

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund

Fourth Meeting of the Donor Council
World Bank Headquarters, Washington, DC
12 February 2003

Ecosystem Profile

Recommended Action Item:

The Donor Council is requested to **review** and **approve** an ecosystem profile covering ecosystems within the Succulent Karoo hotspot in Namibia and South Africa. Grant disbursement in both countries is contingent on securing GEF Focal Point endorsement. This document was discussed with the Working Group during the December meeting. Input from this discussion was incorporated into the profile and a revised version was submitted for additional comment on January 10, 2003. The enclosed version now incorporates any final input received since January 10, 2003, including comments from external reviewers.

Background:

The ecosystem profile for the Succulent Karoo is based on the results of the Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Planning (SKEP) process, funded by CEPF preparation resources. The SKEP process involved more than 60 scientific experts and over 400 local stakeholders representing government, academia, nongovernmental organizations, private sector interests and local communities in a unique approach to conservation planning which integrated scientific expertise with socio-political, economic, and institutional concerns. The overall objective of the SKEP process was to develop an overarching framework for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in the Succulent Karoo from which the best niche for CEPF investment could be determined. One of the products resulting from the SKEP process is the creation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

In 2001-2002 the planning process of SKEP has:

- Identified a hierarchy of priority areas, using sound biological assessments and systematic conservation planning techniques, and actions through a broad stakeholder process to guide conservation efforts and donor investment in the biome;
- Leveraged existing biological and socio-economic initiatives to contribute to the identification of these priorities and engender innovation and consensus in the form of a long-term conservation plan;
- Expanded human resource capacity to implement the plan by including training and mentorship opportunities as part of the planning process; and,
- Secured the institutional and government support required to ensure effective implementation of the plan by linking conservation to regional development needs.

The outputs resulting from the SKEP process include:

- A SKEP-CEPF First Phase Report that summarizes the methodology and results of the Information Gathering Phase;
- Technical reports containing an assessment of biodiversity priorities, socio-political issues, economic alternatives, and institutional constraints to conservation in the Succulent Karoo Biome;
- Twenty-year Conservation and Sustainable Land-Use Strategies at both regional and sub-regional level based on recommendations from stakeholder workshops and a rigorous scientific analysis;
- The CEPF ecosystem profile, which provides a justification and vision for how CEPF will invest in civil society activities to achieve priority outcomes;
- A strategy for funding longer-term implementation of the SKEP Programme.

A mid-term report resulting from the SKEP planning process was provided to the CEPF Donor Council during the 12 June 2002 Meeting. Subsequently two SKEP coordinators from South Africa presented the results from the SKEP process and the initial thoughts on the ecosystem profile to the CEPF Working Group on 2 October 2002.

GEF Focal Point Endorsement is being sought for this ecosystem profile.