

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: Botanical Society of South Africa

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): *Biodiversity Guidelines for Agricultural Development in the Northern Cape*

Implementation Partners for This Project:

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): May 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

Date of Report (month/year): September 2008

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

This project is a joint-initiative between the provincial departments of Tourism, Environment and Conservation (DTEC) and Agriculture and Land Reform (DALR) and the Botanical Society of South Africa (BotSoc). Botsoc was requested by both DTEC and DALR to facilitate the integrated permit project which was initiated with a view to streamline application and decision-making procedures in respect of agri-environmental applications (i.e. development proposals requiring the approval in terms of both environmental and agricultural legislation). This project was conducted using the technical expertise of Mary-Jane Morris of MEGA (Morris Environmental & Groundwater Alliances) and Charl de Villiers and Mark Botha of the Botanical Society. The technical expertise was contextualized by the Northern Cape local knowledge of Kirsten Fourie of the Botanical Society. Workshops were held with members of both departments in order to facilitate by-in, to understand the context of the project and to ensure that outcomes of the project do not collect dust on a shelf.

III. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

1. What was the initial objective of this project?

The initial objective of this was to create an enabling environment for decision making under the NEMA and CARA regulations with specific reference to the removal of virgin land for agricultural development. It was aimed that this project would result in a **working relationship** among the decision makers in the Northern Cape Province.

2. Did the objectives of your project change during implementation? If so, please explain why and how.

The objectives of this project did not change during implementation

3. How was your project successful in achieving the expected objectives?

Through this project a dialog between the departments of Agriculture and Environment was facilitated. This dialog and debate is the catalyst for the beginning of a working relationship between the relevant parties. This project also produced documentation which will assist in the decision making process regarding the application for the development of virgin soil. These documents include;

1. Notification Form for agri-environmental applications requiring Basic Assessment.
2. Project Information and Assessment Report (PIA Report) for agri-environmental applications requiring Basic Assessment.
3. Application Form for agri-environmental applications requiring Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
4. Departmental Review Form for notification. (NOTE: This form can also be used for the review of the Application Form for agri-environmental applications requiring Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
5. Departmental Review Form for the Project Information and Assessment Report.

In addition to the documents which should be used in the decision making process an **Operational / Administrative Process for the Integrated Permitting Process** was developed. This document provides a step-by-step description of the actions required for agricultural development proposals that require approval under Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act and its Regulations and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. The actions required are based on the model given in the **Background Information Document**.

4. Did your team experience any disappointments or failures during implementation? If so, please explain and comment on how the team addressed these disappointments and/or failures.

One of the biggest disappointments of this project was that we were unsuccessful in getting the Heads of Departments (HODs) from either of the departments to one of the workshops. We overcame this issue by working with those who were delegated by their departments to stand in for the HODs and at the end of the project we submitted a printed copy of all final documentation to the HOD of each department.

One of the first "failures" was to get the two departments to agree on one date for an initial meeting, in order to ensure the project was not delayed unnecessarily we decided to have separate meetings with each department. This proved to be a better modus operandi as the participants felt they were able to be more honest about their frustrations with the opposite department. The information gained in these separate meetings was invaluable in design of the final documentation.

5. Describe any positive or negative lessons learned from this project that would be useful to share with other organizations interested in implementing a similar project.

Key lessons learnt

- Meet with “opposing” departments individually initially
- Taking time to unpack the issues at the beginning of the project helped in the development of the final products
- Set up one on one meetings with the HOD to explain the project in order to ensure buy-in at that high strategic level
- Do not expect feed back – you need to target key people and telephonically ask them for feed back. It is difficult to make this kind of project someone’s key focus and long docs are difficult for them to work with
- Building in a training session on how to use the final products would have been very useful. This would have been most productive if it was done on a region by region basis with the people who would be working together on applications
- Close the project with a combined meeting

6. Describe any follow-up activities related to this project.

A letter to the Heads of Department describing the follow-up activities required to ensure the ongoing success of the Integrated Permit Project included the following;

- Ongoing commitment by officials dealing with the application to communicate with each other, timeously, at critical stages in the process. This may require the following:
 - Establishment of a forum or committee that meets regularly.
 - Access to senior management in the event of significant issues in respect of co-operation arising that require resolution by senior management
 - Translation of the forms into the relevant provincial official languages.
- Training for staff in respect of the integrated process and the use of the set of forms that have been developed for the Integrated Permit Process.
- A communication and awareness-raising programme within the farming community, so that land-users are clear about the procedures that must be followed in terms of agri-environmental applications. This programme could include:
 - The issuing of a formal letter, signed by both HoDs, to farming organisations informing them of the new process.
 - Preparing an information pamphlet and poster on the new application system that is circulated to all municipalities, farming organisations and co-operatives.
 - The publication of an article in farming magazines (e.g. Landbou Weekblad, and Farmers Weekly).
 - The conducting of workshops / information sessions within farming communities.
- Formalisation of the integrated process through a Regulation 6 Agreement as provided for in the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. A Terms of Reference in this regard has been prepared.
- An ongoing process for reviewing and, where necessary, revising the forms that apply to the Integrated Permit Process.

7. Please provide any additional information to assist CEPF in understanding any other aspects of your completed project.

The success of the project can only really be measured once an application by a landowner to develop new lands has successfully been through all the steps as indicated in the administrative process. It is hoped that by following this process that the application time line would be decreased and that both departments would have all the necessary information required to adequately apply their minds in order to make a decision.

IV. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

No additional donors supported this project. Due to the size of the Northern Cape it is necessary to mention that both the departments of Agriculture and Environment supported this project financially by ensure that staff members were able to attend meetings in Kimberly. In some cases this meant traveling 1600km (return) as well as accommodation and subsistence.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
Department of Agriculture and Land Reform	A	\$4920.00	Travel, accommodation, subsistence
Department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation	A	\$2650.00	Travel, accommodation, subsistence
		\$	
		\$	

****Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:***

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF project)*
- C** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- D** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

VI. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. One way we do this is by making programmatic project documents available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these in our newsletter and other communications.

These documents are accessed frequently by other CEPF grantees, potential partners, and the wider conservation community.

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