

Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development Project



Biodiversity Conservation through Private Lands Stewardship and Improved Production Systems Sustainable management of natural resources and mainstreaming of biodiversity in the Cape Floristic Region (CFR) in South Africa

Overview

The project, which was implemented during 2004-2010, enabled the more effective use of economic incentives to induce changes in land user behavior in favor of conservation stewardship. Notably, it resulted in successfully expanding the area of terrestrial habitats (from 1,054,033 ha to 1,953,246 ha, exceeding the original target) under conservation management through expansion of traditional protected areas and establishment of three mega-reserves (Baviansloof, Garden Route, and Cederberg) with connecting corridors between the mountain and lowland habitats to the sea. The project also resulted in an increase of endangered and critically endangered ecosystems under conservation from an initial 16,115 ha to 61,603 ha (a 282 percent increase) through stewardship agreements with private landowners and communities.

Challenge

The Cape Floristic Region (CFR) is the smallest and richest of the world's floral kingdoms and entirely contained within a single country, South Africa, with more than 9,600 species of plants. The CFR biodiversity hotspot provides a multitude of essential ecological services and livelihood opportunities. This biodiversity hotspot faces a high degree of threat, especially to lowland habitats, which are under pressure from conversion for agriculture and livestock farming, rapid urban development, inadequate fire management practices, overexploitation of terrestrial and marine resources and ecosystem-damaging incursions by invasive alien species, all inherently linked to poverty and livelihoods. Further, the relative emphasis on conservation of the natural environment at all government levels at that time, including dedicated funding, was low. Thus, while the Cape Action for People and Environment (C.A.P.E) 2000 Strategy had been prepared there was an urgent need to begin its implementation. The critical need thus was to build a sense of ownership for the strategy and thereby lay the foundations for the long-term sustainability of the CAPE program.

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Approach

The project was creatively designed to promote improved management and sustainable use in three mega-reserves (Baviaansloof, Garden Route, and Cederberg), covering altitudinal gradients from the mountains to the coast; to pilot and adopt new models for biodiversity management, including improved biodiversity conservation off-reserve and, to lay a foundation to mainstream biodiversity into economic activities. All these were done with a view to scaling up and replicating successful outcomes across the CFR, during and after project implementation in line with the CAPE 2000 Strategy. Specifically, the project designed interventions to deal with social and environmental sustainability, environmental management to protect the rich biological heritage of the CFR, and creating much-needed employment and micro-enterprise development opportunities. The project successfully refined conservation planning, promoting biodiversity considerations in spatial planning and water resource management, thus mainstreaming biodiversity into economic development and poverty alleviation strategies, while at the same time leveraging the alignment of normal government budgets with the overall CAPE strategy objectives.

Results

Since the beginning of the project in 2004:

- The total number of hectares under formal conservation agreements in the Kogelberg, Cederberg, Baviaanskloof, Gouritz (funded through the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)), Garden Route, and South West Lowlands almost doubled from 1,054,033 ha to 1,953,246 ha by 2011, exceeding the target of 1,454,033 hectares.
- Within the project areas, the initial 16,115 ha of endangered and critically endangered ecosystems under conservation increased to 61,603 hectares (a 282 percent increase) by 2011, through stewardship agreements with private landowners and communities.
- 1,107 jobs were created at project sites. The number of person-days of work associated with conservation increased from an initial 85,804 per year to an average of 181,276 per year over the project period, an increase of 111 percent.
- A new, streamlined model for biodiversity stewardship was agreed upon and implemented nationally, with a total of 58 contracts signed between landowners and Cape Nature by 2011, establishing 39 Private Nature Reserves and 19 Biodiversity Agreements for biodiversity-friendly land management.
- Biodiversity issues are being integrated into the Spatial Development Frameworks of 15 out of the total 18 CFR local municipalities. In Western Cape, the provincial planning authority has integrated biodiversity considerations into provincial land use planning policy. Under the project, Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA) maps with associated land use guidelines were produced for 31 of the 34 local municipalities of the Cape Floristic Region.
- Biodiversity considerations were strengthened in water resource management

Million

Hectares of land under formal conservation agreements

1,107

Jobs created at Cape Biodiversity project sites

MORE INFORMATION

- › South Africa Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development Project
- › SANParks Website
- › CAPE
- › SANBI
- › Project partner: Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF)
- › Baviaanskloof
- › Cederberg
- › Garden Route
- › Cape Nature
- › Country Website
- › Country Brief
- › Country Partnership Strategy
- › Data and Statistics

procedures, techniques and protocols of three of the five CFR catchments (Olifants-Doring, Baviaanskloof and Breede-Overberg).

- A comprehensive and collaborative strategy was developed for managing non-native, invasive plant and animal species in the Cape Floristic Region.

Beneficiaries

The project benefitted local communities, including disadvantaged groups, by creating a number of socio-economic opportunities for communities and businesses. Local landowners and farmers benefitted through gaining opportunities for the private sector in three targeted mega-reserves: through tourism-related services and accommodation; through tax incentives and payments for environmental services; and receiving extension services to improve environmental management as part of Stewardship Agreements. Other benefits for local populations were conservation education; training and capacity-building opportunities for targeted communities, schools, and NGOs; and greater involvement of local communities in the management and governance of terrestrial and marine reserves.

Bank Contribution

The project was implemented with two Global Environment Facility (GEF) grants: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (**IBRD**) **provided a US\$9.0 million grant from the Global Environment Facility as well as the expertise and technical knowledge of several experts**; and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implemented a US\$2.0 million grant from the GEF. The project also successfully leveraged additional co-funding in the amount of US\$51.40 million, from several national government agencies and from other organizations including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The project included six components and was jointly implemented by UNDP (Components 1 and 2) and the World Bank (Components 3-6) with good collaboration.

Component 1: Institutional Strengthening (US\$1.4 million)

Component 2: Conservation Education (US\$1.11 million)

Component 3: Project Management, Coordination, and Monitoring (US\$1.79 million)

Component 4: Protected Areas (US\$4.12 million)

Component 5: Biodiversity Economy (US\$2.45 million)

Component 6: Watershed Management (US\$1.32 million)

Partners

Partnership with the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) enhanced synergies in the project area through consolidation of land stewardship, biodiversity and business, and learning initiatives. The Table Mountain Fund (TMF) contributed to capacity-building by supporting the establishment of land stewardship positions in conservation-oriented government agencies, and played a key role in supporting civil society organizations in diversifying sources of funding. World Wildlife Fund (WWF)-South Africa was engaged to provide support for the marine sub-component of the Garden Route Initiative as well as the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. This involvement allowed for the launch of a participatory planning exercise to zone the Kogelberg marine protected area (MPA), and to test the principles of co-management in the Kogelberg and Garden Route marine reserves, with the strong engagement of local fishermen.

Toward the Future

A solid foundation of planning, partnerships, and good practice is already being rolled out more broadly and will influence implementation of the next phase of the C.A.P.E program. The national and provincial policy interventions are expected to have long-term positive impacts for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation within development activities in the CFR and more widely throughout South Africa. The successful demonstration of the value of tools (fine-scale planning and working with multiple partners) is likely to be a key area for follow-up. Best practice guidelines for stewardship developed in Western Cape are now being developed in other South African provinces (Kwa-Zulu Natal and Eastern Cape). Successful pilot activities are already influencing other programs, such as participatory management planning for marine

and coastal areas nationally under the privately-funded WWF-Honda Marine Program; tax incentives for landowners under stewardship agreements being applied nationally; and piloting of payments for environmental services.