX modality).

When asked how it was able to reconcile its conservation ethic and philosophy with trophy hunting, IUCN-P asserted that it believes that conservation is not just about “protection” of biodiversity but can also include “use” provided it is equitable and ecologically sustainable. IUCN-P believes that trophy hunting as exemplified by MACP fills both of these criteria. The community benefits derived from this activity provide a direct incentive for protecting local populations and their natural habitats and by focusing on the harvest of older males (trophies), while protecting females and younger animals, IUCN-P aims to achieve population growth. As long as trophy hunting is tightly regulated and there is a transparent process for revenue sharing and quota allocations, IUCN-P believes that trophy hunting can be an important conservation tool in managing wildlife and their habitats.

## **1.4 The Evaluation Mission**

### **1.4.1 Mission Team composition and activities**

The Terminal Evaluation of the Mountain Areas Conservancy Project was undertaken in June/July 2006 by a team of four independent experts, comprising Team Leader Philip Tortell, Fund Management Specialist Barry Spergel, and National Experts Arjumand Nizami and Saeed uz-Zaman. They were joined by Mian Muhammad Shafiq who was appointed to the Evaluation Team by the Ministry of the Environment. The second Government nominee from the Economic Affairs Department was not appointed. Terms of Reference for the evaluation are in Annex 1.

The Evaluation Team worked together in Pakistan for approximately four weeks, but the work continued electronically for some time after the mission disbanded. Considerable support and input were received from the main MACP partners – the Government of Pakistan, local administrations in North-West Frontier Province and Northern Areas, UNDP, IUCN-P and WWF. Project management and staff facilitated the evaluation and provided invaluable input to the evaluation process.

The mission spent some ten days travelling by road in the Northern Areas and the North West Frontier Province and a further 13 days in Islamabad. The Mission Schedule is in Annex 2. Local government offices, local village communities and local Project staff from each of the Conservancies were consulted during the extensive field work. While in Islamabad, consultations were held with Government officials and other senior representatives of MACP partner agencies. Almost 300 stakeholders ranging from Government officials to grassroots communities were met and consulted during the Mission, and these are listed in Annex 3.

As the drafting of this report progressed, the findings of the mission were discussed with project management, UNDP and the Government and a formal presentation of the preliminary findings was made to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and other stakeholders. Following on this presentation, a draft of this evaluation report was distributed widely and comments were invited over a two-week period. Comments were received from four of the project partners, necessitating some further dialogue. The comments and the results of these further discussions were taken fully into account in the preparation of this final independent terminal evaluation report.

## **1.4.2 Evaluation objectives**

It is a UNDP/GEF requirement that an end-of-project evaluation is carried out with the major purpose of evaluating the project's impacts and achievements against the objectives as set forth in the original project document. More specifically, terminal evaluations are intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of a project by looking at early signs of potential impact and sustainability of results including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. Terminal evaluations also identify and document lessons learned and make recommendations that might improve the design and implementation of other UNDP/GEF projects.

The tasks of this evaluation mission, according to the Terms of Reference (Annex 1), were the following :

- a) *Evaluate whether the project has achieved its objectives as envisaged in the project document and followed on the recommendations of mid-term evaluation.*
- b) *Determine the socio-economic and environmental impact of project contribution at the level of the local communities and relevant government departments.*
- c) *Assess progress towards established targets (in terms of quality, quantity, efficiency and effectiveness), review the design and existing operational status of the various components of the project and based on findings provide recommendations for improvement that may be followed up in next phase or replicated under a similar project.*
- d) *Analyze the implementation modality of the project, with reference to institutional partnerships, formal and informal networks and decision-making structures and processes.*
- e) *Comment on the contributions of the project to empowerment and capacity building of relevant groups.*
- f) *Analyze the key successes and the main weaknesses of the project, and recommend ways and means to expand on the former and improve on the latter, for future initiatives.*
- g) *Highlight features, if any, of the project which could be its unique contribution to the knowledge base at regional and global level.*
- h) *Analyze the institutional sustainability of the project, with particular reference to the organizations ultimately responsible for taking over the activities.*
- i) *Review various operational and cost-recovery systems that are currently in place, and based on the findings, provide recommendations for future.*
- j) *Identify issues, constraints and lessons learnt under the project.*
- k) *Assess the possibility of replication of similar projects in other parts of Pakistan or in the region*
- l) *Advise on whether a follow-up initiative is merited.*

The Evaluation Mission carried out all the above tasks and this report is the result.

## **1.5 Methodology of the evaluation**

### **1.5.1 The approach adopted**

The evaluation process comprised three phases. The first phase was one of data and information gathering. It started with a review of relevant documents made available electronically by UNDP and the Project Management Unit even before the team assembled in Islamabad. In addition, relevant websites were also visited and studied. Soon after its arrival in Islamabad, the team received extensive briefings and additional documentation from the UNDP Energy & Environment Unit, the Project Management Unit, and IUCN-P as implementing agency. Following this, the team embarked on a broad programme of

consultations with key stakeholders and beneficiaries ranging from Government officials to grassroots communities. The latter were met in their own environments at village level during field visits. All of the field visits and most of the other consultation meetings were conducted in the company of Project personnel and/or staff of the UNDP Energy & Environment Unit. The aim was to capture as broad a catchment of views and opinions as possible within the time constraints and at no time did the mission feel that the presence of project staff influenced the frankness and sincerity of those consulted.

The second phase focused on analysis, discussion and drafting by the team. During this phase, the team shared preliminary conclusions and drafts with key stakeholders and sought advice on any errors of fact, or omissions, or inaccuracies. This phase included a presentation of the preliminary findings to the Project Steering Committee and other stakeholders, following which a preliminary draft version of the report was released for comments. The team received extensive comments from a small number of stakeholders including the implementing agency, IUCN-P, and UNDP.

The third and final phase refined the draft in the light of the comments received, and produced this final report. Information provided in the comments received was used substantially in revising the draft, sometimes as quotations, other times simply as a reference. Where no specific source is given in this report for information from one or other of the stakeholders, this information would have come from comments which are kept on file.

The latest guidance provided by GEF and UNDP, was adhered to by the team in undertaking this terminal evaluation. As noted in the Acknowledgements, the team benefited greatly from the wide spectrum of views, opinions and advice that it received during the course of its work. However, the conclusions reached and the recommendations made, represent the independent consensus of the team members alone.

### **1.5.2 Documents reviewed and consulted**

The team was provided with an initial list of documents (in the Terms of Reference) by UNDP and further advice was provided by the PMU. The evaluation team sought additional documentation as necessary and supplemented these lists with additional relevant documents to provide us with the background to the project, insights into project implementation and management, a record of project outputs, etc. The full list of documents reviewed and/or consulted by the team is in Annex 4.

The annex also contains a short list of the websites that were visited and reviewed.

A related list is that provided by Project management and showing the publications of the Project. This is contained in Annex 5. The team consulted some of these documents but did not evaluate them.

### **1.5.3 Consultations with key stakeholders and government officials**

Based on their perceived degree of influence on the project and their expressed interest in it, the mission identified two main categories of stakeholders for the purpose of consultations – primary stakeholders and secondary stakeholders.

The **primary stakeholders** were considered in a further two sub-divisions and these were :

#### **Project Management and Project Implementers:**

Office of the Inspector General of Forest, Ministry of Environment; Office of the GEF Operational Focal Point, Federal Ministry of Environment; NAs Forest, Parks and Wildlife Department; NWFP Wildlife Department; UNDP (especially the Energy & Environment Unit); GEF; IUCN Islamabad; WWF-Pakistan;

Valley Conservation Committees; District Conservation Committees; and, Conservancy Management Committees.

**Other primary stakeholders:**

Himalayan Wildlife Foundation; Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP); Economic Affairs Division, Government of Pakistan; NWFP Forest Department; NWFP Fishery Department; NWFP Agriculture Department; Northern Areas Strategy for Sustainable Development, Northern Areas Development Programme; IUCN-P regional offices in Chitral and Gilgit; IUCN-P Peshawar; and, members of the communities in the project conservancies.

The **secondary stakeholders** identified by the evaluation mission were the following:

District Governments; representatives of other donor- or government-funded projects being implemented in the two regions (including Malakand Rural Development Programme, Dir Kohistan Upland Rehabilitation Project, Khushal Pakistan Programme, Innovation for Poverty Reduction Project IC-IPRP); and, civil society organisations in the regions (including partners of EC-UNDP SGP Tropical Forestry Programme).

The mission was able to interact with the entire range of the above stakeholders during its brief tenure and a full list of persons met and/or consulted is in Annex 3.

#### **1.5.4 Field visits**

The mission followed a pre-planned itinerary for field visits to project areas. The itinerary was prepared by the MACP team in collaboration with IUCN-P and UNDP and included both NWFP and Northern Areas. In both regions the mission was briefed on arrival at the regional centre by the RPM and enjoyed interaction with regional as well as field staff. This was soon followed by field visits to the respective conservancies where the mission was shown a number of developments that MACP had undertaken or contributed to. Meetings at VCC and CMC level were held in Kalam (Swat), Garam Chashma (Chitral), Gojal (Hunza - NAs), Bonji and Rama (Astore-NA) and Skardu. In this way, the mission was able to appreciate the scope of the project, the natural resources that it was trying to protect, the communities that it was working with, the difficulties of access and communication faced by project field staff, etc. The mission also met with key stakeholders of the MACP representing Government, NGOs and civil society in the project areas.

The meetings at community level were conducted in a semi-structured, informal and interactive way. Following introductions, the mission explained to participants the purpose and scope of the evaluation. This was followed by presentations from the VCC/CMC representatives on what the project had achieved in their valley/s and how they had benefited from it. An open discussion followed, during which mission members pursued particular aspects of interest through questioning. The community members were always very willing to share their views on the project, as well as their aspirations. They were also open to the evaluation team on discussing aspects they felt could be improved in any future follow-up activity.

The mission was also fortunate to have interaction with local Government officials, NGOs and members of the public. Of particular value were the views of the Secretary Environment of NWFP and the Secretary Forests of NAs. These meetings provided the mission with an insight to the manner in which provincial authorities perceived MACP, and what they felt about a possible follow up.

Fuller notes on field visits are in Annex 6.

## **2 FINDINGS**

### **2.1 Project design**

The immediate objective of MACP was the establishment of conservancies “covering wide ecological landscapes, zoned for multiple use and backstopped by an enabling institutional, policy, regulatory and financial framework”. According to the Project Document, this was in response to the following threats to biological diversity in the mountain areas of Pakistan :

- *Degradation of rangelands by domestic livestock, leading to a loss of habitat quality for wild ungulates*
- *Hunting: Ibex, Markhor and other wild ungulates are hunted for food by local villagers and for sport by outsiders without legal permits; Snow Leopards, Lynx, Otters, Grey Wolves and other predators are hunted for pelts, and in retaliation against livestock predation*
- *Forest loss owing to the unsustainable harvest of fuelwood, trees for the construction of shelters, and fodder for livestock*
- *Overharvest of medicinal plants and other economically useful flora*
- *Disease transmission from livestock to wild fauna, particularly closely related species*

In response to these threats, the project set out to empower, organize and boost the capacity of local communities to conserve biodiversity at an ecological landscape level; to enhance the relative values of wild resources (as a conservation incentive) by promoting their sustainable use; and, to create a conducive policy, legislative and financial framework for community-based conservation.

The model had been tried successfully in the GEF PRIF (Pre-Investment Facility) Project which ran from 1995 to 1998 and which was evaluated in 1997, and the MACP was designed according to the lessons learnt from the PRIF phase. According to the Project Document, the PRIF phase Evaluation Mission concluded that the approach piloted under the PRIF phase had yielded very positive results in a short period, and would, if continued, provide a strong foundation for achieving stable biodiversity conservation in a cost-effective manner.

MACP approached its tasks on a “conservancy” basis but the term is not widely understood. IUCN-P is adamant that *“conservancies are NOT protected areas! They may or may not contain protected areas (as in the case of Community Controlled Hunting Areas) but they are not protected areas themselves; rather, they represent a social agreement between communities and the government to allow for the collaborative management of natural resources within a landscape. Dubbing them as a “form of protected area” would create serious reservations among the local communities as they have on numerous occasions expressed concern that the government may try to take away whatever rights they have secured through MACP by declaring conservancies as a form of protected areas”*. The mission concurs with these sentiments, however, we cannot reconcile this with what is said in the Project Document<sup>3</sup>, and with two of the indicators shown in the revised LogFrame Matrix for Output 6 which state - *“Protected area classification system revised to include Conservancies by PY 6.0”* and *“4 Conservancies designated as protected areas under revised classification system by PY 6.5”*.

But regardless of their official status, the conservancies engender a sense of ownership and encourage communities to adopt a protective stance of their natural “assets”. At the same time, by addressing the community’s needs, the approach enhances livelihood security and enables the community to reduce its reliance and stress on the natural environment. The outcome of the conservancy approach is expected to be the conservation of biological diversity.

At the conservancy level, MACP established Conservancy Management Committees (CMCs) (which were not part of the original project design) as a result of recommendations from the MTE to provide a

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<sup>3</sup> From the Project Document - *“The Conservancies are analogous to Managed Resource Protected Areas (category VI PA) as defined in the register of PA Management Categories (IUCN/WCMC, 1994).”*

comprehensive and holistic basis for management and stipulated this in Conservancy Management Plans. Below this level, MACP brought villages together in groups at valley level through the establishment of Valley Conservation Committees (VCCs).

In order to provide for the financial sustainability of these bodies and ensure the continuity of their work, MACP designed a Trust Fund at national level (the MACF) and further funds in each of the VCCs. The whole system was to be underpinned by conducive policies and enabling legislation on the part of Government, both federal and local.

The model designed by MACP, which was quite innovative some nine years ago when it was designed, is seen by the mission to be sound in principle. The extent to which it has been applied and is likely to be sustainable, are the subjects of this evaluation.

However, MACP was found to have three major design faults by the MTE –

- Reliance on partners for investment in physical infrastructure
- Assumption that community institutions would be readily available to work with MACP
- Understaffing

The mission sees the reliance on partners for such a crucial element of the project design, namely the parallel social development projects to provide the incentives for those communities that were prepared to reduce their reliance on natural resources, as the most critical of these design flaws. According to the Project Document, this was necessary because “*Such activities, aimed at meeting the basic needs of local communities, can be justified in Pakistan’s own sustainable development interests and are not eligible for GEF financing based on the incremental cost criterion*” and the design was passed by “the system” after the usual scrutiny and peer reviews and approved for implementation by GEF. It can also be added that the project may have been ahead of its time because the GEF has relaxed its strict insistence on purely global benefits and the incremental cost criterion<sup>4</sup>.

In the event, the partners had their own objectives to pursue and did not always supplement and complement the work of MACP. This was recognized by the Mid-Term Evaluation which opined that without the sustainable development activities the conservation objectives of the project may be in jeopardy and which made some very strong recommendations for the socio-economic aspects of the project to be addressed by MACP itself. In following the recommendations of the MTE, the MACP adapted itself to the changed circumstances and extended its activities into the community development field to fill the gap left by its original partners. This was seen as the only way to ensure that the conservation objectives of the project would ultimately be reached.

MACP broadened its focus into the area of poverty alleviation and the improvement of the quality of life of disadvantaged village communities in return for their commitment to protect and manage natural resources. The original objectives of the GEF project remained the same, however, MACP broadened its activities to include the building of irrigation schemes and reservoirs, repairing bridges, providing drinking water supply, building access roads, school improvements, provision of fuel efficient stoves, etc. In NWFP, the project instigated 185 community development schemes with a total cost of Rs.27,740,000. MACP contributed Rs.16,156,000 of this and the community contributions amounted to Rs.11,749,000. In NAs, the number of community development schemes was 247 at a total cost of Rs.16,000,000. The contribution of MACP was Rs.11,588,000 and that of the communities Rs.4,399,000.

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<sup>4</sup> See UNDP-GEF Biodiversity Advisory Note of 18 April 2004 on *GEF Strategic Priorities – Implications for Biodiversity Project Design and Impact*.

and, UNDP-GEF Biodiversity Advisory Note of 15 March 2004 on *Guidance on the development of projects under Strategic Priority BD-1 – Catalyzing the sustainability of Protected Areas*.

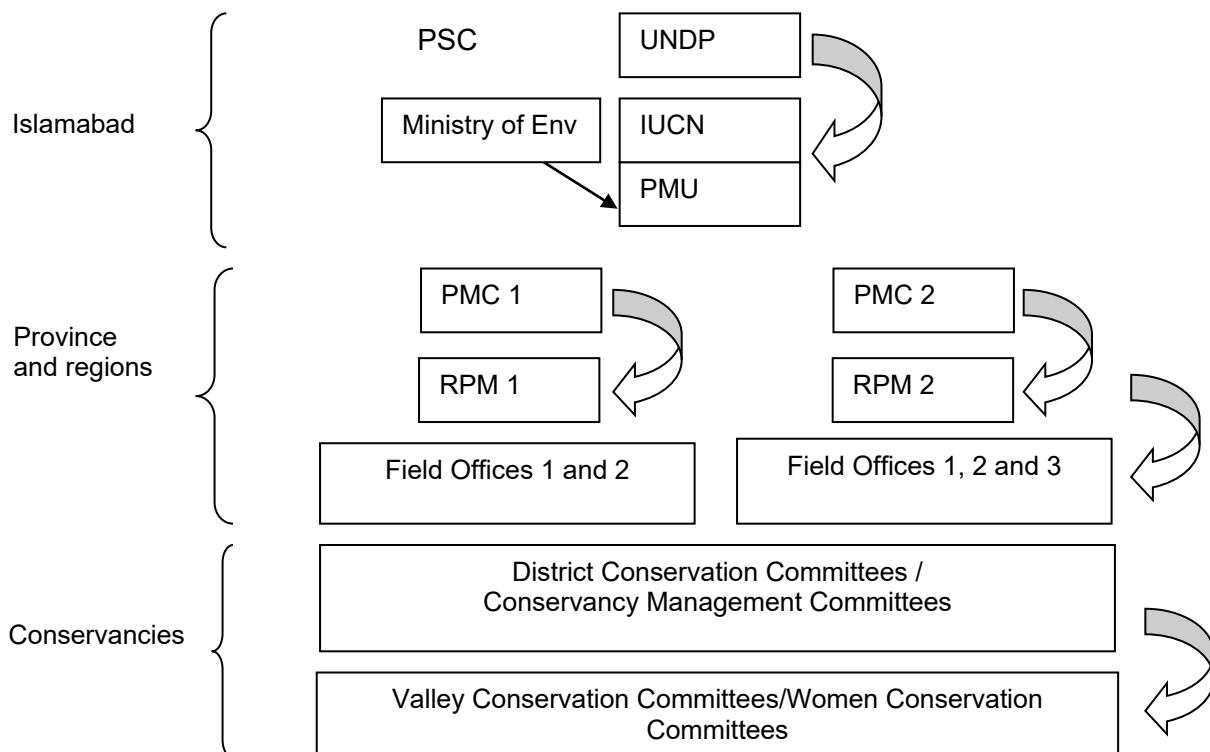
The mission accepts that this work was in the form of incentive, compensation or substitute for what the communities had to give up to accept the management regime for natural resources which was being proposed by MACP. The mission also accepts that in doing so, the project was still in harmony with the original project concept and design – the main difference was the fact that these social development activities were now being undertaken by MACP rather than its partners and GEF funds were being used. This change, which had been strongly advocated by the MTE, was adopted after the necessary approvals had been obtained and can be seen as an example of adaptive management. The cost of making this change was \$350,000 which represents about 4% of the GEF funds committed to MACP.

## 2.2 Project implementation and management

Project implementation was entrusted to a non-government organization, IUCN-Pakistan, in collaboration with the Federal Government, and IUCN-P established an implementation framework and management structure along the lines suggested in the Project Document. The effectiveness of this implementation modality and the organizational framework are discussed below.

### 2.2.1 The project implementation framework

The project implementation framework as prescribed by the Project Document is fairly complex and involves several layers of management. The various layers are justified by the Project Document which identifies their importance, their role and responsibilities. In practice, however, the situation on the ground is rather more complex as illustrated in the diagram below which depicts the project’s organizational layers.



The framework aims at involving to the maximum possible, all primary stakeholders in the project, and its implementation is intended to ensure ownership and the sharing of competencies and responsibilities. IUCN-P is identified as the organization (outside Government) with prime responsibility for the implementation of a biodiversity project of global significance in collaboration with the Federal Government. The Ministry of Environment represents the Federal Government in the partnership which reflects the need for Pakistan to honour the obligations it assumed when it acceded to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The structure also aims to provide cohesion and unity for the project in spite of the fact that it is being implemented in two disparate geographical and administrative regions.

The project document identifies the UNDP as Implementing Agency (for the purposes of GEF) and the Ministry of Environment as the Executing Agency. However, IUCN-P is also identified as the Implementing Agency through its MoU with the Government which was signed between the Ministry of Environment and IUCN-P. A Project Cooperation Agreement was also signed between UNDP and IUCN-P.

Reporting requirements are multiplied at each layer of management and the workload for implementation teams is significant. In NWFP, the Wildlife Department is closely collaborating with MACP for project implementation. In the NAs, IUCN-P has a stronger role and is collaborating with the Forest, Wildlife and Parks Department. However, they do not have a direct link with the Federal Ministry of Environment outside the project setting and the only link is through the PSC. As a result, these important partners have, in effect, been left out at the implementation level and this exposes the project to the criticism that it is being implemented in isolation.

The MTE recommended that *“MACP needs to be more decentralized in terms of approval procedures and financial arrangements with more authority delegated to the NPM, RPMs and field staff. This would help to dispel the perception of MACP as an “IUCN affair” and encourage more creative and bottom-up solutions”*. According to the informal Summary Report<sup>5</sup> prepared for the mission by the PMU, this recommendation has been fully implemented, however, the mission heard of incidents which indicate that the problem still exists at the field level. Project personnel are employed by IUCN-P and their reporting lines are shown in the organizational organograms in Annex 7. IUCN-P rules and procedures are applied at all levels. While some relaxation in IUCN-P rules may have indeed taken place following the MTE, the mission observed that procedures are still somewhat centralized and may still result in unnecessary administrative delays. In an environment where the operational season is rather short, even short delays can be serious at field level. Administratively, the decision-making process is also still centralized and it depends a lot on the central PMU directives. The mission was advised that this central control is necessary since the PMU must sign and authenticate financial expenditures and submit them to UNDP.

## **2.2.2 Project policy and guidance**

The MACP has a Project Steering Committee (PSC) at central level and a Project Management Committee (PMC) at each of the two provincial levels.

### **2.2.2.1 The Project Steering Committee (PSC)**

According to the Project Document, the PSC is *“to provide policy guidance to the project and monitor progress and performance”*. The PSC is also expected to *“facilitate inter-agency co-ordination of the project at the national level, provide avenues for maintaining inter-provincial linkages, and ensure that*

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<sup>5</sup> Undated and unofficial *Summary Report on the Mountain Areas Conservancy Project – Report #1: Background information and the Conservancy and Regional/National-level overviews*, provided to the mission by the PMU.



*the lessons learned from implementation of the project are integrated into Pakistan's overall conservation programme".*

The Project Document also identifies the functions of the PSC as :

- *project review, monitoring and coordination;*
- *approval of annual work plan and annual budget;*
- *coordination of government actions and provision of policy guidance;*
- *facilitating policy and legislative reform to support the establishment of the Conservancies and to enable community management of wild resources for sustainable use;*
- *facilitating the gazetting of the Conservancies as legally incorporated entities;*
- *monitoring efforts to establish the financial mechanism;*
- *ensuring adherence to UNDP guidelines for the administration of project funds;*
- *ensuring linkages with the NCS and BSAP.*

These are laudable aims and the mission feels that the membership of the PSC comprises very important functionaries fully capable of addressing issues pertaining to policy, institutional collaboration, conflict resolution, project performance, efficiency, etc. At the level of the project partners, the PSC is seen as a useful body which has performed its functions as intended. The PSC has been instrumental in fulfilling several tasks on a timely basis. These include the review and approval of progress reports and annual work plans, the decision on MACF establishment, moving forward with the development of the Programme for Mountain Areas Conservancy for the approval of Government and even ensuring the allocation of financial resources for this purpose. The PSC also set deadlines for the provincial and regional governments to work on the proposed draft legislation.

However, the view of the PSC from the field level is less satisfactory. The body is lamented as a potential source of advice and guidance which did not materialize. It was suggested to the mission in the field that a number of issues could have been usefully brought to the PSC by the PMCs, the PMU and/or IUCN-P for strategic advice for the benefit of the project. For example :

- The high staff turnover at various levels – inability to retain good staff
- Collaboration (or lack of collaboration) in NWFP between the Wildlife and Forest Departments, and its impact on the project
- Conflict between the Gojal communities and the Khunjerab National Park, and its impact on the project<sup>6</sup>
- Serious relationship problems between the project partners resulting in the absence of a fulltime appointee to the position of Regional Project Manager in NAs for 3.5 years
- Allegations (by a partner) that one or more partners worked against the larger interests of the project and its beneficiaries.

#### **2.2.2.2 The Project Management Committees (PMC)**

The Project Document states that *"Project Management Committees (PMCs) will be formed in both North West Frontier Province and the Northern Areas to supervise project implementation, ensure that project targets are met, and monitor on-the-ground impacts".*

In Northern Areas, it would seem that until 2005, most project decisions were made in collaboration with the immediate partner (such as the Conservator Forests) rather than making use of the PMC. More

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<sup>6</sup> Shimshal Valley is in Gojal Conservancy but about 70% of its territory falls within the Khunjerab National Park. The National Park and the community-based MACP conservancy are conflicting approaches to natural resource management. As a result, the communities cannot implement their CMP without contravening the NP legislation.

recently, the PMCs have been delegated to approve the Annual Work Plan. However, often due to time constraints or other factors, the PMCs fail to deliberate on the work plan. Hence the PSC takes up the issues and PMC is just asked to send comments.

In a similar manner to the PSC, the mission feels that the PMCs, while carrying out their tasks of debate and approval of reports, budgets and plans, may have not been utilized by the project in the most effective way.

### **2.2.3 The PMU and central management**

The Ministry of Environment and IUCN-P in Islamabad together form the Project Management Unit (PMU) with the responsibility for day-to-day management entrusted to the National Project Manager and his team in Islamabad. According to information provided by the PMU (see Annex 7), in addition to the National Project Manager, the PMU team comprises an M&E Specialist, a Project Administrator and an Executive Secretary. However, the mission is aware of at least two further positions in the PMU namely, a Technical Specialist (National) and a Programme Officer (International). For a project that is being implemented almost exclusively at the regional and field levels, the number of personnel in an Islamabad office may be excessive and this fact has already been criticized by the MTE. On the other hand, IUCN-P maintains that *“the PMU has been entrusted with the substantial responsibility of providing technical support, ensuring quality control and accountability, keeping partnerships intact, indulging in conflict management and reporting extensively to UNDP/GEF ... this required a much larger team than ever existed in the PMU.”*

The mission was repeatedly informed that the flow of information and operational guidance has improved significantly with the recent changes in top management at the PMU. However, we believe that there are other areas where the PMU and/or IUCN-P as the implementing agency, could have played a more effective role. Examples are discussed below.

#### **2.2.3.1 Providing intellectual support to the regional and field staff**

The PMU in Islamabad has suffered from a high staff turnover. In the six years of MACP there have been four different NPMs. It is acknowledged that the PMU, led by the NPM has been a catalyst in streamlining project planning and monitoring based on the LogFrame Matrix on a quarterly and annual basis. However, the role of the PMU needs to go beyond this. The NPM (and this also applies to the RPMs) should serve as a mentor who encourages initiatives from the field and provides guidance on how these could best be achieved in a qualitative manner and with long lasting effects. The PMU's role is to support and push the policy front and pave the way for an enabling framework for field staff. However, the mission was advised that there has not been much backstopping support and guidance from the PMU for the field staff, for instance regarding the outputs of the project, institutional maturity indicators, qualitative monitoring, relationships with project partners, gender mainstreaming, etc. Some of these aspects are discussed further under Section 2.3 below.

#### **2.2.3.2 Playing a mediation role in conflict situations**

The mission came across two good examples of where the PMU could have been extremely helpful in resolving conflicts. The first example related to the time when there was no appointed RPM in NAs, and the Forest Department highlighted relationship issues with the acting RPM which resulted in conflicts between the institutions involved. This was a serious matter and should have been referred by the PMU to the PSC.

The other example is related to the conflict which still exists between the local communities and the Khunjerab National Park authorities. This conflict created an opportunity to clarify community rights as well as obligations regarding access and control over resources and for MACP to propose the conservancy model as a more acceptable option. Advice and support to the RPM from the PSC through the PMU could have helped resolve this conflict had the PMU brought it to its attention.

### **2.2.3.3 Capacity building of project personnel**

The mission is confident that IUCN-P has put a lot of effort into its recruitment process so that the most competent applicants would be appointed. However, while recruits to the NPM and RPM positions could be expected to assume their duties forthwith, the innovative nature of the project required project management to plan for capacity building among recruits at the operational level. According to IUCN-P, the staff training effort was substantial. For example, training programmes were provided as follows :

- In 2005: Leadership and Performance Management, Team Building, Project Budgeting, Orientation, Monitoring, Gender Sensitisation for support staff and evaluation of in-house training programmes were arranged covering 53 person-days of training.
- In 2006: Project Management, Re-orientating sessions, Fixed Point Photography, Groom Yourself for Success and People Management programmes were arranged in-house, covering 46 person-days of training.

In spite of this impressive effort, the mission was told that more structured learning opportunities needed to be provided for younger staff in the regions. There was no culture of internal learning through team interventions, sharing of experiences, or exchange visits, especially for women staff members.

### **2.2.4 Management in North West Frontier Province**

In NWFP, the Wildlife Department is a great influence on MACP. This is because the RPM and other key members of the team are on secondment (after an open process of selection by IUCN-P) to the project from NWFP Wildlife Department. This closeness has both positive and negative repercussions.

The Department sees this arrangement as a means to ensure end-of-project sustainability since personnel currently engaged in MACP will return to the department to continue with the work after the project finishes. The Department has a strong sense of ownership of the project and officials claimed that the MACP success in NWFP was the result of a strong Wildlife Department team. Another positive is that both the MACP RPM and the Biodiversity Specialist have been in their position since the beginning of the project and this continuity has no doubt been of benefit to the project.

However, the situation has created some difficulties for the RPM who is expected to represent and defend the institutional interests of both his parent organization and IUCN-P as the implementing agency for MACP. It has also affected the visibility of the MACP partners (especially IUCN-P and UNDP/GEF) in NWFP since to so many people it looks like MACP is a project of the Wildlife Department.

The mission wonders whether the close relationship with the Wildlife Department has also hindered closer relations by MACP with other provincial government organizations such as the Forest Department, the Agriculture Department, and others. There is no denying that MACP has recruited individual consultants not only from the Agriculture Department, but also from the Livestock Department,

Forest Department, Pakistan Forest Institute Peshawar, National Agriculture Research Council, NGOs like HUIRA and Pakistan Adventure Foundation, IUCN-P Peshawar, University and college. While these individual consultants have assisted with training of communities in best practices of agriculture/horticulture management, livestock management and breeds improvement, wildlife survey, vegetation surveys, medicinal plants survey, etc, no formal linkages were established with their institutions which will ultimately need to take over from MACP. The mission also wonders whether the choice of consultants has been influenced more by their availability and personal contacts rather than a well-defined process (e.g. through the PMC).

### **2.2.5 Management in Northern Areas**

The new RPM in Northern Areas was only recruited about six months ago and the position had been filled by an Acting RPM for three and a half years of the seven-year duration of the project. This problem has already been alluded to above and no doubt MACP in the NAs has certainly suffered through this absence of leadership. The mission is of the opinion that IUCN-P must assess the reasons for this state of affairs and find ways to ensure that similar situations will not occur in the future.

The NAs MACP team is currently focussing on revitalising its relationships with partners and establishing synergies with the communities at CMC/VCC level. The mission was impressed by the extent of interest demonstrated by the Secretary Forests in the policy process, the DFOs in Astore and Skardu who have gone beyond their brief to support VCCs and CMCs in performing their tasks, and the AKRSP regional teams which have worked in a very complementary and mutually beneficial relationship with the MACP field teams. The mission was also pleased to have been able to interact freely with all levels of the MACP team and noted their independence, their self-critical attitudes and their analytical approach which was fully supported by the National Project Manager.

In contrast to NWFP, in NAs, IUCN-P is regarded as the “owner” and main implementing agency of MACP while the Forest Department considers itself to be a relative outsider in the institutional set up. No doubt, the project has benefited from the higher benchmark established by the two decades of work by AKRSP in mobilizing communities in NAs. As a result, the linkages between VCCs and Government line agencies (e.g. the Forest Department and the Agriculture Department) are more diverse and noticeable. Despite this, the physical progress in several outputs does not seem to be at par with the expected outcome and the mission was told that sectarian clashes, seasonal barriers, a short working period in the year, relationship issues, etc, influenced performance.

The most burning issue at the moment in the NAs management setup is the shared facility between the IUCN-P regional office in Gilgit and the MACP team. MACP does not have its own administrator and relies on the IUCN-P regional office for all its administrative support. While at senior level, mutual support and collaboration have been the norm and the “one-IUCN face” policy is nurtured by both partners, the administrative procedures are based on IUCN’s own internal control systems which may be too stringent for MACP. These have often become a bureaucratic hurdle rather than a facilitating mechanism and project performance has suffered as a result.

### **2.2.6 The role of Government**

The fact that the project is largely focusing on wildlife rather than habitat, together with the complexity of land tenure in northern Pakistan, has created a situation where some of the important government actors are missing from the scene altogether – we refer in particular to the Forest Department in NWFP. Most of the project areas are *de facto* or *de jure* Government lands and as such are therefore assigned to the Forest Department to manage. Communities living within the area enjoy customary or usufruct (*i.e. extra legal*) rights over most of the resources in the forest (including timber on a shared basis), but ownership

remains with the Government as represented by the Forest Department. A good example is the case of Kalam, in NWFP, which is a protected forest managed by the Forest Department in which the communities enjoy 60% of the royalties from the sale of timber.

In the meantime, the Wildlife Department is charged with responsibility for the protection and management of wildlife even though it has no legal authority to stop the Forest Department from logging the forest and destroying the habitat on which wildlife depend. The Wildlife Department's only recourse is to lobby on an *ad hoc* basis for wildlife protection at the level of the Secretary Environment, but this should not be necessary. It is obvious to the mission that the Forest Department must be an active partner in similar projects, collaborating in a meaningful way, and this should be borne in mind for any future follow-up activity to MACP in NWFP.

In NAs, the situation is different, with wildlife and their habitat (forests) managed within the same department. However, NAs have their own problems since the Forest Department has not adopted a participatory approach in its policies and departmental setup. It is also grossly under-resourced and hardly able to satisfy even its basic management responsibilities.

The participation of local government and elected representatives in the project institutional framework, was only possible in cases in which individuals happened to come from localities where the project operates. In some cases the project has genuinely tried to include elected local government representatives in one or the other level of conservancy management, not only as individual residents but also as elected representatives (for example in Qashqar and Astor Conservancies). Where this happened, they have played a significant role in enhancing ownership of the project and combating social barriers on so-called cultural and religious grounds. However, a systematic effort to engage local government in MACP is not evident and it should be mandatory in any follow-up initiative.

There are other Government agencies which could have had an active role in MACP. Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Mining Departments are all active in these regions and some or all could have been brought in as technical advisers for some of the MACP activities. The benefits would have been mutual, particularly in the case of the Agriculture Department which seriously needs to enhance its technical capabilities for mountain agriculture and would have benefited from close collaboration with the project in its holistic, conservancy-based approach.

The mission feels that Government is a natural successor to the project. However, it is concerned that in both NWFP and in NAs, maybe for different reasons, the Government may not be ready to assume this responsibility. Capacity is lacking and institutions are weak and these cannot be built overnight, and financial resources alone will not remedy the situation. It is acknowledged that capacity is better in NWFP, however, a capacity needs assessment is required in both NWFP and NAs, and this should be undertaken as part of the exit strategy.

### **2.2.7 Financial management**

It is not the function of this mission to perform a financial audit, however, the mission was asked to comment on financial management by the project. The following discussion is based on the observed changes between the original budget and the latest revised version. This analysis can provide an indication of changing priorities.

It is interesting to note that at the level of Component Total, all budget line categories were decreased except for line 79.00 Micro Capital, which was increased apparently to cover the previously unbudgeted item - Productive Infrastructure (GEF). However, the actual amounts involved in the changes are not very significant at this level.

The picture is different at a more micro level and many changes appear noteworthy when comparing the MACP's latest revised budget with the original budget presented in the GEF Project Document. Budget reallocations between different line categories, and either under- or over-spending relative to the original budget figures can be summarized as follows:

1. Expenditures have been reduced by 20% to 40% in four of the five sub-categories listed under "Monitoring and Evaluation". The only sub-category under M&E whose budget rose during the project (by around 25%) is "Project Information Systems". The very substantial reduction in expenditures for deriving "lessons learned" from the analysis of such data as was collected by the project appears to have hindered its ability to achieve greater biodiversity conservation impacts through an iterative process of adaptive management.
2. The original budgets for "impact monitoring" which are listed separately under the heading of "Demonstrations: Sustainable Use" (which is separated into three categories: Trophies and Gamebirds, Economic/Medicinal Plants, and Ecotourism) have been reduced by 95% to 100%. On the other hand, the budget lines for "Management Planning" under these sub-categories have been increased by 50% to 100%. However, it is hard to understand how one can do good planning without also doing good monitoring of impacts. The latter should feed back into (and improve) the former.
3. The original budgets for Overseas Training were reduced by around 35% to 60%, and the budget for Study Tours was eliminated. Budget categories for Staff Orientation/Training and Conflict Resolution Training have been cut by around 35% to 60%. Training in Ecotourism Management was cut by around 70%. It is hard to assess the ultimate impacts on biodiversity conservation of any of these cuts in the budgets for training, since there is no direct "cause and effect" relation between the two, but only a more indirect and long-term relation.
4. Each of the seven different budget sub-categories for Meetings and Forums either went up or down by 10% to 20%, but the overall budget for this category has remained about the same. The budget allocated to WWF for Education and Awareness activities (Output 2) has remained the same as in the original Project Document.
5. The budgets for each of the sub-categories listed under "Equipment" have gone up or down by varying percentages, but the overall budget for this category has decreased by around 6%. The budgets for utilities, postage, telephone, etc. have either been substantially reduced or not been spent.
6. Staff costs were increased by 50% or more for some positions, but decreased by more than 30% for other positions in what appears to be a re-allocation of the budget among the various positions. The budget for Official Travel has remained almost the same, but the budget for Drivers/Security Guards has been increased by over 100% (from \$142,000 to \$306,000).
7. The revised budget for Independent Evaluations (Mid-Term and the Terminal Evaluations) represents around 40% less than what was originally budgeted.
8. The budget for Trust Fund Design was reduced by around 55% and the budget for Trust Fund Appraisal was reduced by over 80%.

The most substantial increases compared to the original budget took place in two categories. The first was an increase of 400% in the amount allocated for Policy Reform (from \$60,000 to almost \$240,000). This has been done on the recommendation of the MTE and it was duly approved by the PSC and TPR. The amount was increased to provide additional support to the three government administrations namely Federal, NWFP and NAs to help them engage in the management of project initiatives. This included salaries of the new positions of one Federal Coordinator for the Federal Government and two Provincial Coordinators - one each for NWFP Provincial Government and NAs Administration as well as the provision of short consultancies, office equipment, supplies, study tours, etc, to each of the three offices. used to fund the consultative process for preparing the draft Model Wildlife Law. Furthermore, these funds were also used for the consultative process and consultative workshop for the preparation of the model wildlife law. The NWFP Wildlife Department was given a leading role for the preparation of the

draft law which will be adopted by other provinces with some amendments. A national level workshop was organized in which experts from all over the country participated with the cost covered by the project.

The other significant increase was an amount of more than \$350,000 for “Productive Infrastructure”, which did not appear at all in the original MACP budget. This budget allocation has been used for the community development works discussed in Section 2.1 above that serve as an incentive and motivation for the Conservancies to adopt more sustainable natural resource management practices or to compensate them for giving up the use of some natural resources. According to the original project design, this kind of “productive infrastructure” was meant to be covered by co-funded parallel projects to be undertaken by MACP’s partners. Since this collaboration did not materialize, MACP was advised by the MTE to fill the gap, hence the additional expenditure. Eventually, these developments are expected to be funded from the VCFs.

For a complex project such as MACP, with a duration of seven years, budget revisions have been surprisingly few and comparatively small – the original estimates of cost were pretty accurate. It must also be said that all revisions were scrutinized and approved by the PSC.

## **2.3 Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring is the repeated, regular measurement or observation of a pre-determined parameter in a strictly consistent manner. It records departures from the baseline as well as trends away from or towards established targets. Analysis of the data obtained from monitoring can be used to predict and forecast outcomes and corrective action can be implemented before impacts become irreversible.

In the case of MACP, the mission recognized four types of monitoring. These are discussed below following a brief discussion of the Logical Framework Matrix and outcome indicators.

### **2.3.1 The Logical Framework Matrix and outcome indicators**

According to its Terms of Reference, the mission is required to - *“Review the effectiveness of the performance indicators, vis-a-vis the objectives, the outputs and activities, including objectivity, measurability, methodology of analysis to determine the effect and the impact of the project”*.

In pursuit of this requirement, the mission set out to examine the adopted indicators for Objectives and Outputs/Outcomes (the GEF terminology changed during the project life) and assess the extent to which they have been achieved, or are likely to be achieved by the project. The baseline for such an assessment is usually the LogFrame Matrix and various progress reports, Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs), and other documents are used to assess progress. However, this has not been an easy task and the mission has had difficulty obtaining clear, definitive answers on the LogFrame Matrix .

The mission was advised that the LogFrame Matrix has been revised twice in the life of the project. The first revision was the outcome of an inception workshop in 2000 – these were mainly changes in the language. Then, following the MTE in 2003, it was revised again to accommodate changes brought about through the recommendations of the MTE. The MTE criticised the fact that the LogFrame Matrix had not evolved at all during the first half of implementation and recommended an immediate revision in view of the recommended changes in project design. It also recommended that the LogFrame Matrix should be subject to an annual review and fine-tuning to reflect adaptations resulting from monitoring. In the event, the MACP LogFrame Matrix does not appear to have been used very much and it has remained static since the MTE.

The mission has assumed that the version it was provided with (labelled Revised Logical Framework – MACP) was the latest revision (it had no Output 3), was probably adopted sometime during 2004, and is the current one that should be in use by MACP.

UNDP advised the mission to use the PIRs as a source of information on measuring progress. Unfortunately, the PIRs between 2000 and 2004 do not go down to the level of Output/Outcome, but stop at the Immediate Objective level. It is only PIR 2005 that discusses progress with the achievement of indicators at Output/Outcome level. But, the indicators used in PIR 2005 are those from the original LogFrame Matrix as in the Project Document, instead of the revised version of the LogFrame Matrix.

IUCN-P and PMU, very helpfully prepared and shared with the mission, a Summary Report which has already been referred to above. This report was seen by the mission as the most comprehensive and up to date assessment by the project of its own progress. One of the annexes of the report comprises two tables, one each for NAs and NWFP, reporting on achievements against indicators, at the Objectives as well as the Outputs/Outcomes level. The division into two tables creates a slight difficulty when trying to obtain an overall, comprehensive picture of the project's progress. However, a far greater difficulty is posed by the fact that the indicators used in the tables of the Summary Report are also from the original LogFrame Matrix instead of the revised version.

These inconsistencies and confusion indicate to the mission that the value of the LogFrame Matrix was not fully appreciated by MACP management as a tool for project performance monitoring.

### **2.3.2 Project performance monitoring**

The MACP project design included Monitoring and Evaluation as one of the project outputs and it was expected that *“A system for monitoring and evaluating project impacts, including ecological, and socio-economic outcomes will have been established”*. This was not usual at the time (although it has since become standard practice for GEF projects), however, according to GEF guidance, *“All projects will include a concrete and fully budgeted monitoring and evaluation plan which will contain as a minimum:*

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

The mission is not aware of an M&E plan or system for MACP and while the Project Document does provide a schedule of various meetings and reports, this needed to be developed further by project management to convert it into a useful M&E plan including clear commitments of how the results of monitoring will be applied, and by whom.

Following the MTE recommendation that *“M&E should be made into a cross-cutting Project function, part of each component”*, the MACP LogFrame Matrix was revised by deleting Output 3 : Monitoring & Evaluation, and its activities were meant to be re-distributed to Outputs 1, 5 and 7. However, analysis of the new and revised LogFrame Matrix reveals that most of the Output 3 activities have been used to create a new separate activity line called *“crosscutting”* in subsequent work plans. This indicates that M&E has not been fully integrated into the logic of the project framework.



**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

In spite of this, and according to IUCN-P, MACP followed the LogFrame Matrix strictly according to its defined objectives, outcomes and respective indicators. In striving for these defined targets, the PMU convened an annual meeting for the formulation of the Annual Work Plan with the participation of all project professional staff from both regions (NAs & NWFP), fixing the targets to be pursued in the following year. Regions then convened separate internal meeting of staff to formulate their own Quarterly Work Plans again with the mutually agreed defined targets and achievements - both physically and financially.

The table below, which was prepared by the evaluation mission from discussions with MACP staff (NPM, RPMs, and M&E staff), illustrates different levels in the MACP planning, monitoring and evaluation framework.

<b>MACP MONITORING</b>	
PSC	Overall steering based on Project Document. Approve and recommend revisions in annual review and work plans
PMC	Review of Annual Progress Review and Work Plan and recommend to PSC for approval. Bi-monthly progress review of the regions
PMU – Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	Overall supervision of monitoring officers in regions, participate in quarterly planning and review in the regions. Compile final work plan, review and quarterly reports
RPM – Monitoring and Evaluation Regional Officer	Comment on VCP documents and add participatory monitoring elements. Quarterly progress review and annual review sessions with partners and PMU. Annual Work Plan compilation in the regions. Coordinate wildlife survey and analyze results
Field staff	Follow up with the VCC, CMC on activities performed and update M&E officer at RPM level. Annual and quarterly review of the Valley Conservation Plans
DCC	Approval of Valley Conservation Plans. Quarterly review VCC progress, Review CMC performance in view of the Valley Conservation Plans
Communities	Implement and monitor interventions in VCPs through implementation/monitoring committees, participate in resource surveys, PRA (once) / resource need surveys. Plan VCP under the supervision of Regional team
<b>Milestones in Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	
<p><b>Field visits to VCCs / CMCs and feedback:</b> National Project Manager and other members of PMU (regular), Regional Project Managers and field staff (regular), UNDP (occasional).</p> <p><b>Quarterly planning and review (regional events):</b> Participants: Regional team, NPM (occasional), PMU M&amp;E (at least six monthly)</p> <p><b>Yearly Plan of Operation and Review (national event):</b> Participants: PMU, Regional teams, PSC members (occasional) and other stakeholders</p> <p><b>District Conservation Committee meeting (quarterly):</b>  <b>NWFP:</b> District Nazim/Naib Nazim, District Coordination Officer, Regional team, CMC members, Social Welfare, Wildlife, Agriculture, Livestock, Forest and Police Departments, Chitral Scouts, AKRSP, MRDP, WWF.  <b>NAs:</b> District Commissioner, Superintendent Police, Forest Department, WWF, AKRSP, AC, Regional team, CMC members</p>	
<p><b>Mechanisms:</b>            Quarterly Progress Reports and fund requests (regions to PMU. PMU to UNDP)            Annual Progress Report (regions, PMU) Annual Work Plan - compiled by regions, finalized in workshop organized by PMU            Project Implementation Reports (annual PIR – to UNDP and GEF)            Tri-Partite Project Review (annual TPR – partners forum)            Project Steering Committee (at least once a year), Project Management Committee (twice a year), DCC, CMC and VCC meetings (regular)</p>	

The table shows that in addition to the Annual and Quarterly Work Plans, there were other project performance monitoring tools available to MACP management, including Annual and Quarterly Progress Reports, the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) and the Tri-Partite Project Review (TPR). Of these, the PIRs appear to have been the most insightful and detailed, particularly the earlier ones.

The project has also applied a well defined system for financial monitoring and reporting based on the internal controls elaborated in the IUCN-P handbook and the requirements of UNDP and GEF.

In discussions with field staff, the mission felt that while they contributed to the monitoring process, they did not fully understand what comprised a comprehensive planning, monitoring and evaluation framework. Field staff monitoring activities were mainly mechanical. The system did not provide “qualitative indicators” to recognize and assess individual interventions in relation to a particular output and end-of-project sustainability. And, while MACP did conduct specific case studies under each output and sought examples of lessons learnt, these do not appear to have been obtained through a participatory team approach and the sharing of mutual experiences. The mission also noted that the IUCN-P offices in Chitral and Gilgit did not play any role in monitoring of the project at field level and we feel that this was a missed opportunity for mutual gain.

The mission found project performance monitoring by MACP as only marginally satisfactory.

### **2.3.3 Compliance monitoring**

Compliance monitoring is undertaken to ascertain that legal requirements are being observed. It targets poaching of wildlife, unlawful tree-felling and other illegal activities not covered by the required permit or licence. Compliance monitoring is normally entrusted to the rangers, wardens and other supervisory staff of responsible Government organizations. In the case of MACP, the responsibility has been shared with participating communities.

The increased sense of ownership of these resources and the communities’ interest in benefiting from them has led the communities to, for example, stop poaching, introduce controls over the fuel wood harvests, and restrict grazing rights to pastures. Increased awareness and sensitivity (as well as pecuniary interest) has certainly increased through MACP and some villagers are now enforcing their own compliance monitoring and reporting infringements. However, they have no legal basis on which to act and their capacity is weak. The mission was repeatedly told by community members that they wanted the legal authority to apprehend and prosecute those who did not comply with the law. There were also questions regarding the fines and penalties applicable under the law and whether these were enough to serve as a deterrent.

Compliance monitoring by MACP has been highly satisfactory.

### **2.3.4 Species and ecosystems monitoring**

The objective of this monitoring activity, according to project personnel, is as an indicator of the project’s success with endangered species and the results have been used to claim that the project is meeting its targets and objectives. The Mission wishes to point out that there is another objective of species and ecosystem monitoring – in order to manage the risks inherent in controlled harvesting of wild populations of endangered species. And, in the case of MACP, species survey and monitoring in some valleys are required to ascertain whether trophy animals are available for hunting.

The LogFrame Matrix established impact indicators for monitoring of species and ecosystems. However, they were deemed unworkable by the 2001 PIR since it was felt that - *the baseline figures were informed guesses or sample results; it is not feasible to accurately determine large mammal numbers; it was not possible to determine that there is no decrease in the number of rare species; and improvement of habitat quality had not been clearly defined.* The PIR proposed new indicators and acknowledged their limitations which included - *considerable variability in between-year observations arising from the vagaries of weather, differences in survey methodology, idiosyncratic animal movements*

and observer skill capacity. The PIR noted that to detect trends in such variable data requires either very large changes or many data points.

IUCN-P advised the mission that the survey methodology of MACP was evolved in consultation with experts and local communities and is based on actual sightings, which is so far considered the most appropriate technique for surveying relatively smaller populations. The technique has been standardized over a period of 12 years of practical working in the field. IUCN-P added that the wildlife surveys are jointly conducted by staff of the Wildlife Department, community trained guides and staff from WWF and MACP. According to IUCN-P a Pakistani conservation biologist, Dr Amjad Virk, was awarded a doctorate degree by Montana University on studying the same technique of wildlife survey. The project has also conducted an independent review of the trophy hunting programme, including the survey technique, through an independent technical expert, Dr David Shackleton, the then chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission Caprinae Specialist Group. He is quoted as saying that *“Pakistan is leading the world in community based trophy hunting”*. In summary, IUCN-P considers the survey methodology effective in generating data that can be compared over time (to establish trends) and replicated over larger areas. They also note that aerial surveys are neither practical nor permitted in these mountainous areas of northern Pakistan.

In fact, while stating that *“survey techniques appear adequate for determining available trophy males because they consist of direct counts of animals,”* Shackleton<sup>7</sup> is cautious and states that *“using this count data to estimate populations is more problematic”*. He refers to some methods being *“only a very rough rule of thumb and should be used with caution, especially with threatened species such as markhor”*. Shackleton concludes that *“Monitoring statistically reliable trends in survey data is vital. To do this, survey techniques must be consistent. New techniques need to be developed that supply reliable data. Until this is available, total counts probably can be used as indices for tracking population trends. Significant year-to-year variation is to be expected in total counts, however. To be meaningful, trends must be evaluated using counts from several consecutive years, collected using the same survey method”*.

The mission accepts that IUCN-P has made every effort to standardize the surveys to reduce the potential for variability, and that the direct count method may be the only one available to MACP at the moment. However, we feel that the results may still not be reliable enough to be used as proof of the project’s success in the protection of particular species, particularly in cases where very small numbers of animals are involved or where increased numbers are somewhat large<sup>8</sup>.

It is admirable that MACP has trained and is involving community members in survey work. However, there is also the possibility that with the significant financial incentives involved, communities may be inclined to bias survey results in their favour, innocently or more dishonestly (as was the case with inflated claims of livestock number reductions). While the project is mitigating against this through the joint nature (*i.e.* including MACP personnel, government specialists and community members) of survey and monitoring currently undertaken, this arrangement may not survive beyond the project.

Another factor is of concern to the mission. According to the GEF Operational Strategy<sup>9</sup>, *“the risks of introducing perverse incentives that lead to overharvesting and destruction of natural resources are significant. Activities that involve harvesting of wild resources (for example, wildlife, nontimber forest*

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<sup>7</sup> Shackleton, D M, 2001, *A Review of Community-based Trophy Hunting Programs in Pakistan*. Prepared for the Mountain Areas Conservancy Project with the collaboration of The World Conservation Union (IUCN-Pakistan), and the National Council for the Conservation of Wildlife, Ministry of Environment, Local Government and Rural Development, Pakistan.

<sup>8</sup> According to PIR 2004, ibex numbers in Hushey increased by 889% in five years, from 120 in 1995 to 1187 in 2000. This sort of increase in numbers must be accompanied by an analysis which proves that this is ecologically possible. There should also be anecdotal evidence that these sort of numbers used to be poached or lost in other ways in the past.

<sup>9</sup> Operational Strategy of the Global Environment Facility. Chapter 2 – Biological Diversity.

*products) pose special risks. Therefore, sustainable use activities will require close monitoring of: species selection; information on current occurrence, density, and other demographic parameters of biological resources, including yield studies and regeneration surveys; and actual impacts of harvesting, so that harvesting levels and methods can be adjusted as needed.”* It is not apparent to the mission that these checks and balances have been applied.

The species monitoring programme employed by the MACP does not demonstrate an appreciation of these risks which do exist in MACP conservancies. One influential community member advised the Mission that they are considering fencing, digging of artificial watering holes and supplementary feeding to protect the trophy-quality animals – this is not protection of biological diversity; it is simply the protection of a financial asset.

The mission concludes that while the survey and monitoring undertaken by MACP to determine the potential for trophy hunting is satisfactory; the survey and monitoring results are not sufficiently reliable to gauge the project’s success in the protection of endangered species and this aspect is deemed unsatisfactory.

### **2.3.5 Monitoring of VCPs and other plans**

The VCP document analyses the biodiversity issues faced in a valley and proposes solutions to overcome those issues / problems. These solutions arise through a PRA exercise undertaken with the villagers (men and women in cases where women can be accessed). The VCPs presented to the mission mostly cover a 5-year period with a yearly break down of the institutions (first) responsible for executing them (VCC, MACP, etc). The plans, however, do not stipulate a village / valley based monitoring and evaluation framework which may be used by VCCs for monitoring the progress of these annual projects given in VCPs in a participatory manner, holding the ‘responsible(s)’ accountable.

For example, the Bhan VCP (approved May 2003), has the following objectives :

1. To ensure biodiversity conservation (forests, medicinal and economic plants, wildlife and pastures, etc) at valley level and to learn and implement sustainable utilization measures.
2. To reduce the number of unproductive breeds of livestock and to increase their production capacities.
3. To maintain the fertility of agricultural land and to adopt modern agriculture practices for improving its production capacity.
4. To get benefits through ecologically friendly methods from existing ecotourism potentials.

The document analyses and presents problems and solutions in areas including forests, wildlife, medicinal plants, pastures and livestock, tourism and horticulture. There is also a list of possible rural development activities to be undertaken in each village, including irrigation channels, drinking water supply, mosque completion, access road, etc. The mission was advised by the VCC that the communities are more aware and motivated for collective action on biodiversity conservation as a result of the project intervention. Other highlights included:

1. Skill development in medicinal plants collection and packaging (see section on gender),
2. Rural development schemes were mostly on schedule
3. Pasture management plan had been written which chiefly aimed at delayed arrival of animals to the pastures through alternate means
4. And that they need the following support from there onwards including:
  - Compensation for loss of livestock heads as a result of predator attacks (which they earlier used to kill if they attacked livestock).

- Skills in effective partnership in conservation with development (incl. government) agencies.

The mission feels that a monitoring framework, based on participatory principles, would have helped the VCC to critically report according to their objectives and identify areas which were still unaccomplished or weak/strong.

The first draft of the CMP provided to the team by MACP (Gojal Conservancy) has been sent out by PMU to the stakeholders in NAs for comments and feedback. The plan does have a chapter on monitoring. It also suggests a review of the plan after 5 years – which is considered as too long at the community level when they are only just learning to plan and implement. The plan also suggests quarterly and annual progress reviews and planning meetings around the plan. This should work, however, it is not clear whether the partners identified for fulfilling certain responsibilities (Government, AKRSP) are formally committed or not, and on what terms. The plan does not provide indicators of performance, especially on the quality of interventions. The plan assumes that the community will remain the same over the years, ethnically and socially, and no changes in roles will take place. The mission confirmed in Gojal that although the difference between better off and disadvantaged is not as wide as one finds in some parts of Malakand, yet the overall strategy should also give visibility to issues which might safeguard the interests of the lower stratum of the community. The mission felt that some of the contents of the plan may not be appropriate for the CMC level. The plan seems to have arisen through a process which included community participation (details not known to the mission), and this is important since such plans should emerge from communities themselves rather than from the PMU, to ensure ownership.

In order to make sure that the VCPs get implemented, interventions must be monitored and the outcomes measured. This can only happen if the VCC members learn participatory monitoring tools, survey techniques and documentation. As mentioned earlier, they should write case studies / anecdotes of their successes and failures which they can also substantiate on the ground. This means that the VCCs and CMCs need a lot of support in organisational management and institutional strengthening.

It is too early for the mission to determine how successful the monitoring of CMPs and VCPs is going to be, but with the proposed refinements and if the proposed strengthening and capacity building is undertaken as part of the exit strategy, it should be successful. However, we feel that no assessment grade for this aspect of monitoring would be justified at this stage.

The mission concludes that taking into account the various facets of monitoring, MACP has been marginally satisfactory in its efforts towards monitoring and evaluation overall.

## 2.4 Results achieved

This section looks specifically at each of the original outputs targeted by MACP according to the Project Document, and the indicators according to the revised LogFrame Matrix as supplied by the PMU. It contrasts these with the achievements as reported in the Summary Report provided to the mission by the PMU.

### 2.4.1 Output 1: Community Organisation & Planning

According to the Project Document, and according to its long title, Output 1 aimed for : *“The institutional and human capacity of community level organisations to conserve biological diversity, will have been strengthened, and planning and management structures will be in place”*. The title was changed slightly in the revised LogFrame Matrix, however, the focus remained on social mobilisation and the indicators, while fewer in number, retained their focus. This Output was the foundation for the rest of the work by MACP and the mission recognizes fully that the social mobilisation process must have been extremely challenging and time consuming owing to the socio-political and physical context of the project areas.

The MACP social mobilisation efforts were built on previous work done by projects such as the SDC-funded and IC-implemented Kalam Integrated Development Project (KIDP) in Kalam, the EC-funded and IUCN-implemented project in Dir Kohistan ERNP, and the two-decades of social mobilisation by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme in Chitral and Northern Areas (as noted in the Project Document). However, the social mobilisation required for meeting the ambitious objectives of the MACP needed special considerations. In many cases the predecessors of MACP worked through village and women’s organizations around specific objectives of integrated rural / natural resource management and these efforts had been mostly confined to private land with minimal engagement with the Government. MACP, on the other hand, aimed at building ‘broad based’, valley level organizations which can take charge of biodiversity management and planning on their own. This needed a number of specialized skills, first in recognizing and learning from the experiences of the MACP predecessors, and second, in carefully analyzing and addressing the inherent conflicts and seizing on the opportunities in villages in a valley to build an umbrella organization.

The Indicators in the revised LogFrame Matrix, together with their level of achievement according to the Summary Report for Output 1 were :

INDICATORS FOR OUTPUT 1 (from Revised LogFrame Matrix)	ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 1 (from Summary Report provided by IUCN-P/PMU)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At least 80% VCCs are self sustained by PY 7.0</li> <li>- 70% VCCs prepare and implement management plans on sustainable resource use and development by PY 6.5</li> </ul>	<p><b>N As</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MACP operated in 47 valleys (including 6 PRIF sites, 2 WWF sites). During community mobilization process, MACP formed 36 new VCCs and 32 Women CCs.</li> <li>- Three CMCs formed in Astore, Skardu and Gojal to provide long-term self-reliance support to VCCs and Conservancies.</li> <li>- Conservancy management plans are being formulated to leave a framework for VCCs and CMCs to run conservancies.</li> </ul> <p><b>NWFP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Model wildlife law in NWFP has been drafted. The established conservancies will be legally notified after legislation is complete.</li> <li>- Baseline established by the project team for livestock in 2001 was 1) Tirichmir 46,562 and 2) Qashqar 146,390. The enumeration is repeated in 2006 and results will be available at the end of July 2006.</li> <li>- VCCs in Kalam and Chitral applied regulations and received fine for poaching and applied other traditional measures. Evidences received that the animals roamed near villages in heavy snow fall and they were not hunted.</li> </ul>

<p>- Joint forest management plans are being implemented in Madaklasht and Golain valleys. Community anti-smuggling check posts have been erected in three places in Kalam.</p> <p>- Pasture management plans for 8 valleys have zoned the pastures and areas have been set aside for wildlife exclusively.</p> <p>- Management plans for pastures prescribed the grazing periods and late arrivals in pastures has been initiated.</p> <p>- Management plans for medicinal plants harvest limits have been formulated for three valleys in Kalam along with capacity building of the collectors. The harvest limits are under implementation.</p>
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The Indicators are quite specific and quantitative, however, the lists of achievements create confusion since they do not address the indicators specifically. In NAs the table above states, for example, that 36 new VCCs and 32 WCCs were formed but we do not know how many, if any, are self-sustaining or likely to be so by the end of this year (as targeted by the indicators). Likewise, the table says that CMPs are being formulated, but does not say how many VCPs have been prepared. The information provided for NWFP is even more difficult to comprehend and seems to be referring to the wrong Output.

From the information provided, the mission can only conclude that this Output has only been partly achieved in NAs and the achievements in NWFP are unknown.

Having said that, there is no doubt that MACP has been successful in organizing conservation institutions at valley level. The mission noted that -

- The committees presented to the mission are highly motivated and are keen to promote biodiversity conservation.
- The partners and stakeholders expressed commitments to sustain their organisations and conserve biodiversity through community-based mechanisms.
- The enthusiasm of the community was also indicated by the savings which they had generated in valley conservation funds, not only men but also women.
- The level of awareness and commitment among communities (in some cases including women) is a good indicator of the effort that has been made to build a strong social base<sup>10</sup>.
- Communities in the neighbouring areas were also emulating simple measures to manage their resources in a sustainable way (e.g. pasture management).
- MACP has been success in mobilizing communities across ethnic and religious boundaries<sup>11</sup> without being stigmatized like some other projects / NGOs.

The enthusiasm and interest generated at the community level is admirable. In some areas, vested interests have tried to oppose the project in the name of religion by spreading false rumours. In reality, they opposed the project because they were going to be deprived of the income they obtained illegally through hunting or timber trafficking.

However, and in spite of the obvious signs of success, the mission has some lingering concerns about the sustainability of VCCs after MACP ends (PRIF VCCs had become inactive and required reactivation by MACP). The funds accumulated in Valley Conservation Funds are rather meagre, and while all the VCCs met during the mission expressed their willingness to remain active for at least a year when a possible follow up of the project is finalized, they may be somewhat over-optimistic. The mission

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<sup>10</sup> From their meetings with WCCs and discussions with female MACP staff, the mission could note that the MACP social mobilization staff and the WWF female education officers, have conducted various E&A activities together in the project areas. In addition, a number of events were conducted under Output 1 in which women could participate. Biodiversity conservation awareness raising events created interest among both men and women and resulted in Women Conservation Committees being formed in many valleys.

<sup>11</sup> The mission recognizes that in some areas the social mobilization process has been more difficult than in other areas owing to social conservatism and religious apprehension.

believes that unless the exit strategy addresses this issue and puts in place adequate support systems, VCCs may not survive much beyond the project.

The mission reached a number of other observations as follows:

1. The MACP, due to its special philosophy, works well at valley level and hence encompasses both communal and protected lands. These areas are subject to several complexities and conflicts and the project has not developed a complete understanding on these problems. The VCPs are somewhat simplistic and make the assumption that the communities are homogenous and enjoy the same access to these resources collectively. This is not the case and the plans do not cater for these complexities.

**Example:** AKRSP, in the past two decades, has operated below water channels. These are the areas where lands are privately owned and do not pose a threat to social harmony. MACP operates both below and above water channels and the latter are in communal use and subject to several conflicts among villagers on rights, obligations and distribution of benefits. In such a situation, MACP does not have a mechanism to address social mobilization in a manner that does not pose a risk to the social investment made by various parties and village communities and which allows social mobilisation staff to positively engage in, rather than avoid, discussion of conflicting issues so that in future these matters do not sabotage the project purpose.

2. The multiplicity of community-based organizations is an issue which needs discussion with the various parties involved in MACP geographical areas. Multiple organizational layers can create problems and conflicts and unnecessary competition for resources, diluting the development effort and jeopardising the objectives.

**Example:** In five valleys in Garam Chashma, the following situation emerged during discussion :

At the Village level:

AKRSP: Village organizations: Around 100 in 5 valleys

AKRSP: Women Organizations: Around 150 in 5 valleys

MACP: Women Groups: 2 in one of the 5 valleys

At the Valley level:

AKRSP: Cluster organisations at valley level: 5 in 5 valleys

MACP: Valley Conservation Committees: 5 in the same 5 valleys

MACP: Women Conservation Committees: 5 in the same 5 valleys

At Conservancy level:

AKRSP: Garam Chashma Development Organization: At sub tehsil level including the 5 valleys

MACP: Conservancy Management Committee: 1 for 5 valleys

It is important to note that all these 270 organizations maintain their own funds and bank accounts, including separate bank accounts for the women's groups. Some of the members are also to be found in more than one organization. The pros and cons for reducing the overlap created by these multiple layers of organisations should be analyzed. The concept of local support organizations promoted by AKRSP has good potential to be linked with the VCCs. In NWFP, another reference is made to the District Development Plans and registration of Citizens' Community Boards (CCBs) which might introduce yet another layer. The NWFP team informed the mission that all the VCCs have been registered as CCBs, so they can gain access to the opportunities available to CCBs.

3. The VCCs follow a planning document called 'Valley Conservation Plans' which are approved by the District Conservation Committees (DCCs). It is important that these plans are fully owned and understood by communities to ensure that their own aspirations are reflected. Annex 8 gives a list of VCPs and it shows that VCP implementation is a recent phenomenon, which continues to suffer from a lack of legal basis until the new act is approved (see Section 2.3.4).



**Example:** In NAs and NWFP, the regional MACP team has initiated two important steps in this direction. The VCCs themselves proceed to defend their plans for approval by DCCs; and, the VCCs also approach the registration authority themselves (although under project guidance).

4. The CMCs are newly formed and have a weak management and organisational structure. The mission is convinced that while some VCCs are pursuing their VCPs, even if without a legal basis, the CMCs have yet to define their role in the administration of conservancies. Currently the MACP is offering CMCs all kind of support for most of their tasks, including furnishing their offices.

**Example:** In NAs, the CMCs are being registered to serve the multiple objectives of 'conservancy management' and 'development' as well as to provide services for 'eco-tourism'. This broader vision for CMCs will enhance their chances for future sustainability.

5. Conservancy Management Plans (CMPs) are now being developed by the PMU. These draft plans will go through a consultation round at all levels in the regions. The plans should be scaled to encompass elements for broader conservation and development objectives based on a communal planning and decision-making framework.

**Example:** The draft plan for Gojal which has recently become available as a first draft.

6. The boundaries of conservancies do not always follow administrative boundaries. The fundamental difference between the two is that MACP conservancies are 'resource driven – or managing territory where the resource thrives'; while administrative units are 'people driven – or managing populations which an administration has responsibility for'. The follow-up phase of MACP should look at this issue a bit more closely and consider the future sustainability of community groups managing these 'territories'. The mission recognizes that the project was designed when devolution and local government as a concept was only under discussion. In order to ensure ownership and linkages with the district authorities, the conservancies must align with district boundaries which have since become a reality.

**Example:** Qashqar conservancy has been subdivided into three sub-conservancies following three district boundaries. Gojal on the other hand is only part of a sub-district.

The mission concludes that the results of awareness and motivation work by the project are excellent, in spite of the failure to report the achievements accurately. However, ecological principles are not always well understood by the communities and more work still needs to be done. This task has been made easier since the communities are now receptive.

## **2.4.2 Output 2: Education and Awareness**

According to the Project Document and its long title, this Output targets : *“Conservation values will have been imparted to local communities through a well targeted conservation education and awareness drive, with avenues developed for the sharing of information/experiences regarding wild resource management amongst villagers”*. The title of Output 2 in the revised LogFrame Matrix is more cryptic and it loses its focus of *“sharing of information/experiences”* completely. The mission sees this revision as a backwards step. The same can be said of the revised indicators which move away from targets focused on education and sharing of experiences.

The work was sub-contracted to WWF-Pakistan and implemented as a parallel project which finished at the end of 2005 and a final evaluation has been completed. In the opinion of that evaluation the overall rating for this component was “good”. The mission therefore did not attempt to deliberate on this Output in detail.

**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

The mission was informed that a series of scoping workshops were held in May and August 2000, near the beginning of work on this component, wherein all MACP staff, IUCN-P and other relevant partners participated and developed an inter-output harmonization mechanism for the project – this is laudable, but it could not be adopted as it would have caused procedural difficulties between the two organizations. This lack of a harmonization mechanism may have denied some of the potential synergies between Output 2 and other Outputs which would have enhanced the project benefits.

The list of achievements claimed in the Summary Report (see below) does not match the indicators and this mismatch is even more marked in the case of NWFP which, as for Output 1, appear to relate to the wrong Output. The mission can only conclude that a lot of good work seems to have been done following the prescription of the original LogFrame Matrix and regardless of the MTE and its recommendations and the revision of the LogFrame which arose from them.

INDICATORS FOR OUTPUT 2 (from Revised LogFrame Matrix)	ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 2 (from Summary Report provided by IUCN-P/PMU)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50% village forums in the conservancies discuss Conservation issues in their meetings by the end of PY 5.5</li> <li>- Illegal hunting in the project area declines by at least 80% by the end of PY 6.5 as compared to PY 1.0</li> <li>- Local governments take care of biodiversity conservation measures while preparing their short and long term plans by the PY 6.5</li> </ul>	<p><b>N As</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The awareness workshops held in valleys and at conservancy level help imparting conservation values in the communities.</li> <li>- Valley level functions were organized on environmental awareness and these proved to be very effective.</li> <li>- About 40 radio programmes broadcasted by radio stations in NAs on different themes of biodiversity in local languages (total of 1567 minutes in project life)</li> <li>- 64 schoolteachers trained as MTs, who further trained about 300 teachers.</li> <li>- 9 nature study camps organized and 130 nature clubs were established in schools.</li> <li>- 6 schools were provided infrastructure support.</li> </ul> <p><b>NWFP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Out of 22 target valley, VCCs/Communities of 18 valleys (82%) have been trained in Resource and Need Assessment and use of common PRA tools as means for developing Valley Conservation Plans (VCPs). Persons trained included Resource and Need Assessment 591, Gender &amp; Environment 324, Communication and leadership 36, Organizational Management 20, Basic Project Proposal Development 29, Conflict Resolution 16 and Accounts and Record Keeping 16 trained the community members.</li> <li>- VCPs prepared and updated in Kalam are 5, Chitral 4, Dir Kohistan 3, Garam Chashma 5 and Tirichmir 1.</li> <li>- Functional VCCs are 17: Kalam 5, Chitral 4, Dir Kohistan 3, Garam Chashma 5 and Tirichmir 1, which has been dropped from the project</li> <li>- 8 WCCs formed: 3 in Chitral and 5 in Garam Chashma. Similarly 10 women groups formed: 8 in Kalam and 2 in Chitral Qashqar.</li> <li>- DCC Swat, DCC Chitral, and DCC Upper Dir are functional.</li> <li>- CMPs under process. Clearance and consensus of legal, social, geographical, biological and administrative features have been lately obtained with project management, IUCN, WWF and Government. MACF has been also recently finalized. Consolidation and capacity building of CMCs is under way.</li> <li>- Regulations for Conservancies are being firmed up with the government</li> </ul>

According to the Summary Report, the E&A effort was quite broad, targeting valleys and conservancies and schools. The E&A message did not cater as well for non-school going children and the adult illiterate population (mainly Nangaparbat and Qashqar Conservancies). The project opted to classify this segment of society as rural youth and this target group was primarily addressed through visual materials like posters, wall charts, documentary shows, presentations and sports developed and organized on specific themes / issues.

The mission notes that -

- E&A has been one of the most visible elements in our meetings at the community level (with both men and women).
- The implementation of E&A was undertaken by a gender balanced team, exclusively assigned to undertake the component<sup>12</sup>.
- Schools in the public and private sectors (including AKES) were covered under E&A.
- Apart from the printed material, radio broadcasts were also used for propagating the conservation message (e.g. in NWFP, Skardu).
- The E&A component contributed to the social mobilisation efforts and vice versa.

The mission found the material to be rather general in nature from the point of view of biodiversity conservation. No specific packages were tailored for the circumstances and needs of individual conservancies and valleys. It is now incumbent on the regional teams of MACP and on the follow-up project to ensure further extension of the E&A network to villages, valleys, conservancies and in areas outside conservancies. The regional teams should complement the E&A packages with indigenous knowledge and ensure that material is produced in Urdu and/or in the local languages in order to make the messages more effective and acceptable.

Annex 5 contains the lists of project publications (as provided by project management) which is very impressive. In order to ensure that these products are not lost following project closure, there is an urgent need for a knowledge management strategy – this should be part of the exit strategy of the project.

### **2.4.3 Output 3: Monitoring & Evaluation**

Following the recommendations of the MTE, this output was dissolved and its activities distributed as cross-cutting to other outputs. Monitoring and evaluation are discussed fully in Section 2.3 above.

### **2.4.4 Output 4: Village Eco-Development**

The Project Document expects that *“Development agencies and communities will be targeting financial and human resources towards long-term village eco-development in the Conservancies”* to achieve this Output. By targeting this Output the project was binding itself to the delivery by other development agencies! Indeed, the Project Document provided the following list of activities that the *“partners will be responsible for”* :

- *building productive infrastructure, such as irrigation channels and hydro powered lift irrigation systems to extend the area under cultivation;*
- *piloting field initiatives to demonstrate the viability and efficacy of ecologically sustainable land use practices (such as rotational grazing);*
- *providing technical assistance to improve livestock husbandry methods;*
- *improving animal health, so enhancing the productivity of livestock (enabling villagers to obtain meat and milk needs from smaller herds);*

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<sup>12</sup> Besides the social mobilization team of the MACP, there was a team of two coordinators and four education officers. In addition to these six, there were four other education officers (two male and two female) in the EC Support project, who provided necessary technical support to MACP in organizing all female related activities throughout the project period (2000 - 2004). The MTE had suggested that the teams should be multidisciplinary and not divided into educationists, planners and social mobilisers but for practical reasons, the MACP continued with its so-called cadre of conservation officers post MTE.

**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

- supplying technical inputs, seedlings and financial resources for social forestry programmes; supplementing government agricultural and livestock extension services to improve the productivity of animal husbandry and farming system methods; and
- providing enterprise support to villagers in support of sustainable livelihood initiatives.

This reliance by the project on other parallel projects for such a crucial component has already been discussed as a design flaw (see Section 2.1) and following the MTE, the project was redesigned to assume direct responsibility for as many of these social development activities as possible. Perhaps in an attempt to reflect these changes, the title of Output 4 in the revised LogFrame Matrix is simply “Improved village eco-development in the conservancies” which removes the reference to “development agencies” and “financial and human resources”.

The discussion below addresses the indicators adopted following the project redesign and according to the revised LogFrame Matrix. The indicators are matched with the achievements as recorded in the Summary Report.

INDICATORS FOR OUTPUT 4 (from Revised LogFrame Matrix)	ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 4 (from Summary Report provided by IUCN-P/PMU)																		
<p>- Eco-development aspects of 80% VCPs were implemented by PY 7.0</p> <p>- 25% increase in area under fodder production by PY 7.5</p> <p>- 20% increase in area under tree plantations by PY 7.5</p>	<p><b>N As</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MAC Project provided financial support to VCCs in implementing 43 eco-development schemes reflected in the VCPs. The total cost of these schemes is Rs.15.97 million. The communities contribution was Rs.4.4 million.</li> <li>- 150 VWGs were trained in wildlife surveys and management techniques.</li> <li>- Under the implementation of pasture management plans the VCCs were provided support to increase fodder production in their barren lands.</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="618 1024 1122 1108"> <thead> <tr> <th>Spp /Site</th> <th>Gojal</th> <th>NP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1998</td> <td>20 ha</td> <td>170 ha</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2006</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Afforestation and fruit tree planting was boosted up in conservancy areas through providing forest and fruit trees. This resulted in increase of area under tree planting</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="618 1192 1122 1276"> <thead> <tr> <th>Spp /Site</th> <th>Gojal</th> <th>NP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1998</td> <td>28 ha</td> <td>220 ha</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2006</td> <td>45.94</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>NWFP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Village interventions &amp; resource use decisions implemented through sub-committees of VCCs and WCCs/WGs.</li> <li>- Regular meetings of DCC.</li> <li>- Quarterly progress reports shared with partners.</li> <li>- Project Management Committee (PMC) reviews and approves project’s annual work plan and progress.</li> <li>- Joint annual review by the PMU and regional teams and partners’ representatives.</li> <li>- Process reviews done by the PMU and regional teams quarterly and annually.</li> <li>- Two case studies: Women Involvement in NRM and Social Dynamics of VCCs.</li> <li>- One M&amp;E workshop in year 1 by PMU.</li> <li>- Deliberation of Result Based Matrix (RBM) yearly.</li> <li>- Village specialists participated in all surveys.</li> </ul>	Spp /Site	Gojal	NP	1998	20 ha	170 ha	2006	-	-	Spp /Site	Gojal	NP	1998	28 ha	220 ha	2006	45.94	-
Spp /Site	Gojal	NP																	
1998	20 ha	170 ha																	
2006	-	-																	
Spp /Site	Gojal	NP																	
1998	28 ha	220 ha																	
2006	45.94	-																	

From the table above it can be seen that the project, having set itself impossible targets in the original Output title, was more realistic with the revised title and in its setting of indicators since they now relate to activities that are within the control of the project.

Unfortunately, the quantitative targets in the indicators and those under reported achievements do not always match and there are some gaps. For example, we are told that in NAs, 43 eco-development schemes were supported by MACP funds, however, there is no indication of whether these qualify as

“eco-development aspects of 80% of VCPs”. The achievement noted for the second indicator is extremely vague and does not show any increase whatsoever in the “area under fodder production”. The third indicator set a target of 20% increase in the area of plantations. According to the Summary Report, this was exceeded in Gojal but no figure is given for Nangaparbat.

In fact, the mission has been able to obtain more up-to-date figures which indicate that in NAs all the targets set by the indicators have been exceeded. The fodder production area in Gojal has increased by 90% and that in Nangaparbat by 76%. The increases in area of tree plantations increase by 35% in both localities.

In the case of NWFP, the reported achievements appear mismatched with the indicators once again. Although it would seem very likely that this is due to an error when putting the table together, the correct version is not altogether obvious.

It is interesting to note that the indicators quoted by the 2005 PIR for this Output ignore the percentages and other specific figures given in both the original indicators as well as the revised LogFrame Matrix but, apart from this minor variation, it uses the original indicators (like the Summary Report) instead of those in the revised LogFrame Matrix.

In spite of mis-reporting, the mission is confident that satisfactory progress has been made towards this Output in its revised form.

### 2.4.5 Output 5: Sustainable Resource Use & Livelihoods

Under this Output, the Project Document expected that “The knowledge base regarding sustainable use of components of biodiversity will have been enhanced, with results applied in on-going community development activities”. In the revised LogFrame Matrix, the Output title was revised to qualify the knowledge base as being “of stakeholders”, it added “livelihoods” following sustainable use (implying the sustainable use of livelihoods!), and deleting the reference to “on-going community development activities” and replacing it with “SRU demonstrations”. The mission considers these changes in the Output title and the replacement of the original indicators as a backwards step.

Both the original LogFrame Matrix and the revised version had three indicators, with the third indicator among the revised version being hard to understand. The achievements listed in the Summary Report for NAs address the original set of indicators and are a mismatch for the revised indicators. The achievements listed for NWFP seem to focus partly on the second revised indicator, but in the main they do not address this particular Output.

INDICATORS FOR OUTPUT 5 (from Revised LogFrame Matrix)	ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 5 (from Summary Report provided by IUCN-P/PMU)
- By PY 6.5 onward, significant increase witnessed in the volume of target species marketed	<p><b>N As</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 Sustainable use workshops were held in Northern Areas. These workshop paved way for initialization of sustainable use demo projects on Urial sheep, Musk deer, Blue sheep, Markhor, Ibex, Medicinal Plants, Fish, Eco-tourism, Game birds, and Pastures.</li> <li>- The marketing of Big Game increased 200%.</li> </ul>
- Livelihood options increased by PY 6.5	<p><b>NWFP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 70% functional valleys of MACP availed partners financing for micro-infrastructure schemes.</li> </ul> <p><b>a. Partners Parallel Financing (000 Rupees): Total schemes:</b> 34 at a cost of Rs.30,491 with Partners Share Rs.22,775; MACP share Rs. 550; Community share Rs.7,166</p>

**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

- Significant threats to the biodiversity encountered in the resource management plans demonstrated by PY 6.5

**b. MACP Financing for eco-development in 100% functional valleys (000 Rupees):**  
185 schemes with a cost of Rs.27,740; MACP contribution Rs.16,156 and community contribution Rs.11,749

- Village specialist training in wild resources management

Training	Total
Pasture Management	116
Medicinal plants collection & Processing	847
Oak Management	31
Markhor/Ibex Survey	212
Snow Leopard Survey	53
Pheasant Survey	116
Chukor survey	40
Eco-tourism	19
High Altitude Porters	18
Low Altitude Porters	21
Visitors Management	56

- Village specialist training in rural livelihood management

Training	Total
Livestock management	622
Livestock breed improvement	245
Agriculture best practices	399
Fruit & vegetable process	32
Carpentry	13
Initial Environmental Examination	139

- Other rural livelihood interventions

Interventions	Total
Vegetable Seed Kits	1751
Poultry Chicks	930
Fuel Efficient Stoves	260
Compost Pits	59
Fruit plants	34546
Fuel Plants	514000

- Area under fodder

Conservancy	Area in 2000 (ha)	Area in 2006 (ha)	Increase (ha)	% increase
Tirichmir	18.5	36.9	18.4	50
Qashqar	34.8	64	29.2	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>53.3</b>	<b>100.9</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>53</b>

- Area under plantation

Conservancy	Area in 2000 (ha)	Area in 2006 (ha)	Increase (ha)	% increase
Tirichmir	41.5	74.3	32.8	56
Qashqar	41.4	72.1	30.7	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>82.9</b>	<b>146.4</b>	<b>63.5</b>	<b>57</b>

Formal planning and management tools for community-based initiatives in conserving biodiversity have been adopted and these include VCPs, Pasture Management Plans, Species Recovery Plans, Ibex/ Musk Deer Conservation Plan and Oak Management Plan. In addition, grazing regulations have been drafted for selected pastures. However, it is trophy hunting that is the major incentive for VCCs to manage and protect natural resources.

This focus on trophy hunting is of concern to the mission mainly because of the inequitable distribution of the benefits. For example, the mission gathered from the stakeholders in NAs that only eight out of many valleys could get the opportunity for trophy hunting in the PRIF and MACP phases. This appears to be of concern for the MACP team itself and the Summary Report highlights it under the title “*Dominance of trophy hunting to the detriment of other income generating activities*”, and says – “*The emphasis on trophy hunting was a consequence of both the wildlife-related backgrounds of staff as well as the incredibly high returns from trophies (up to US\$56,000) in a poor region. Natural resource related sectors that have suffered as a result include : medicinal plants, agricultural products (fruit, dairy, etc.), weaving, eco-tourism (except mountaineering), woodworking, fishing, etc.*”. However, having acknowledged the problem and analyzed the cause, project management does not seem to have any proposals for a solution.

Another problem with relying so much on trophy hunting is illustrated in NAs, where the mission learnt that the outfitters are only interested in permits from valleys which are easily accessible through 4X4 roads. MACP on the other hand, has been trying to balance hunting practices in different valleys in order to sustain the incentive in other valleys where the population of ungulates is good but which are less attractive for hunters who might look for convenience rather than conservation objectives. The mission concludes that there is an urgent need to diversify the attractive economic potentials for VCCs in remote valleys otherwise their interest in project objectives will die out sooner or later.

In the conservancies of NWFP there is far less potential for generating income through markhor trophy hunting than in NAs. However, there is a huge potential for generating income through value-added products from medicinal plants and this potential has not been sufficiently tapped so far. In doing this it is important to ensure that MACP does not take away the medicinal and aromatic plants collection enterprise from the landless and nomads, intentionally or unintentionally, and promote this as an income resource for the more powerful. The project has made a commendable effort in training selected communities on sustainable methods for harvesting and processing medicinal and aromatic plants in the conservancy areas, but the mission is not aware of any moves by MACP to address the next step, namely, marketing of the product (even though the concept is very much appreciated by MACP staff and its partners). There are some very good ideas around for milk marketing and processing, value adding in non-timber forest products, wool processing, etc. However, none of these have materialized yet and the mission has drawn the following conclusions :

1. The areas are too remote and are not traditionally engaged in marketing non-timber forest products. For this reason, the undertaking in Output 5 may have been too ambitious in the first place.  
**Example:** In Shahi Abad, Ashuran, Cherat and Paleer villages in Kalam, women have been trained in the sustainable collection of medicinal plants. The women presented the mission with cleaned and well packed sachets of prime herbs which they were very proud of. However, they are uncertain of the next steps to market the products and obtain an income.
2. The project team is covering marketing through in-house expertise rather than outsourcing it to specialists. The mission feels that this was the wrong decision - an economically viable opportunity once identified, should have the benefit of a specialist's advice on value adding and market orientation. Project staff have made an admirable effort with all good intentions but the results are still elusive.  
**Example:** The wool ginning machine and construction of the special centre in Garam Chashma is a good idea which potentially will serve as an attraction for entrepreneurs and will have a positive impact on women's health. However, such an idea should have been analyzed by specialists before it was committed. Women in the valley are generally involved in wool spinning to earn an income and the question is whether it will be these same women who will use this facility. Who will maintain the machine and the centre? How would this centre connect with the central market and who will receive and distribute the income? Interestingly enough, the initial effort to draw up a business plan

came from the MACP team but the mission was informed that MACP now intends to engage an expert for the task<sup>13</sup>.

3. The mission was informed that the communities have voluntarily reduced the number of livestock heads in order to comply with pasture management principles (and to ensure that more forage is available for ungulates). This raises the following question – what alternatives were envisioned by the communities since as far as the mission knows, most of the communities in the project area include farmers who are dependent on their livestock? Most of these communities do not have firm rights to alternatives such as timber or trophy animals and the mission doubts that they will sacrifice their livelihood in the hope of receiving a legal right in biodiversity produce. A detailed study is needed on the subject of who reduced livestock heads and how were they compensated.

**Example:** In Gojal / KVO the communities reported that they have reduced livestock heads from over 22,000 to 6,000 in five years under a mutual understanding with the KNP management. This is a substantial reduction and it must have had a huge impact on local markets, the cost per animal and benefit ratios. The communities were meant to be compensated through a small share of the entry fee to the Khunjerab National Park on alternate year basis, however, they have not received this share for the past four years.

Once again, in spite of the problems with changes in the indicators and with the reporting of achievements, the mission is well aware of the numerous good initiatives taken by MACP under this Output. If the time permits, these should now be taken to their next steps using the most appropriate expert advice.

#### 2.4.6 Output 6: Enabling Policy Framework

According to the Project Document, this Output will result in “*Government policies and regulations will have been remoulded to support management of the Conservancies and institutional capacities for managing participatory conservation models will have been strengthened*” and this has remained virtually unchanged in the revised LogFrame Matrix. The indicators for this Output have also not changed much – one indicator targeting a “*policy and legal framework*” was abandoned and a new one, focussing on the capacity of government personnel, was adopted.

The mission believes that this Output and the Indicators selected for it may have been somewhat over-ambitious since the results targeted are beyond the influence of the project – it is only governments that can adopt policy, enact laws and promulgate rules and regulations. The project is therefore unable to deliver directly on this Output. This is borne out by the following table taken from the Summary Report which indicates that after 7 years none of the products of this Output have been finally approved or implemented.

INDICATORS FOR OUTPUT 6 (from Revised LogFrame Matrix)	ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 6 (from Summary Report provided by IUCN-P/PMU)
- Protected area classification system revised to include Conservancies by PY 6.0  - 4 Conservancies designated as protected areas under revised classification system by PY 6.5	<p><b>N As</b></p> <p>- The following Laws/Policies/procedures were prepared, reviewed and finalized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Model wildlife law (under final review)</li> <li>b. Joint Forest Management rules (ready for approval)</li> <li>c. Game birds shooting rules (drafted)</li> <li>d. Trophy hunting procedures (forwarded for approval).</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> The AKRSP Chitral was a stakeholder in this decision, however they were not consulted in this regard. AKRSP has a huge network of female spinners / weavers in the area known as ‘Shubinak’ which also received SDC financial assistance for many years.



**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

<p>- Communities in Conservancies granted use rights for wild resources by PY 6.5</p> <p>- By PY 7.0, at least 80% of government staff of concerned departments, working in the conservancies practice sustainable resource use techniques effectively</p>	<p>e. Rules for sustainable harvest of medical plants (forwarded for approval)</p> <p><b>NWFP</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="586 237 1440 695"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="591 237 1341 268">Training workshop</th> <th data-bbox="1346 237 1435 268">Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 268 1341 323">National workshop "Mountain Tourism for Community Development and Nature Conservation".</td> <td data-bbox="1346 268 1435 323">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 323 1341 378">National workshop "Biodiversity Conservation in Northern mountain region of NWFP"</td> <td data-bbox="1346 323 1435 378">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 378 1341 432">Develop understanding of MACP and partner staff in identification of elements of biodiversity for application of sustainable use methods.</td> <td data-bbox="1346 378 1435 432">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 432 1341 487">Selection of sites of demonstrations of sustainable uses of wild flora and fauna with community/VCCs</td> <td data-bbox="1346 432 1435 487">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 487 1341 518">Sustainable use methods of medicinal and economic plants</td> <td data-bbox="1346 487 1435 518">12</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 518 1341 550">Sustainable use methods of pastures</td> <td data-bbox="1346 518 1435 550">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 550 1341 581">Sustainable use methods of Markhor and ibex</td> <td data-bbox="1346 550 1435 581">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 581 1341 613">Sustainable use methods of Oak</td> <td data-bbox="1346 581 1435 613">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 613 1341 644">Sustainable use methods of forests (joint Forest Management)</td> <td data-bbox="1346 613 1435 644">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 644 1341 676">Sustainable use methods of eco-tourism</td> <td data-bbox="1346 644 1435 676">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="591 676 1341 695"><b>Total</b></td> <td data-bbox="1346 676 1435 695"><b>35</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>- Five ibex trophy hunts marketed at Garam Chashma. 3-4 Markhor trophy hunts are marketed annually by NWFP wildlife department outside MACP conservancies.</p> <p>- Volume of sustainably harvested medicinal and economic plants could be ascertained.</p> <p>- One collector guide &amp; one pamphlet developed and printed for 24 species of medicinal plants.</p> <p>- 656 plants collectors (520 male and 36 female) were trained in methods of sustainable collections of medicinal plants.</p> <p>- sustainable harvest plan of 24 species of medicinal plants developed for three valleys in Kalam</p> <p>- 8 Pasture management Plans: 4 Garam Chashma and 4 Kalam.</p> <p>- 2 ibex Management Plans: 1 Garam Chashma and 1 Chitral</p> <p>- 1 Oak Management Plan in Kalam.</p> <p>- 2 Markhor Management Plans: 1 in Chitral &amp; 1 Kalam.</p> <p>- 1 Medicinal Plants Management plan - Kalam.</p> <p>- 2 joint Forest Management Plans - Chitral</p> <p>- 2Chukor management Plans: 1 Chitral and 1 Garam Chashma.</p> <p>- 2 musk Deer Recovery Plans: 1 Dir Kohistan and 1 Kalam</p> <p>- 1 Fisheries management Plan – Kalam</p> <p>- 1 Wool Processing Plan – Garam Chashma</p> <p>- 1 Milk Marketing Plan - Kalam</p> <p>- A model wildlife law for NWFP drafted &amp; draft circulated</p> <p>- A national level consultative workshop conducted</p> <p>- Classification revised and Conservancy included in NWFP draft model wildlife law.</p> <p>- Conservancy is included as sustainable multiple land use collaborative management category in NWFP draft model wildlife law, with empowerment of communities for invoking regulations.</p> <p>- NWFP draft model wildlife law provides for usufruct rights of wild resources of communities in Conservancy.</p>	Training workshop	Total	National workshop "Mountain Tourism for Community Development and Nature Conservation".	1	National workshop "Biodiversity Conservation in Northern mountain region of NWFP"	1	Develop understanding of MACP and partner staff in identification of elements of biodiversity for application of sustainable use methods.	2	Selection of sites of demonstrations of sustainable uses of wild flora and fauna with community/VCCs	3	Sustainable use methods of medicinal and economic plants	12	Sustainable use methods of pastures	8	Sustainable use methods of Markhor and ibex	3	Sustainable use methods of Oak	2	Sustainable use methods of forests (joint Forest Management)	2	Sustainable use methods of eco-tourism	1	<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>
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<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>																								

The achievements listed for NAs focus exclusively on the drafting of legislation, regulations and procedures all of which remain to be accepted by Government. As for NWFP, the achievements listed comprise extensive training courses and the drafting of numerous plans, which seem to relate more to Output 5, together with reference to legislation that has yet to be enacted.

The mission acknowledges that there are many developments within the federal and provincial government agencies that could make the MACP team optimistic about the eventual acceptance of the project’s proposals for legislation and similar instruments. These include the adoption of the Pakistan

**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

National Conservation Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan and the Provincial Conservation Strategies for NWFP and NAs; the National Forest Policy for Pakistan and Provincial Forest Policy for (NWFP) which has put emphasis on the ecological function of natural resources and supports participatory management of these resources; the devolution of power to District and Tehsil levels and the empowerment of Citizens Community Boards under the Local Government Act, etc.

The chances of success with the proposed policy and legislation reforms will be enhanced if MACP were to influence successfully certain precursor actions. For example -

In NAs, the Secretary has submitted a request to higher levels to reorganize the Forest Department following the experience of NWFP. Although the subject is beyond the scope of the project, the suggestion is for MACP, together with its relevant stakeholders, to critically analyze loopholes in the NWFP case (making use of its “insider” knowledge) and provide advice to NAs to make good use of lessons and to avoid the same mistakes. This suggestion arises from the information provided to the mission in NWFP where there is a dire need for the Wildlife Department and the Forest Department to collaborate on a comprehensive approach to natural resources management on an ecosystem basis.

In conclusion, while acknowledging the work done by MACP in drafting various legal instruments and training Government personnel, the mission is not optimistic that the new legislation, regulations and procedures will be adopted by Government before the end of MACP and this places many of the project’s outcomes in jeopardy.

**2.4.7 Output 7: Financing Mechanism**

According to the Project Document, “A Biodiversity fund will be in operation and will be contributing towards meeting the recurrent costs of Conservancy management” and this original wording was not changed much when the LogFrame was revised. On the other hand the indicators have been changed totally from four indicators which focussed on MACF and sustainability to those shown in the table below. The mission is quite sceptical about the two new indicators since, by their own terms, they can only be ascertained from project year 7.5 onwards, i.e. some six months after the project has been terminated.

INDICATORS FOR OUTPUT 7 (from Revised LogFrame Matrix)	ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 7 (from Summary Report provided by IUCN-P/PMU)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual recurrent costs for conservancy management do not need additional support from project year 7.5 onwards</li> <li>- Recurring costs are met beyond PY7.5 keeping initial endowment fund intact</li> </ul>	<p><b>N As</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>MACF:</b> The Northern Areas Administration has committed to contribute US\$0.25 million, while till now contributed US\$0.167 million. The remaining amount of US\$0.83 million will be capitalized by the end of 2006.</li> <li>- <b>VCFs:</b> A total of US\$0.202 million has been invested by MACP as project share in VCFs and WCFs. In addition V/WCCs have contributed US\$0.042 million as community share.</li> <li>- US\$0.043 million has been contributed by the communities through proceeds from SRUs (trophy hunting amount)</li> <li>- The total amount of VCFs capitalized is US\$0.287 million. The VCFs have been deposited in schedule banks on fixed term deposits basis with high yielding profit.</li> </ul> <p><b>NWFP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trust fund at federal government level established and capitalized US\$ 3 million.</li> <li>- Total Rs.10,886,084 is capitalized as fund with Rs.2,199,069 MACP contribution and Rs.8,687,015 community contribution</li> <li>- Returns from trophy hunts are 100% deposited in VCF.</li> <li>- Returns from local fine and compensations or other customary measures or local sales of common resources are 100% deposited in VCFs.</li> <li>- Share from sale proceeds of timber and rents of pastures</li> </ul>

The achievements listed above do not address either of the two sets of indicators. As noted above, it is not possible to address the new indicators, so the issue is only of academic interest. However, the old indicators dealt with sustainability and this is now not assured.

Much remains to be done in order to achieve this Output. Annex 9 is a full report containing a detailed discussion of the MACF, proposals for how progress can be made, and advice for when the fund becomes operational.

## **2.4.8 Project Objectives**

### **2.4.8.1 The Development Objective**

The Development Objective of the Project was - *To protect and ensure the sustainable use of biodiversity in the Karakoram, Hindu Kush, and Western Himalayan mountain ranges through application of a community-based conservation paradigm.*

According to GEF guidance, this should be the highest level in the project's structure, and it is often referred to as the project goal. As such, it is beyond the capability of the project alone and the most that the project is expected to do is contribute towards it. As a result, it is not usual for indicators to be selected for the Development Objective, and evaluators are not expected to assess the achievement of the Development Objective or overall goal.

### **2.4.8.2 Immediate Objective**

The Project had one Immediate Objective which was - *Establishment and effective long-term management of four Conservancies covering wide ecological landscapes and zoned for multiple uses, backstopped by an enabling institutional, policy, regulatory, and financial framework.*

The wording of the Immediate Objective did not change during the course of the project. Likewise, the performance indicators did not change much either. However, the reasons for the changes that did take place, are not always obvious.

The following table traces the four versions of the indicators for the Immediate Objective. As can be seen from the table, the salient changes in Indicators during the life of the project have been the following :

- Indicator 2 (reduction in livestock numbers) started with a set of very specific numerical targets, however, after two years these were removed and the Indicator became close to useless. Over the following two years (2004-05), the Indicator was removed altogether from the PIR lists. Then it reappeared in the revised LogFrame Matrix, once again with a quantifiable target (20%) and a time-bound target (by year 6). The mission is unable to determine the logic behind these changes.
- Indicator 5 (application of zoning strategies) was also removed from the Indicators list shown in PIRs for two years (2004-05). This change also is inexplicable.
- The indicators appearing in the revised LogFrame Matrix have a time-bound target and this is a good quality in an Indicator. However, the timeframe given for Indicators 2 to 7 is beyond the life of the project. This means that project management will not be able to assess whether the targets have been reached, unless they are reached earlier than the time target. The mission does not support this approach.

**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

INDICATORS FOR THE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE																			
PROJECT DOCUMENT ORIGINAL LOGFRAME and PIR 2000, PIR 2001 and SUMMARY REPORT	PIR 2002 and 2003	PIR 2004 and 2005	REVISED LOGFRAME MATRIX																
1 Govt. approval of legal establishment of 4 Conservancies	1 Government approval of legal establishment of 4 Conservancies	1 Govt. approval of legal establishment of four Conservancies	1 Govt. approval of legal establishment of 4 Conservancies by PY 6.00 under relevant Act																
2 Reduction in livestock numbers as shown below <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Site</th> <th>Gojal</th> <th>NP</th> <th>TM</th> <th>Qashqar</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>B/line</td> <td>80,000</td> <td>62,500</td> <td>37,500</td> <td>57,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 yrs</td> <td>64,000</td> <td>50,000</td> <td>30,000</td> <td>46,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Site	Gojal	NP	TM	Qashqar	B/line	80,000	62,500	37,500	57,500	7 yrs	64,000	50,000	30,000	46,000	2 Reduction in livestock numbers		2 20% reduction in livestock numbers living on pastures in the conservancies by PY7.5	
Site	Gojal	NP	TM	Qashqar															
B/line	80,000	62,500	37,500	57,500															
7 yrs	64,000	50,000	30,000	46,000															
3 Evidence of application of hunting regulations	3 Evidence of application of hunting regulations	2 Evidence of application of hunting regulations	3 Evidence of application of hunting regulations by PY7.5																
4 Evidence of application of forest management regulations	4 Evidence of application of forest management regulations	3 Evidence of application of forest management regulations	4 Evidence of application of forest management regulations by PY7.5																
5 Evidence of application of zoning strategies	5 Evidence of application of zoning strategies		5 Evidence of application of zoning strategies by PY7.5																
6 Harvest quotas applied for wild resource use	6 Harvest quotas applied for wild resource use	4 Harvest quotas applied for wild resource use	6 Harvest quotas applied for wild resource use by PY7.5																
			7 Significant improvement in the socio economic profile of target population by PY7.5																
<p><b>Mission comment :</b></p> <p>The first two indicators show quantifiable targets which should be comparatively straightforward to know when they have been achieved.</p> <p>According to the LogFrame, Indicators 3, 4 and 5 are to be verified mainly from DCC and VCC records but the mission wonders whether this can be taken as "evidence".</p> <p>Indicator 6 is also straightforward – the quotas are either applied or not applied.</p>	<p><b>Mission comment :</b></p> <p>The only change is in Indicator 2 where the quantifiable numerical targets have been removed. This indicator is now very weak since any reduction at all can be deemed to be an achievement.</p>	<p><b>Mission comment :</b></p> <p>Indicators 2 and 5 are removed altogether. No changes in the other Indicators</p>	<p><b>Mission comment :</b></p> <p>Time-bound targets are attached to each of the Indicators. However, all but Indicator 1 are targeting a date which is six months beyond the termination of the project.</p> <p>A new indicator is added – Indicator 7 on socio-economic improvement.</p>																

## ***Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION***

- The revised LogFrame Matrix shows a new Indicator targeting socio-economic improvement. This is assumed to have been added to reflect the broadening of the project activities into the social development area following the MTE recommendations. While this is supported by the mission, we feel that the wording of the Indicator is too loose and it will not be easy to determine what comprises “significant improvement”.

In an attempt to assess progress towards the Immediate Objective, the mission examined the Indicators given in the revised LogFrame Matrix and comments as follows :

<b>INDICATORS</b>	<b>EVALUATION COMMENTS</b>
Govt. approval of legal establishment of 4 Conservancies by PY 6.00 under relevant Act	The 4 Conservancies were later split into 8 geographically distinct Conservancies “to better meet the objectives of the project”, and this change should have been reflected in the revised LogFrame. In the event, no Conservancies have been legally established yet and as they rely on the draft legislation, the mission is not optimistic that they can be before the end of the project.
20% reduction in livestock numbers living on pastures in the conservancies by PY7.5	Some of the claims on the reduction of livestock numbers were reported by other sources to have been grossly inflated, such as to call into question whether this indicator/target has been achieved or will be achieved up to the targeted 20%.
Evidence of application of hunting regulations by PY7.5	The Mission is not aware of the <u>application</u> of these regulations.
Evidence of application of forest management regulations by PY7.5	
Evidence of application of zoning strategies by PY7.5	Pasture management plans and species management plans are quoted in the <i>Summary Report</i> as evidence of the application of zoning techniques. The mission could confirm that zoning has been proposed in some plans but these are yet to be applied/implemented.
Harvest quotas applied for wild resource use by PY7.5	Apart from the quotas for trophy hunting, the mission is not aware of any other quotas.
Significant improvement in the socio economic profile of target population by PY7.5	The <i>Summary Report</i> is silent on this indicator and so are all the PIRs available to the mission. While the Mission is aware of some improvements, it is uncertain as to the “target population” and has no way of telling whether the improvements are “significant”.

If the above indicators had to be relied upon, the mission has to conclude that the Immediate Objective has not been reached and is unlikely to be reached by the time the project ends in December 2006.

However, the mission is aware that this is not the case, and in an effort to make headway towards an assessment of progress with the Immediate Objective, we have adopted two other ways of looking at the Objective to determine whether it has been reached. The first approach is to dissect the Objective into its component parts and its expected products.

Taking the Immediate Objective as it stands, namely, *Establishment and effective long-term management of four Conservancies covering wide ecological landscapes and zoned for multiple uses, backstopped by an enabling institutional, policy, regulatory, and financial framework*, it can be seen to be composed of the following six elements :

- 1 Four conservancies established
- 2 Four conservancies managed effectively
- 3 Institutional framework
- 4 Policy framework
- 5 Regulatory framework
- 6 Financial framework

Regarding elements 1 and 2, the mission is satisfied that the Conservancies have been established although they are still lacking a legal basis and it is not possible for the mission to say how effectively the

**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

Conservancies are being managed. Conservancy Management Plans do exist but their implementation has yet to happen.

Some parts of the institutional framework (element 3) have been put in place by MACP. At the community level, institutions in the form of VCCs and CMCs have been established in most localities and while some of these are acknowledged as being immature by the project itself, hopefully this deficiency can be rectified before the end of the project.

Under elements 4 and 5, unfortunately the policy framework is still very weak, and so is the regulatory framework. Legislation and regulations have been drafted by the project with limited participation from the Government side. The project now faces some resistance in getting the legislation and regulations adopted by Government and the time delays could jeopardize the result.

Finally, under element 6, participating communities have made impressive commitments and actual contributions to the financial resources necessary to continue with project activities. But even with the MACP contributions, the resources set aside in VCFs are limited. On the other hand, the MAC Fund has received US\$3 million, but until it receives an additional US\$2 million it cannot become operational<sup>14</sup>. At the time of writing, the Mission has to conclude that the financial framework for managing the Conservancies has yet to become viable.

The second attempt by the mission to gauge whether and to what extent the project has achieved its original objectives, is based on the expected “end of project situation” as outlined in the Project Document. The following table shows the expectations of the project designers together with the mission’s observations.

EXPECTED END OF PROJECT SITUATION	MISSION COMMENTS
<p>1 Four Conservancies areas will have been formally designated, covering an area of 10,800 square kilometres and encompassing a representative sample of the bio-geographic regions of the W. Himalaya, Karakoram and Hindu Kush ranges. There will be clear evidence of active biodiversity conservation, with improvements in habitat quality and an increase in populations of keystone species. Land within each Conservancy will be zoned and managed by communities for multiple uses including protection, harvesting of wild resources, social forestry, livestock and agricultural activities.</p>	<p>Conservancies have been adopted but their status is not yet formal. They do encompass a representative sample of the bio-geographic regions of Pakistan’s northern mountains environment and as such they address values of global significance.</p> <p>There is some evidence of biodiversity conservation but the improvements in habitat quality and increases in the populations of keystone species have yet to be demonstrated convincingly.</p> <p>Some zoning of land has indeed taken place under Conservancy Management Plans but implementation of a multiple uses approach has yet to materialize.</p>
<p>2 Strong capacity for conservation management will have been established at the local-level. Valley Conservation Committees formed for conservation purposes will be planning, managing, and monitoring conservation efforts in each Conservancy with support from DCCs. An umbrella Conservancy Management Plan will have been prepared for each of the four Conservancies, agreed upon by participating villages, and will be guiding resource-uses and development. A system for policing regulations will be in place, supported by the necessary legal instruments. Environmental awareness programmes will have been executed to impart conservation values to community members, and a forum for inter-village communications on conservation issues established. A record of project impacts will be available, lessons learned will have been documented and disseminated, and monitoring mechanisms will have been institutionalised as part of the conservation paradigm.</p>	<p>Good capacity has been established at community level.</p> <p>A number of VCCs have been formed and while some are active, most are considered as “immature”.</p> <p>Conservancy Management Plans have been adopted, but implementation has yet to happen.</p> <p>Compliance monitoring is taking place successfully at community level although the system still awaits a legal basis.</p> <p>Environmental awareness has been enhanced successfully at community level, but the mission is not aware of a functional forum for inter-village communication on conservation issues.</p> <p>Some lessons have been documented but the extent to which they have been disseminated is not known to the mission.</p> <p>Monitoring mechanisms for various facets of the conservation effort can be strengthened further.</p>

<sup>14</sup> It is open to question whether the interest and investment income generated by \$3 million or even \$5 million is “substantial” or will be sufficient to cover most or all of the conservancies’ recurrent costs, which have never been calculated or analysed in any kind of systematic way

<p>3 Development programmes within the Conservancies, including those sponsored by communities, governments, NGOs, and donors will be geared towards the achievement of conservation objectives. The foundations for long-term sustainable development in the Conservancy areas will be in place, supported by a conducive policy, regulatory and institutional framework. Field trials of sustainable use models will have been completed, with the results guiding resource-uses in the Conservancy areas. Existing extension agents, including community-based agricultural, livestock and forestry specialists will have been trained in technical aspects of sustainable use, with mechanisms established through government and NGOs for the provision of future refresher courses.</p>	<p>Current development programmes do not appear to be significantly influenced by conservation objectives.</p> <p>The foundations for sustainable development may have been laid, but the policy, regulatory and institutional framework is in need of further strengthening.</p> <p>Field trials of sustainable use models have taken place but mainly focussed on trophy hunting.</p> <p>Extension agents have been trained but future refresher courses are not certain.</p>
<p>4 Government wildlife policies will have been reoriented towards supporting community-based conservation, as provided for under the Biodiversity Action Plan. Enabling legislation will exist to give legal backing to the Conservancies, providing a means for targeting incentives to villages, regulating resource uses, and enforcing Conservancy Management Plans. The institutional capacity of Provincial Wildlife and Forestry Departments will have been strengthened to co-manage the Conservancies, with government providing management advice, ensuring compliance with regulations, and monitoring impacts</p>	<p>Government wildlife policies have, to some extent, been reoriented towards community-based conservation,</p> <p>Enabling legislation has yet to be enacted.</p> <p>Local Government institutional capacity has been strengthened but may not be amenable to co-managing conservancies.</p>

From an overview perspective, the Evaluation Mission is of the opinion that regardless of the indicators selected, MACP has achieved good progress towards its Immediate Objective overall, and at the time of writing, this is seen as satisfactory. We believe that with a concerted effort in the remaining four months it might be possible to upgrade this rating.

## **2.5 Stakeholder participation**

### **2.5.1 Participation during project formulation**

According to IUCN-P, a series of planning workshops were organized following the PRIF phase to develop project proposals. Some 22 NGOs, together with forest, wildlife and agriculture departments were involved at the local level.

At the federal Government level, the Ministry of Environment played the role of focal point. In NAs, the Forest Department was involved. IUCN-P played the lead role in the formulation while AKRSP and WWF were consulted regarding their respective roles in implementation. The NWFP Forest Department was not involved at any stage and this created a lack of ownership at departmental level and only added to the friction between the two sister departments. The first draft of the project document and the LogFrame analyses were prepared by consultants. This draft was shared with stakeholders for further fine tuning.

However, concerned Government departments informed the mission that their views regarding project design were not taken into consideration fully during the project formulation stage. Neither did the GEF component include provisions for a baseline on rural development in the candidate valleys and hence these were not reflected in the Project Document. Communities in the target valleys lamented the absence from the Project Document of their priorities for village development as a means for conservation. These social development activities had been left out of the project design because of GEF constraints but they were later included after the MTE.

The mission feels that stakeholder involvement during the project formulation process was not adequate to generate the necessary goodwill and ownership among stakeholders. Many stakeholders advised the

mission that they felt un-informed about the project scope and contents. Others criticised the project design which they saw as the product of a formulation mission rather than a consultative process. The lesson learnt for any follow-up project is that a wider catchment of stakeholders must be included during the formulation stages so as to ensure ownership.

In the opinion of the mission, public participation during the MACP formulation stages was only marginally satisfactory.

## **2.5.2 Participation in project implementation**

The relationship between MACP and its partners, and their participation in project implementation varied with time and place. But while MACP could have certainly done better in relation to its implementation partners, it has been very successful in providing meaningful participation opportunities at the community level.

### **2.5.2.1 In NWFP**

In NWFP, the main partner was the Wildlife Department and it participated effectively in project implementation. The active role of the Wildlife Department in MACP implementation and the secondment of departmental officials to the IUCN-P team have already been discussed above. However, the project seems to have suffered through the non-participation of other relevant Government departments.

MACP social mobilization activities in the valleys in Chitral was founded on two decades of work done by AKRSP and collaboration between the two partners continued. In Kalam, the project benefited from its predecessor, the Kalam Integrated Development Project (KIDP), and many members of MACP conservation committees come from ex-KIDP organizations. The participation by local government and other elected representatives in the VCCs / CMC by virtue of their being locals from the project area has helped the project become socially accepted.

Following are other observations by the mission :

1. NWFP Forest Department has not been involved at any time in the planning and implementation of the project. This is the department which is administratively responsible for all forest management, hence the habitat, in the conservancy areas<sup>15</sup>.
2. The project seem to have no relationship whatsoever with local civil society organizations operating in the area (with the exception of AKRSP in Garam Chashma). There are at least seven partners engaged in the EU-UNDP SGP Tropical Forestry Programme. There has been no synergy and sharing of information between these partners and MACP<sup>16</sup>.
3. AKRSP-Chitral provided an excellent platform in the shape of village and women's organizations. But despite an MoU between MACP and the national office of AKRSP, the project has proceeded with setting up community organizations in parallel without any attempt at mutual sharing between the two partners<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> In NWFP, forests and wildlife are two separate subjects administered by parallel departments under the same Secretary Environment, GoNWFP.

<sup>16</sup> The mission recognizes that some individual engagements were obtained by MACP from local NGOs on a consultancy basis. However, this did not extend to institutional relationships.

<sup>17</sup> The MACP management believes that VCCs and CMCs necessarily should remain within their stipulated roles and should not become 'broad based' local development organizations since this will lead to a dilution of their emphasis on conservation.



4. The regional office of IUCN-P in NWFP (in Peshawar) seems to have no formal involvement in MACP business. However, the field office in Chitral does collaborate with MACP for administrative purposes.
5. The district government, especially the devolved NRM departments (livestock, agriculture, water), could have been formally engaged in a number of interventions. While there have been examples of individual consultancy engagements from among government officials, this has not removed the feeling of lack of involvement.

The MACP is based on an innovative approach which focuses on the 'poverty-environment nexus'. This requires a greater engagement of development partners to gain their ownership and support in addressing community needs on a long term, sustainable basis. Instead, the project has usually depended on one-off, direct support using its own resources rather than establishing an institutional link with development partners, thus assuring future support to the communities.

### **2.5.2.2 In Northern Areas**

In NAs, the collaboration between IUCN-P and the NAs Forests, Parks and Wildlife Department did not work effectively for a number of years and IUCN-P struggled alone with implementation. The relationship has improved in recent months with a change in leadership in all the partner agencies (FPWD, MACP, IUCN-P).

The project operated in three locations namely Gojal, Astor and Skardu where the mission has noted the strong presence of AKRSP and the project seems to have benefited from the more than two decades of good quality social mobilization at village level. MACP is currently putting a great deal of effort into relationship-building at local level aiming for improved ownership among its partners. Linkages have been built with the local agriculture, livestock and tourism departments and enterprise development ventures like BEDAR. It is also encouraging to see that District Counsellors are members of VCCs / DCC not as representatives of local government but because they are local residents and personally interested to support biodiversity conservation. Other observations of the mission are as follows :

1. The mission has noted from meetings in NAs that there was serious damage to relationships with partners during the three and a half year period when there was no fully appointed RPM in the region. Most of the current efforts at regional level are geared towards 'repair' work which will take as much time as is left in the project.
2. There has been a natural synergy and close collaboration with AKRSP in all the three districts. However, as in NWFP, collaboration at the institutional level is required to avoiding duplication and multiple layers at the community level<sup>18</sup>.
3. Forest Department officials in the district are supporting the project as a result of the commitment of top management in the department. The relationship, however, is fragile since the department does not have a legal framework to institutionally support community needs<sup>19</sup>.
4. The relationship with the regional IUCN-P is two-fold. On one hand the leadership of IUCN-P and MACP enjoy a symbiotic relationship through sharing ideas and strengthening each other. On the other hand, the mission has come across evidence of administrative concerns and lack of

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The AKRSP intends to support communities at union council / each 5000 communities / a cluster of at least 25 VOs to become a 'Local Support Organization'. This concept has potential to overlap VCCs or at times at CMCs, avoiding additional hierarchies and multiplication of institutions.

<sup>18</sup> The mission came across at least two examples in which the LSO concept of AKRSP was merged with the VCCs: Bunji, KVO. This can pave the way for negotiating with AKRSP regarding the future of the rest of the VCCs.

<sup>19</sup> The Secretary Forest, Wildlife and Parks has recently moved a request at ministerial level to conceptualize and implement reorganization of the department in NAs to cater for participatory approaches and increasing departmental support to stakeholders in natural resource conservation. This is an encouraging step. There are lessons to learn from the NWFP experience.

transparency arising from IUCN-P administration rules for resource deployment and human resource management<sup>20</sup>.

**2.5.2.3 Participation at village / valley level**

MACP has successfully mobilized a number of communities at the conservancy level. It has established VCCs and WCCs/WGs and set up VCFs as well as WCFs. It has established CMCs and it has confirmed the DCCs. All these bodies are made up almost exclusively of community members from the village level. Participation in the MACP from the grassroots level probably could not be better.

It is true that women are under-represented in the decision-making process and more work is required in this respect. However, even in the case of women and other disadvantaged groups, MACP has made significant progress towards meaningful participation.

The mission concludes that MACP achieved a satisfactory level of stakeholder participation during the implementation phase, overall; whereas at community level, participation was highly satisfactory.

**2.6 Gender and empowerment**

**2.6.1 The gender strategy of MACP**

MACP conducted a workshop in 2000 entitled Gender Strategy Development Workshop which aimed at developing a gender strategy for the project. The mission has reviewed the report arising from the workshop and found strong notions on gender....

*Women have a major role in NRM activities in the Northern Areas and NWFP....Women and men can both contribute to and suffer from the loss of biodiversity – equally they can both contribute to and benefit from biodiversity conservation. The appropriate involvement of women in the MACP is therefore critical for the project success. We must not apply static definitions of what ‘types’ of communities we are working with....*

Although no formal strategy was adopted by MACP as a result of the Workshop a number of proposals were put forward for implementation by the project. The salient proposals are listed in the table below together with an analysis by the mission and proposed follow-up actions. Some of the follow-up actions could be carried out as part of the exit strategy.

ACTION PROPOSED BY WORKSHOP	MISSION ANALYSIS	PROPOSED FOLLOW UP
Engaging female staff and interns	The project has not been very successful in this area. Women either did not react positively to advertisements or they resigned soon after joining. There are no women in senior and mid-	Analyze the barriers that prevented women from applying for advertised positions. Review work conditions provided to the women such as salary, accommodation, security, pick and

<sup>20</sup> While MACP has its own resources it does not have its own dedicated administrative personnel and relies on IUCN-P whose procedures are complex and have resulted in severe delays and dissatisfaction at various levels, which was communicated to the team on many occasions.

**Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION**

	level career positions in the project	drop service, etc.
Daily pick and drop service is essential for women in the field	This service was only provided when women come and go to and from field visits	In remote areas where MACP operates, women should always be provided this facility. It gives them security and ensures a supportive attitude from their families
Gender sensitization of drivers and other support staff on gender issues	Done	This should be an ongoing process in order to cater for staff changes
Gender sensitization of both community members and project staff (mostly men)	The mission noted that most gender sensitization activities, focussing on gender roles and responsibilities, undertaken at the community level were targeted at women	Both men and women should be the focus of these activities which should be a regular feature
Develop an M&E system which is gender specific and is based on traditional knowledge	The mission is not aware of any gender specific elements in the project M&E system	The MACP M&E system should be well defined at all levels and reflect efforts at gender mainstreaming
Development of a women's advisory committee	The mission was not made aware of such a committee	The purpose and added value of such a committee should be discussed
Develop ToRs and selection criteria for VCCs and DCCs which ensures representation of women	The mission did not see any evidence of this. The VCPs present a work plan which does not address the specific roles and responsibilities of women and the landless	Women should be encouraged to participate and be represented at all levels – including the MACF board, DCCs, CMCs and VCCs. Qualified women's representation is extremely important also in the steering committees.
Skill development in income generating activities	Some good initiatives have been taken on skill development at the production level.	The project must extend this activity to address marketing of the products. Only in this way will women and the landless/poor realize an income from their activities
Gender sensitization of female staff in Government departments	The mission is not aware of any female staff in the relevant government departments (Forest, Wildlife) and finds it inexplicable that male staff are not targeted	It may be too late for MACP to engage in this activity, but an analysis of the situation should be undertaken for the benefit of any follow-up project
Involving religious leaders	This has been done. The mission lauds the awareness material on environment and Islam which has been very helpful in this regard	This should be an ongoing process and senior government officials must be engaged in such campaigns.
Addressing inefficient use of fuelwood and solid waste disposal	Fuel efficient stoves and methods for safe disposal of solid waste have been introduced	The mission suggests training local artisans to make good quality stoves. The stoves introduced by MACP have ample scope for further improvement
Participatory thinking, decision making and power sharing	The mission noted that women are engaged, on a limited scale, in VCCs and CMCs. However, they are completely left out of decision-making forums	The mission strongly recommends including active women (not just token representation) and men from disadvantaged groups, in the CMCs, DCCs and MACF Board.

According to IUCN-P, MACP has developed a gender action plan which incorporates aspects related to gender in all the outputs, thus making gender an integral part of project implementation. The mission did not see any evidence of this.

**2.6.2 Gender in project implementation**

Attention to gender is promoted by development agencies due to the fact that among poor communities in the Pakistan mountain environment, women have an extremely disadvantaged and inferior status. However, in a project like MACP, the involvement of women at the community level is additionally important for the sake of the project itself, because ...

- Women are close to nature. They use natural resources as an engine to run their household. They have a direct impact on the natural resource base with their sustainable or unsustainable practices and are in turn affected the most when these resources deteriorate.
- They serve as an important source of information which can never be ignored when establishing any sort of baseline or development plan at local level.

Without the meaningful participation of women, a biodiversity conservation project in the mountain environment of Pakistan cannot be successful because women have a broader impact on conservation than men. This means, for example, that Valley Conservation Plans need to refer specifically to the role of women and identify women’s activities beyond the household level. It is worth mentioning that all the women’s groups met during the mission were unclear about the objectives of the VCF/MACF and could therefore have wrong expectations about the use of funds in future among women.

MACP had to overcome a number of hurdles in its attempts to reflect gender and gender equity in the project. IUCN-P noted that certain areas still have reservations and some communities are not even willing to discuss the matter directly. They related that in parts of Astor, religious leaders even demonstrated ‘fitwa’ and warned MACP staff against the participation of women. Faced by such hurdles, the project is said to have focused on raising awareness among male members of the community through religious sermons and gender awareness workshops for men and women. In these circumstances, field teams needed to tread carefully, balancing cultural sensitivities with the objectives and principles of the project.

The mission recognizes the difficulties that MACP was operating under in this respect but notes that this problem is not only faced by MACP. In many other projects, donors have recognized that gender representation must start at senior management levels, from where guidance and coaching can be provided to those facing difficulties in the field. The presence of gender sensitive and qualified women at the decision-making levels also sends out positive messages to the partners by setting a good example. The MACP picture (see table below) shows that there is ample room for improvement in gender representation (let alone gender balance) in the project setup.

Project Steering Committee	None
Project Management Committees	None
PMU IUCN-P / GoP	None
Regional offices	None
Field offices	4
DCCs / MACF Board	None

In its dealings with MACP, the mission felt that at many levels of the project, the reasons for its inability to make headway on gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of women in biodiversity conservation, were rather generalized and too often attributed to remoteness and conservatism. Conservatism of some communities is certainly a barrier and one which project staff had to overcome. But it seems that the project team gave up too easily and became conservative itself and hesitant, for fear of touching a ‘sensitive nerve’. In the case of Bunji, the communities wanted to form a women’s group, but the project was stalling because the field team did not include a female staff member. The mission also noted that in none of the separate male VCC meetings was the role of women and their engagement in VCP implementation mentioned (not even in Garam Chashma which has a liberal community) until it was raised as a specific topic.

The mission observed the following variations in different locations based on social and physical features:

## ***Pakistan Mountain Areas Conservancy Project (MACP) : TERMINAL EVALUATION***

<b>LOCALITY</b>	<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>
Gojal	Remote, socially open. Men and women are willing to form combined organizations
Astor	Remote, socially conservative, communities are willing / unwilling to form separate women organisations
Skardu	Remote, socially moderate, communities are willing to form women organizations
Qashqar	A mix of more or less remote areas, socially conservative / very conservative. Communities are resistant to forming women organizations in Dir and only a few are willing to allow the process in Kalam
Chitral	Remote, socially open. Men and women are willing to form combined organizations

This shows that while in some areas it was extremely challenging, there were other areas where women could have been integrated into project activities relatively easily. The lesson is that there should not be a generalized response but that the circumstances of each situation should indicate the right course of action.

One good example of the MACP team responding to local circumstances was in Chitral where the project team encouraged women to form separate groups despite the fact that men and women were traditionally willing to work together as under the AKRSP. This was because the MACP team had noticed that women remained mostly quiet in the mixed gender meetings and their presence was purely 'ceremonial', preventing them from making any meaningful contribution to decision-making. The mission fully supports these sort of adjustments to the project approach to reflect local needs and challenges. This was not the case in Gojal, where women were often equally (if not more) as vocal as men but their participation was closely tied to the availability of female staff in the field teams.

The recruitment of female staff by MACP, especially in areas like Astor, Garam Chashma and Qashqar remained a challenge and according to IUCN-P, the project was unable to recruit women staff in Astor for five years. This is surprising in view of the fact that AKRSP Astor, local NGOs in Karimabad (Garam Chashma) and MRDP working in Upper Swat, have all been successful in engaging women of reasonable qualifications.

The mission also notes that female staff currently engaged by MACP are not regular employees of the project. Apparently, E&A female staff contracts were terminated because the project document said so and the mission feels that this was the time for adaptive management and for making adjustments in the project budget to ensure that this responsibility of the project is delivered.

Having two women each in NWFP and NAs, at the lowest level in the professional ladder will not help ensuring gender mainstreaming as one of the project achievements. Based on other development experiences in the region, the mission believes that until and unless UNDP/GEF insists on the application of its fundamental values on gender mainstreaming, it is not going to happen. On its part, IUCN-P must also address this issue and take a fresh look at its gender policy to identify the gaps and explore why qualified women are not attracted to apply for positions within an organization like IUCN even though, as the mission has been informed, all professional positions are open and women are encouraged to apply as noted in the newspaper advertisements.

The mission concludes that the MACP perspective on gender mainstreaming was more conservative than it needed to be and that this should be corrected to the extent possible in the remaining time. It is also important to realize that this area is not only the responsibility of women staff but male staff as well.

### **2.6.3 Empowerment**

The mission has not carried out an in-depth analysis of who is represented in the VCCs and other levels. However, there is a strong feeling that the communities are assumed to be homogenous. In areas

where biodiversity resources are managed communally and where value is attached to the resources, there is always a risk that powerful sections of the community will come forward and take over access and control of resources. An example often quoted is that of communal pasturelands in northern Pakistan which are usually accessed by all communities regardless of their status and gender. As soon as a price tag is attached to these pastures or anything that arises from them, the disadvantaged and the poor (and this often includes women) are usually evicted from their use. The mission recommends a thorough analysis of power dynamics in this regard in an effort to safeguard the livelihoods of the landless and poor sections of communities. Specific attention may be needed in the VCPs to secure traditional access rights and obligations. The project must make sure that it is not making the powerful more powerful and the rest more powerless.

As an example, in a few places during the field visits, the mission was told that livestock numbers were drastically reduced according to the community's commitment in the Valley Conservation Plans. In most cases in South Asia, it is the women and the poor(est) members of communities who depend on livestock as their key enterprise since they do not own much agricultural land. In the mountain areas of Pakistan, livestock is perhaps the only natural resource on which women have direct control. In these circumstances, questions such as the following arise : Who made the decision to reduce livestock numbers? Where were the reductions made? What direct and indirect impacts did this have on the community? With reduced stock numbers, how are the nutritional needs of children and women being met? What are the alternative sources of income?

There are two major forums which have decision-making powers and are directly relevant to communities. These are the DCCs and the MACF Board. In MACF the balance of power at the moment is fully in favour of government (see Annex 10) and four community members cannot influence the deliberations of this forum which is meant to exist for the benefit of community groups. The mission was informed by UNDP that a few changes are being contemplated to address this and other issues, and this is encouraging. The mission wishes to recommend that as the composition of the board is being reviewed, it is opportune to promote the inclusion of women's representatives from among the communities to demonstrate the importance of women's participation in committees dealing with aspects of nature conservation.

Similarly, the composition of DCCs should ensure the involvement of important stakeholders in the project at district level. In order to strengthen DCCs, it is important for conservancy boundaries to coincide with district administrative boundaries and for women to be represented wherever possible. These could be women counsellors who may also be CMC members or, in the case of NAs, active and vocal representatives of VCCs on CMCs.

There is a need to analyze the dynamics of community empowerment and lack of it, to learn about the mechanisms and influences which make the community feel empowered, something they may not have experienced when MACP did not exist.

## **2.7 Project impact**

### **2.7.1 Global environmental impacts**

The project targeted the objective of the GEF Operational Strategy, Operational Programme # 4: Mountain Ecosystems. The objective of this Operational Programme is the conservation and sustainable use of the biological resources in mountain ecosystems. The Programme targets the protection of particular systems of conservation areas, among them the Himalayan, Hindu Kush and Karakoram mountain environments. As such, there is no doubt that MACP is targeting biological resources of global significance.

According to the Project Document, among the species found in Pakistan's northern mountain areas there is a range of globally threatened animal species including the Snow Leopard, Himalayan Lynx, Himalayan Ibex, Marco Polo Sheep, Blue Sheep, Ladakh Urial, Markhor, Musk Deer and the Woolly Flying Squirrel. In addition, the Western Himalaya is classified as an Endemic Bird Area (EBA) by Birdlife International and mountain passes in the Hindu Kush serve as flyways for migrating birds, with a range of species frequenting the area during spring and autumn migrations. The resident avifauna includes the Himalayan Monal Pheasant, Snow Partridge, Himalayan Snow Cock and several birds of prey, including the Lammergeier. Although the invertebrate fauna has been poorly catalogued, it is known to include several endemic species of butterflies. The project has had benefits for most of these animal species of global significance, directly or indirectly.

The flora is also diverse, with a number of progenitors of economically useful crops represented, including wild cumin, thyme, pine nuts, apricots and walnuts, plus a host of medicinal plants with potentially useful pharmaceutical applications. Approximately 80% of the 300 or so species of plants known to be endemic to Pakistan are found in the mountains. Through its protection and management of high altitude pastures and forests, and its direct focus on medicinal plants, the project has had benefits for the globally significant flora species as well.

While not as vigorously, the project has also targeted the conservation of the above habitats of the above species even it has not done this based on a holistic and ecosystem approach. The impact it has had on globally-significant ecosystems is modest to date, however, MACP has laid the foundation for further advances in this direction.

The mission believes that the impact of MACP on Pakistan's mountain ecosystems is currently satisfactory and it is of global significance. Benefits have accrued at the species level, the ecosystem level and possibly at the genetic level.

### **2.7.2 Socio-economic and environmental impacts**

MACP has had an acknowledged impact at community level. It has raised awareness of the value of natural resources such that perceptions among the communities have changed radically. Village communities are now thinking about sustainability of the resource rather than their immediate needs. They are also more amenable to balancing their needs with those of the ecosystem so as to ensure the latter's survival. The project has also had an impact on the mountain environment of Pakistan and if the project activities are continued, this is likely to improve. High country pastures are being rested, stock numbers are being reduced, forests are not being cut down for firewood, habitat is being protected – the environment is being protected.

It must be added that this change in perspective and behaviour has not been brought about by a deep understanding of the intrinsic values of ecosystems or an acceptance that humans must live as part of the ecosystem if they are to have sustainable development. The positive behaviour is, in the main, driven by the financial gain that accrues from such behaviour. No community can resist the incentive of a good financial reward for good management.

It must be added that the mission had a very pleasant experience when discussing the ecosystem approach and holistic management systems for biodiversity conservation in Garam Chashma. While the meeting with the male members of the community concentrated on the social development aspects of the project, wildlife surveys, trophy hunting and such like, the women's group meeting discussed the benefits of a valley level approach rather than a village level approach, they talked about environmental impacts, and the concept of natural resources as a valuable asset.

Unfortunately, where conservation is tied to the financial gain, there is a risk that it will not survive if the financial gain weakens. Likewise, it might not be long-lived in valleys where the financial returns are not seen to be worthwhile (such as those valleys where there is no markhor or where their population is so small that a quota is not justified).

The mission is satisfied that MACP has had a significant impact at community level in those valleys where it has operated. The challenge now is to build on this impact and explore ways and means of weaning the communities from their dependence on extractive and exploitative practices on to more ecologically-based and sustainable approaches.

## **2.8 Sustainability**

### **2.8.1 Institutional sustainability**

Institutional sustainability has two aspects - Government institutions and community institutions. The Government institutions are very clear about their mandates and roles for conservation. In the context of MACP, the Ministry of Environment at Federal level is the focal point for federal laws while the Forest and Wildlife Departments of the Governments of NWFP and Northern Areas have similar mandates in their respective jurisdictions.

In the case of NWFP, the Wildlife Department was given the role of jointly implementing the project with IUCN-P and the Department has been closely associated with the project. Senior project staff were released on secondment from the Department when they were selected by the IUCN-P recruitment process. The Wildlife Department has made clear its intention to continue with the project activities by reabsorbing the seconded staff and assigning them to duties similar to those they had under the project. This augurs well for sustainability.

In the NAs, the Forest Department has yet to adopt such a role at its senior management level. However, in spite of the difficulties surrounding the RPM position, the prospects for institutional sustainability of NAs Forest Department are good and this will provide legal and policy support to the MACP approach and will help make secure the role of VCCs, CMCs and DCCs.

The mission feels that in both NWFP and in NAs, capacity is lacking and institutions are weak and these cannot be built overnight, and financial resources alone will not remedy the situation. It is acknowledged that capacity is better in NWFP, however, a capacity needs assessment is required in both NWFP and NAs, and this should be undertaken as part of the exit strategy.

Regarding the sustainability of institutions at community level, the mission felt that target communities, with the help and guidance of Government and MACP, had achieved many of the objectives for their institutional growth.

The communities have established institutions such as VCCs and CMCs which participate actively in meetings of District Conservation Committees. In Skardu, the community has established the Conservancy Management and Development Organization with the intention to integrate development with conservation. Moreover, the communities have established village conservation funds (VCFs) which are discussed below. The sustainability of these community institutions is very much linked with the proposed legislation (yet to be adopted formally) and the follow-up programmes. As such, it is not yet assured.



## **2.8.2 Financial sustainability**

The financial sustainability of the biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management activities initiated by the MACP is to be provided by the following mechanisms:

- the MACF, whose assets are now worth approximately \$3 million, but must be increased to at least US\$5 million in order for the MACF to become operationalised<sup>21</sup>
- the separate Valley Conservation Funds (VCFs), which have now been established in 80% of the valleys, and whose total combined value as of June 2006 stood at US\$281,000
- the separate Women's Conservation Funds (WCFs) established in some valleys, whose total combined value is around US\$85,000.

Activities funded by the VCFs include: village conservation-related activities (like protection, training and infrastructure), implementation of the Valley Conservation Plans, and productive and social infrastructure. Currently, approximately two thirds of the assets of the VCFs and WCFs come from grants by the MACP for "productive infrastructure", which are intended to deliver tangible benefits to the communities during the period before the MACF becomes operationalised. Approximately one third of the assets of the VCFs and WCFs currently come from the communities themselves, through depositing 100% of the revenues earned from:

- trophy hunting fees (which the provincial Wildlife Departments transfer to the VCFs),
- community-levied fines and compensation payments under customary law

They also deposit a share of the proceeds from timber sales, and the rent of communally-owned pastures (rented to pastoralists from outside the local area).

Most of the money contributed by the communities to VCFs currently comes from trophy hunting fees, which means that some VCFs now have much more money than others. However, this situation is expected to change if other new, locally generated income sources are developed (e.g. marketing of medicinal plants, ecotourism, etc).

The overwhelming enthusiasm of the communities to manage and sustain village- and valley-level trust funds is an indicator of their awareness of the link between sustainable natural resource management and the long-term economic well-being of the communities and is a positive ingredient for sustainability.

However, in order for the project to become financial sustainable:

- at least US\$2 million more must be raised by the end of 2006 to capitalize the MACF, which may require considerable additional concerted effort by IUCN-P, UNDP and the Government of Pakistan;
- a highly diversified international investment strategy needs to be formulated, and a highly qualified investment manager needs to be hired through an international tendering process, so that the MACF's capital can generate a net real return of at least 5%/year above the rate of inflation (whereas the money contributed so far to the MACF and deposited in local banks is currently earning around 9%/year in rupees, which merely equals the rate of inflation, and therefore represents zero "real return" on investment); and
- the actual modalities for disbursing the MACF's annual investment returns to the VCCs, WCCs and CMCs still need to be worked out.

An Operations Manual has been drafted for this last purpose, but UNDP, IUCN-P and the MACP have each submitted detailed critical comments pointing out deficiencies in the draft. These deficiencies need to be addressed before the Operations Manual can be considered acceptable.

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<sup>21</sup> The GEF has very recently restated its unwillingness to waive this co-financing requirement, according to UNDP's Regional Technical Advisor for Biodiversity. If this target is not met by the end of the Project, the GEF's and UNDP's contributions to the MACF may have to be returned.

### **2.8.3 Knowledge management**

The project has published an impressive number of publications, information packages and awareness material (see Annex 5). The mission however feels that production and publication have not been undertaken in a systematic manner and hence it is likely that these products do not reach their target audience and may not realize their full benefit once they are published (for example, most staff members are not aware of the gender strategy / action plan of the project). In addition, many documents have no date or serial number to place them within the project's timescale.

The mission recommends that MACP should catalogue all the printed and electronic material that was produced or acquired by the project and identify the potential clients for whom the documents are intended (communities, other similar projects, NGOs, academia, government). The catalogue should be in a format that will enable searches to be undertaken according to keywords and other descriptors. Since most of the documents are in English, some may need to be translated to ensure that they reach the intended readership. Some others which may be of a technical nature, may need to be summarised in simple and understandable (non-technical) language, to ensure that they can be accessed by the communities. Furthermore, once the catalogue is created, the availability of the various publications and other documents needs to be brought to the attention of identified, potential users. In doing all this, MACP should become aware of similar, parallel, or related initiatives by other projects, development agencies and NGOs, and explore the potential for harmonization across databases. This work needs to be done as part of the exit strategy to ensure that the impressive publications record of MACP is not lost out of circulation, in some archive.

The mission notes that there is at least one further publication that MACP will produce – the end-of-project report. At the end of seven years work on a unique objective, it is important to record the experience for posterity. However, the mission cautions against the tendency to produce a costly and attractive end-of-project product with little substance or value. There is nothing wrong with producing an attractive publication, but the end-of-project report must do more than that. It must record the experience of project personnel, stakeholders and others associated with the project as a learning process. It is recommended that the report should arise from an "internal" process with the participation of both project staff, communities and other stakeholders. The process must be self-critical and objective and draw lessons that will be practical enough to be of use in designing a follow-up initiative, if it is so decided.

The mission concludes that whereas the knowledge base of MACP is satisfactory, knowledge management is currently unsatisfactory, but this can be remedied in the next few months.

### **2.8.4 Exit strategy**

MACP will end in December 2006 – a mere four months from the time of writing. With such a short timescale to the project's termination, it is reasonable to expect that an exit strategy would be in place and that implementation of the strategy would have been evident. The mission did not detect such activities.

The project commissioned a consultant to write an Exit Strategy in mid-2005. While this may have been a bit too early, the advice that is provided is sound. However, the mission did not observe any sense of ownership by project management of the exit strategy produced by the consultant. Ideally, an Exit Strategy should be the personal responsibility of the Project Manager, not a consultant. If a consultant's

advice and assistance is sought, it is still incumbent on project management to formally review the consultant's work and only adopt it after any necessary revision and improvement. As a minimum, each of the MACP NPM and the RPMs must update the consultant's strategy and ensure that it addresses the issues that have emerged since the consultant's work.

It is widely acknowledged that if there is a follow-up project, it is unlikely to start right away. There will be a gap and the gap could be substantial. The mission therefore believes that in addition to the usual provisions for the handing over of project assets, the Exit Strategy for MACP must prepare the way for "life after MACP" without the support of a project.

In particular, the Strategy must prepare the various VCCs and CMCs so they can survive beyond the project without any support if necessary. This may require a needs assessment and specific training for those in positions of responsibility at the community level. Training may include the "attachment" of key individuals from the community, to project personnel as they go about their project tasks for the next four months. Some consideration, in the form of a small honorarium, may be necessary in these cases. MACP is fast running out of time to implement such a scheme.

A lot of questions remain about both the MAC Fund and the Valley Conservation Funds (VCFs) and the Exit Strategy must also focus on these outstanding issues to ensure that to the extent possible, all the funds are operational by the end of the project. As noted elsewhere, without the funds there is no financial sustainability for the conservation outputs of the MACP.

It might be too late for the project to design a more robust and scientifically-based wildlife survey system, but if this is feasible it could be a very valuable contribution of the Exit Strategy.

The mission felt that no one among communities, partners and even project teams, is thinking seriously about the project termination and what will happen then. When asked whether there is a will to continue the interventions on the ground after MACP finishes in December 2006, all the communities were adamant that they will continue, even when told that any follow-up was unlikely to happen right away. However, the mission detected a general expectation that a follow-up will happen. In effect, the project is seen as continuing and this is leading to a false sense of complacency. No serious efforts have been made to consolidate results, manage knowledge and adopt a strategic approach to the project's closure. The mission feels that a number of project activities remain to be completed and a strategy needs to be put in place right away to ensure that this is done before the project is closed.

The current situation regarding project closure and exit is unsatisfactory.

## **2.9 Replicability and follow-up**

### **2.9.1 Replication**

IUCN-P has advised the mission that MACP has already been used in several ways for replication in other areas and they quoted the following examples :

- Study Visits: MACP was used as the lead community based conservation initiative and regular visits by other projects and programmes were conducted for learning purposes. The Palas Conservation and Development Project (PCDP) in Indus Kohistan used MACP as a model for community based conservation institutions.

- Ungulate Surveys Techniques and Species Status: An independent student, supported through Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is conducting his doctorate studies on the status of markhor in NAs and using the survey technique developed by MACP for his study.
- Conservation and Development Plans: Northern Areas Development Project (NADP), supported through UNDP and IFAD, is using the Participatory Conservation Planning Process developed by MACP.
- Replication: The Forest and Wildlife Department of NAs, while internalizing the same approach, has developed two independent projects from government funds - one on the recovery of species of special concern like Astor Markhor, Ladakh Urial, Musk Deer and Snow Leopard (10 valleys); and, the second one on community conservation areas declaration (17 valleys).
- Valley Endowment: MACP has established valley endowments with the name of Valley Conservation Funds (VCFs) in each valley with the purpose of helping communities pay for conservation cost. This proved to be a very effective local financial mechanism. Another organization, Aga Khan Water Sanitation Extension Program (WASEP) has replicated VCFs as maintenance fund for all water and sanitation projects in NAs. Conservation funds were also replicated as such in Bulahsbar and Qarambar valley conservation projects in NAs by WWF Pakistan.
- TRAFFIC (a WWF/IUCN creation) is using MACP as a case study for sustainable management and use of CITES listed species in South/Southeast Asia.
- IUCN-P is experimenting with the social mobilization approach and village conservation fund mechanism developed in MACP for other participatory, community based interventions (e.g. Mekong wetlands biodiversity programme);
- Outside Pakistan, there has been considerable interest in the MACP concept from Cambodia (Ministry of Environment – wildlife management) and Nepal (community forestry projects).

The above is testimony to the replicability of the MACP approach. If the identified lessons can be learnt and applied, and the mistakes avoided, the approach devised by MACP can, and maybe should, be replicated even more widely in Pakistan, in the region, and even in mountain areas globally. The models provided by VCCs, VCPs and VCFs as well as the CMCs, have already been the subject of requests to IUCN-P for replicate projects in other areas outside the established conservancies. Likewise, there is good potential for the management of trophy hunting activity, with the equitable sharing of the proceeds as carried out under MACP, to be spread to other parts of northern Pakistan and elsewhere.

Finally, the community mobilization process (while not new) as espoused by MACP, through which communities are given meaningful responsibilities for management of natural resources, could be replicated inside and outside the existing conservancies.

## **2.9.2 Follow-up**

According to the Project Document the institutional and human capacity building, the establishment of a financial mechanism to fund field level activities, and the seven-year implementation period, all characteristics of MACP, were expected to place conservation on a sustainable footing in Pakistan and as a result, *“no follow-up extensions requiring GEF resources will be necessary”!*

All those met by the mission - beneficiaries, stakeholders and others connected with the project, are of the unanimous opinion that the work is unfinished and that it must continue. Government officials believe that the MACP approach needs to be extended to cover other critical mountain valleys and more conservancies need to be established and they concede that they are unable to do this themselves

without outside help. The communities met by the mission are adamant that they will continue the work started under MACP, however, they also acknowledge that they are not ready to do this alone and that further support is required, at least in the short term.

The mission agrees that if there is no follow-up there is a risk that the investment made by MACP will slowly disappear. However, a follow-up should not be a simple extension of the current project and the design will need to be altered to reflect the experience gained from MACP.

## **2.10 Experience gained and lessons learnt**

The evaluation team has identified the following lessons from the project:

1. Attractive economic incentives, such as the income received from trophy hunting and ecotourism, provide good reasons for communities to take a keen interest in conserving their natural resources.

However, economic incentives are not by themselves sufficient to achieve biodiversity conservation and need to be complemented by making people more aware of the deeper links between environment and sustainable development.

2. The economic incentives derived from sustainable use of natural resources must be based on a "portfolio" of resources to ensure an equitable spread of benefits among various communities and valleys.

While acknowledging the success of the trophy hunting programme at community level, it is important to also accept that alternative means of income generation from sustainable use of natural resources (such as mushrooms, economic plants, ecotourism, etc.) will need to be identified for those communities where trophy hunting is not a viable option.

3. A gender balanced team at all levels (including at decision making levels) is important to ensure meaningful participation of women and the poor in project interventions.

The mission feels that the project would have done much better on gender indicators had there been timely intellectual support on gender and empowerment issues from senior levels.

4. Community empowerment is a continuous process requiring patience, time and resources translated into concrete actions and follow up.

The MACF and VCF are not only the vehicles for ensuring that funds are available for conservation activities; they are also tools through which to empower communities. The financing and implementing agencies should ensure the inclusion of those who are normally excluded from such benefits.

5. The conservancy approach as such is based on the principle of integrated management of natural resources which inevitably should engage all the related actors.

The integrated NRM / biodiversity management as is explained under the conservancy concept, is more or less like a community based integrated NRM approach. This means that all the related actors should

be actively engaged in supporting communities in managing these resources. This could be a challenge due to different cultures, coverage, working styles and frame conditions offered by these actors. However, if this could be done, this can end up as an opportunity as well.

6. The number of village/valley based organizations created by various donors can actually hinder community empowerment if it is not well-coordinated and linked.

There are community organizations like VOs, WOs, VCCs, CMCs, WCCs, LSOs and many others which are often promoted by different donors and development agencies. Often they maintain their individual savings and organizational entity. These multiple layers and numbers of organisations may encourage a few people to dominate in each structure resulting in over-empowering a 'development elite' in the community. Moreover, the resources spent on mobilising and keeping the structures intact are enormous and these resources can be spent more productively elsewhere.

7. The MACP tripartite partnership between Government, communities and a non-government organization, has encouraged a new culture of mutual trust and accountability.

MACP had three key partners at field level: IUCN-P, Government (Federal and Provincial) and Communities. Although this partnership was characterized by a stronger department in one region and weaker relationships in the other, the model has ample scope for the future.

8. There should not be a generalized response to the challenges facing those who foster the participation of women, but the circumstances of each situation should indicate the right course of action.

The participation by, and mainstreaming of, women is no doubt extremely challenging in some circumstances, however, there were other areas where women could have been integrated into project activities relatively easily.

9. A wide catchment of stakeholders must be given the opportunity to participate during the project formulation stages so as to ensure a feeling of ownership among prospective partners and other stakeholders.

The scope of stakeholder involvement during the project formulation process must be sufficient to generate the necessary goodwill and ownership among stakeholders. They must feel that they have been involved and avoid the feeling that the project is the product of a formulation mission rather than a consultative process.

10. Without an adequate system for collecting and evaluating data to monitor the progress that has been made and evaluate the reasons for success or failure, community-based NRM and biodiversity conservation projects cannot hope to achieve sustainable benefits.

Community members must become involved meaningfully in various stages of the monitoring process, from the design of the system, to its implementation, and on to the actions that will be precipitated by the results of monitoring.

### **3 CONCLUSIONS**

Conclusions have been drawn throughout this report. They are restated together here in order to facilitate follow-up action.

#### **3.1 Project concept and design**

The MACP project design, which was quite innovative some nine years ago when it was designed, is seen by the mission to be sound in principle. However, one serious flaw was the reliance on partners, through parallel projects, to undertake social development activities to address the identified root causes. The mission believes that this reliance on others for a significant and crucial component of the project was threatening the viability of the project until it was recognized and rectified following the recommendations of the MTE. This adjustment required a change in course for MACP into development activities which, according to the Project Document had not been *“eligible for GEF financing based on the incremental cost criterion”*. However, the project may have been ahead of its time because the GEF has since relaxed its strict adherence to exclusive global benefits and the incremental cost criterion.

#### **3.2 Project implementation**

The Project has been implemented by IUCN-Pakistan, together with the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries of NWFP and the Department of Forests, Parks and Wildlife in NAs. Collaborative partners were the WWF-P, the AKRSP and the Himalayan Wildlife Foundation.

The project has been implemented in situations which presented the project teams with innumerable hurdles. The targeted locations possess unique and high biodiversity values of global significance, on which the communities often depend for their livelihoods because economic opportunities are extremely limited. The areas are prone to natural disasters of various kinds, and are very remote, with difficult road access and weak communication infrastructures. Climatic conditions create a short access season to most of the valleys where the project has been implemented. The project operated in well known ‘poverty pockets’ and the rural communities in these areas are generally poor and vulnerable. Many are also very conservative and extremely wary of “outsiders”. The project field staff are to be commended for their commitment and the hard work required to take the project to these locations where no previous conservation initiative had operated with objectives similar to that of MACP in the past.

As a complex project, MACP had a complex implementation framework which aimed to involve to the maximum possible, all primary stakeholders in the project. In the event, one key stakeholder (NWFP Forest Department) was not very involved and IUCN-P rules may have may have resulted in unnecessary administrative delays in implementation at field level.

While the implementation framework may not have been entirely satisfactory, implementation at field level was satisfactory in spite of the hurdles that had to be overcome.

#### **3.3 Project Monitoring and Evaluation**

Compliance monitoring has been shared with community members and the level of monitoring is highly satisfactory. However, they are still waiting to be given the legal authority to apprehend and prosecute those who do not comply with the law. There are also questions regarding the fines and penalties applicable under the law, and whether these were enough to serve as a deterrent.

The LogFrame Matrix could not be used effectively by the project team for management monitoring and other tools have helped with project monitoring and management. However, project performance monitoring was only marginally satisfactory.

While the mission accepts that every effort has been made to standardize species surveys to reduce the amount of variability, the results may still not be reliable enough to be used as proof of the project's success in the protection of particular species, particularly in cases where very small numbers of animals are involved. Species survey and monitoring was not satisfactory.

It is too early to determine how successful the monitoring of CMPs and VCPs is going to be, but with the proposed refinements and if the proposed strengthening and capacity building is undertaken as part of the exit strategy, it should be successful.

The mission feels that because of all these qualifications, monitoring and evaluation by MACP has been only marginally satisfactory overall.

### **3.4 Project management**

The PSC and PMCs performed their functions as stipulated in the Project Document. However, the perception from the field is that they could have been utilized by project management to advise and assist with the resolution of some issues hindering the project.

The PMU in Islamabad suffered from the high turnover among its senior staff. For a project that is being implemented almost exclusively at the regional and field levels, the number of personnel in the Islamabad office may be excessive and this fact had already been criticized by the MTE.

The innovative nature of the project required project management to plan for capacity building among staff. There was no culture of internal learning, for example through exchange visits (especially for women) or tailor-made staff training opportunities organized by the PMU.

MACP in the NAs has suffered through leadership crises over time. Most significantly, during a three and a half year period there was no Regional Project Manager appointed for the region.

Project management is rated as marginally satisfactory.

### **3.5 Achievement of targeted outputs and objectives**

#### **Output 1: Community Organisation & Planning**

The results of awareness and motivation work by the project are excellent. However, the ecological principles are not always well understood by the communities and more work still needs to be done. This task has been made easier since the communities are now receptive.

#### **Output 2: Education and Awareness**

A lot of good work has been done, and even if it did not always follow the original prescription, it was impressive. In order to ensure that these products are not lost following project closure, there is an urgent need for a knowledge management strategy.

#### **Output 3: Monitoring & Evaluation**

This Output was scrapped following the MTE and its activities were meant to become cross-cutting across other outputs. The distribution across outputs was not entirely successful and monitoring and evaluation were not integrated fully into the logic of the project framework.



**Output 4: Village Eco-Development**

The mission is confident that satisfactory progress has been made towards this Output in its revised form.

**Output 5: Sustainable Resource Use & Livelihoods**

Formal planning and management tools for community based initiatives in conserving biodiversity have been adopted, although it is trophy hunting that is the major incentive and this is of some concern to the mission. However, we are well aware of the other good initiatives taken by MACP under this Output. If the time permits, these should now be taken to their next steps using the most appropriate expert advice.

**Output 6: Enabling Policy Framework**

This Output and the Indicators selected for it were over-ambitious since the results it targeted were beyond the influence of the project – it is only governments that can adopt policy, enact laws and promulgate rules and regulations. The project has therefore been unable to deliver directly on this Output and much remains to be achieved.

**Output 7: Financing Mechanism**

Much also remains to be done in order to achieve this output, and without it the other MACP products are unlikely to be sustainable.

Overall, taking into account all of the outputs targeted by the project, delivery has been satisfactory.

**Project Objective**

MACP has reached its Immediate Objective to a significant extent and at the time of writing, this is seen as satisfactory. With a concerted effort in the remaining four months, it might yet be possible to upgrade this rating.

**3.6 Stakeholder participation**

Stakeholder involvement during project formulation was inadequate to generate sufficient goodwill and ownership among stakeholders and this aspect was only marginally satisfactory.

Stakeholder involvement during project implementation varied with time and place. Although MACP could have certainly done better in relation to its implementation partners and the involvement of women and the disadvantaged, it has been very successful in increasing meaningful participation opportunities for the majority of village and valley people. This aspect is considered to be satisfactory.

**3.7 Gender and empowerment**

The Gender Strategy Development Workshop which was held by MACP in 2000, was intended to develop a gender strategy for the project. However, the evaluation mission has not seen any gender strategy which might have been prepared following the workshop.

By employing only two women in the NWFP and two in the NAs, all of whom have positions at the lowest level in the professional ladder, the project has failed to achieve gender mainstreaming as one of the project outputs. Women are grossly under-represented among project staff, and the barriers to their employment need to be identified and addressed.

The mission recognizes the difficulties that MACP was operating under in this respect. Conservatism of some communities is certainly a barrier and one which project staff had to overcome. But it seems that the project team gave up too easily and became conservative itself and hesitant, for fear of touching a 'sensitive nerve'. The mission concluded that the MACP perspective on gender mainstreaming was more conservative than it needed to be and that this should be corrected to the extent possible in the remaining time.

In addition, the mission recommended a thorough analysis of power dynamics at community level in an effort to safeguard the livelihoods of the landless and poor sections of communities. The project must make sure that it is not making the powerful more powerful and the rest more powerless.

The gender and empowerment aspects of the project are considered to have been only marginally satisfactory.

### **3.8 Project impact**

The project has produced satisfactory global biodiversity benefits by virtue of the environment where it has been working and since benefits have accrued to species and ecosystems which are endemic or in some other way unique to the mountains of Pakistan.

MACP has also had an impact at community level – it has raised awareness of the value of natural resources such that perceptions among the communities have changed radically; village communities are now thinking about sustainability of the resource rather than simply their immediate needs; they are also more amenable to balancing their needs with those of the ecosystem so as to ensure the latter's survival. The project has also had an impact on the mountain environment of Pakistan and, if the project activities are continued, this is likely to improve. High country pastures are being rested, stock numbers are being reduced, forests are not being cut down for firewood, habitat is being protected, the environment is being protected. Other impacts at community level include - the spread of the VCC and the conservancy approach to other valleys; the model wildlife legislation for NWFP which stands to be emulated in other jurisdictions; the commitment by the Government of Pakistan to fund a US\$8 million project to consolidate and follow-up on the work of MACP; the improved relations between communities and Government agencies.

The project has achieved impacts and outcomes at a highly satisfactory level.

### **3.9 Sustainability**

In both NWFP and in NAs, capacity is lacking and institutions are weak and these cannot be built overnight, and financial resources alone will not remedy the situation. It is acknowledged that capacity is better in NWFP, however, a capacity needs assessment is required in both NWFP and NAs, and this should be undertaken as part of the exit strategy to enhance the prospects for sustainability.

The sustainability of community institutions is very much linked with the proposed legislation which has yet to be adopted formally, and with the follow-up programmes. As such, it is not yet secure.

Financial sustainability is not assured yet either – MACP requires a further US\$2 million before it can become operational and the VCF resources are inadequate to sustain the same level of activity without the MACP. While generating a great deal of enthusiasm and expectations, the VCFs have not yet produced significant economic benefits for most communities (except for the few that receive trophy hunting fees).

In terms of institutional and financial sustainability, the mission feel that MACP is not satisfactory.

With regards to the knowledge generated by MACP, the mission concluded that while the knowledge base is satisfactory, knowledge management is currently unsatisfactory, and may not be sustainable. However, this can be remedied in the next few months.

Overall, sustainability of the project products is not yet assured because, while a lot has been achieved, much remains to be finalized. In its current state, sustainability is not satisfactory but it could be improved through a robust exit strategy and additional new contributions to the MACF by donors and Government.

### **3.10 Replicability**

IUCN-P advised the mission that MACP has already been used in several ways for replication in other areas. If the identified lessons can be learnt and applied, and the mistakes avoided, the approach devised by MACP can, and maybe should, be replicated even wider in Pakistan, in the region, and even in mountain areas globally.

### **3.11 Exit strategy**

If there is a follow-up project, it is unlikely to start right away and the gap could be substantial. The mission therefore believes that in addition to the usual provisions for the handing over of project assets, the Exit Strategy for MACP must prepare the way for "life after MACP" without the support of a project. The Exit Strategy must also focus on the outstanding financial resources issues to ensure that to the extent possible, all the funds are operational by the end of the project. As noted elsewhere, without the funds there is no financial sustainability for the products of MACP.

The mission felt that no one among communities, partners and even project teams, is thinking seriously about the project termination and what will happen then. When asked whether there is a will to continue the interventions on the ground after MACP finishes in December 2006, all the communities were adamant that they will continue, even when told that any follow-up was unlikely to happen right away. However, the mission detected a general expectation that a follow-up will happen. In effect, the project is seen as continuing and this is leading to a false sense of complacency. No serious efforts have been made to consolidate results, manage knowledge and adopt a strategic approach to the project's closure. The mission feels that a number of project activities remain to be completed and a strategy needs to be put in place right away to ensure that this is done before the project is closed.

The current situation regarding project closure and exit is unsatisfactory.

### **3.12 Follow-up**

There is complete unanimity among the more than 300 people consulted by the Evaluation Team that there should be a follow-up initiative and the mission agrees. If there is no follow-up there is a risk that the investment made by MACP will slowly disappear. However, a follow-up project or programme should not be a simple geographical and temporal extension of the current project. Its design should reflect the experience gained from the implementation of MACP.

## **4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the following recommendations, the emphasis is on future follow-up interventions unless there is an explicit statement otherwise.

### **Project organization and management**

1. Conservancy boundaries should be revised and made compatible with administrative boundaries.
2. The role of the PMU should be redefined to strengthen 'intellectual' and 'strategic' support to the teams in the regions.
3. Social mobilization is a continuous process, and serious efforts should be directed to retaining and motivating social mobilization staff.
4. The PSC should be used more effectively for seeking strategic and policy support.
5. The synergy and interdependence between projects and IUCN-P regional offices should be explored in an effort to obtain mutual benefit. Increased decentralization of powers and responsibilities to the field offices is essential for smooth functioning.
6. The project should diversify income generation opportunities for women, the landless and the poor through the sustainable use of natural resources, especially in valleys with little scope for trophy hunting.

### **Stakeholder participation**

7. As part of its exit strategy, the MACP PMU should establish formal arrangements with different line agencies (agriculture, livestock, etc.) for the provision of services to the communities. A stronger emphasis is required for linkages and synergies at valley level with Government functionaries, civil society organisations and the private sector.
8. A holistic, ecosystem approach must be followed involving both the Forest and Wildlife Departments.
9. Before it is terminated, MACP should make a genuine effort to include elected representatives in VCCs and CMCs and link them with district development initiatives. In NAs, the participation of District Counsellors in the DCCs should be explored.
10. Project formulation must involve a broad spectrum of stakeholders so as to generate sufficient goodwill and ownership among stakeholders.

### **Monitoring**

11. The LogFrame Matrix should be used as a planning and diagnostic tool – setting the course and the targets, and assessing progress towards them using carefully selected indicators.
12. A monitoring and evaluation strategy should be designed and adopted early in the project, identifying who will do what, and when, the necessary resources, milestones/targets, and the tools for measuring project impact.

### **MACF**

13. The MACF Articles of Association should be amended to more clearly and unequivocally limit the "permissible activities" that it can fund to the "recurrent costs of Conservancy management" (*i.e.* the conservancies' own recurrent costs) and to the MACF's administrative costs. The Articles of Association should also more explicitly require that at least 90% of disposable funds should go

directly to VCCs and CMCs. The role and participation of civil society on the MACF Board should be expanded.

14. A detailed fundraising strategy and Prospectus should be prepared by early September; and senior levels of Government, UNDP, and IUCN-P should make it a high priority to raise at least \$2 million for MACF before the end of 2006.

### **Community mobilisation, empowerment and gender**

15. The MACF Board's composition needs to be shifted in favour of communities and civil society which therefore implies decreasing the representation of Government on the Board. Efforts should be made to include several women on the Board.
16. IUCN-P needs to review its policy on gender and working conditions for women and remove obstacles which exist for women who wish to join project staff.
17. Women representation should be promoted on a mandatory basis at all project levels (PMU, regions, PSC, PMC, MACF, DCC, CMCs, VCCs) and this should be supported by a gender sensitive M&E system.
18. It is important for the regional teams to ensure further extensions of the E&A network in villages, valleys, conservancies and in areas outside conservancies. The packages should be complemented with indigenous knowledge in order to make the message more effective and acceptable.

### **Capacity building**

19. IUCN-P should create opportunities for mutual learning and exchange within project teams. The process for drawing lessons learnt should be participatory in the team and it should evolve from mutual learning exercises.
20. The VCC members should be trained in participatory monitoring and survey techniques and the documentation of case studies/ anecdotes of their successes and failures.
21. The VCCs, and more importantly the CMCs, need support in organizational management and institutional strengthening.

### **Knowledge management**

22. Key documents should be translated into Urdu. The mission suggests giving distribution of material a serious thought before it is lost in archives. This must form part of the exit strategy.
23. A final validation of experiences workshop should be organised with the participation of project personnel project and community members to identify and record lessons arising from MACP.