

# FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

## I. BASIC DATA

**Organization Name: Western Cape Nature Conservation Board**

**Project Title: The Cederberg Mega-Reserve Project Management Unit: Setting the Stage for Conservation in the Cederberg Mega-Reserve, South Africa**

**Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): August 1, 2003 – July 31, 2004  
(Amendment date: March 24, 2004)**

**Date of Report (month/year): October 26, 2004**

## II. OPENING REMARKS

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

The establishment of the Cederberg Mega-reserve (since initiation of this project the name changed to the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor – GCBC) is one of the priorities identified in the C.A.P.E. strategy. Given its large size, varied terrain and wilderness nature, the Cederberg Corridor has the potential to conserve not only biological patterns but also the ecological and evolutionary processes that sustains these patterns.

The Cederberg Corridor is not conceptualized in this report as a single large protected area that is under the exclusive jurisdiction of statutory conservation authorities in which access is controlled and regulated and that can only be expanded through acquisition, or formal contracting in, of neighboring land. The Cederberg Corridor is rather conceptualized as a matrix of natural and transformed areas over an extensive lived in, working landscape in which the different land use patterns are reconciled and aligned with biodiversity conservation imperatives. The Cederberg Corridor is essentially about people – primarily rural communities – and how they use the land now and in the future. It is about their environmental value systems, fears and aspirations, their livelihoods and the drivers of land use patterns. The Cederberg Corridor is not about forcing communities to change how they use their land by introducing new rules, regulations or zonings – it is rather about exposing people to sustainable ways of using land and natural resources, and incentivising their adoption.

The Cederberg Corridor can only be established if it is managed through a partnership of statutory authorities and civil society and it will grow as surrounding land owners and managers choose to join in. It will rely heavily on voluntary associations and partnerships between these stakeholders and will need to add-value to their current initiatives, not duplicate them. The Cederberg Corridor is hence something that will evolve over time. It requires champions to promote it, it needs partners to function, and it needs to deliver results to win over supporters and grow. In this sense it is a campaign to encourage communities to adopt sustainable land use practices.

The Cederberg Corridor is thus founded on protecting biodiversity, but it offers considerable prospects for improving rural livelihoods. If the Cederberg Corridor can raise environmental awareness within these vast areas and use land and natural resources responsibly, society has the best chance of conserving ecological and evolutionary patterns and processes.

### III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

**Project Purpose:** *To deliver an agreed upon strategic management and business plan for the Cederberg Corridor that will enable all the major stakeholders active within the region and all the potential partners of this project, local and national political entities, government institutions, parastatal bodies, funding institutions and civil society to support this project throughout its development and implementation phases.*

#### Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
<p><b>Purpose-level: To deliver an agreed upon strategic management and business plan for the Cederberg Corridor that will enable all the major stakeholders active within the region and all the potential partners of this project, local and national political entities, government institutions, parastatal bodies, funding institutions and civil society to support this project throughout its development and implementation phases.</b></p>	
<p><i>Indicator 1 Private landowners and statutory reserve managers utilize the entire domain of the Cederberg Megareserve in an ecologically sustainable and financially viable way.</i></p>	<p>During the planning phase of the GCBC we were able to identify and collaborate with private landowners and statutory reserve managers about utilization of the GCBC in an ecological sustainable and financially viable way. Throughout the process we found a willingness to support this purpose indicator by both private landowners and reserve managers (although capacity and information sharing is high requirements during implementation). The project was able to target areas of high priority to start implementation for achieving this indicator - especially the Northern Sandveld region.</p>
<p><i>Indicator 2 Civil society and other potential partners participate in all the projects required to maintain the Cederberg Megareserve.</i></p>	<p>One of the purpose indicators where a large degree of success was achieved. Civil society and other role-players are actively taken part in the GCBC roll-out and in the projects identified - with partners acting as champions or taken the lead in many cases.</p>
<p><i>Indicator 3 The boundaries of statutory and private conservation areas are extended to protect the biodiversity of the core area of this biodiversity conservation corridor.</i></p>	<p>The boundaries of the GCBC and the spatial priorities within the domain of the GCBC were identified by the Conservation Planning Unit and agreed by the different roleplayers and stakeholders. No small task, but secondary objectives include awareness in regions outside the boundaries of the GCBC and the initiation of conservation projects through assistance of the GCBC PMU (Knersvlakte project).</p>

<p><i>Indicator 4 The spatial extent and agreed upon objectives for the Cederberg Megareserve are incorporated into the statutory approved Integrated Development Plans of all the relevant District and Local Municipalities</i></p>	<p>As the spatial plans are now in final format - first actions of the implementation phase would be incorporation with the local authorities, IDP's and SDF's. A willingness from the local authorities to work together was experienced during the planning phase, although a lack of capacity was evident.</p>
<p><i>Indicator 5 Partnerships with other implementing agencies for conservation projects in the transitional Succulent Karoo and the coastal zones secured</i></p>	<p>The PMU were able to initiate very good co-operation and partnerships with the main departments and stakeholders in the domain of the GCBC, including National Department of Agriculture, Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, Department of Water Affairs. Northern Cape Provincial Departments were less successful due to very specific problems (staff capacity, lack of staff, budget constraints from departments) but this project is keeping communication channels open, especially through the workings of SKEP and some NGO's based in the Northern Cape.</p>

***Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.***

The GCBC made a considerable effort in initiating meaningful partnerships with a variety of stakeholders / roleplayers in the landscape domain. Let me illustrate with one example: Even before the spatial planning process was initiated we all suspected that the Sandveld region of the GCBC would be a high priority for conservation actions. As such we started quite early in the planning phase to focus on the Sandveld region and trying to devise ways of doing a proper fine-scale plan for the region - at about a 1:10 000 scale. One of our strategies was to get Provincial Department of Agriculture as a partner for this region, as their natural resource management strategy is very closely aligned with our strategy for the Sandveld. At our first meeting - all the different approaches, strategies, challenges were discussed and a decision was made to collaborate and to use the Area-wide planning approach for the Sandveld region. With this relative simple start, now after 10 months, we have institutional collaboration in the Sandveld. The project now have agriculture and conservation officials attending farm visits together (for the first time ever) and jointly provide information to landowners regards future agriculture developments, areas of high conservation value and existing agricultural practices. Our partnership is now in the process to devise various best practices programmes for this region, regards especially the potato industry, we jointly enforce environmental legislation and fairly recently, we also invited Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning to join this partnership. We were fortunate to realize very early on during this Planning phase that WCNCB as implementation agent, will never be able to successfully implement a strategy for landscape conservation. Therefore the very important role of strategic partnerships, to assist and strengthen the implementation of the GCBC.

***Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?***

Positive impacts: Through the project planning phase we were able to assist and secure support for neighboring regions (Knersvlakte) in developing conservation targets.

Negative impacts: The capacity problem had a bigger impact than what we expected. The project team had to assist much more than anticipated with project planning and

development, setting realistic targets, how to plan a budget, etc for participating partners. With few staff, this put tremendous pressures on the project regards keeping to deadlines and timeframes.

#### IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

**Project Outputs:** Enter the project outputs from the Logical Framework for the project

##### Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
<b>Output 1: Project manager, the assistant and steering committee for the Cederberg Megareserve appointed</b>	
<i>Indicator 1.1 Project manager and assistant appointed</i>	Project manager appointed for the planning phase period. Assistant appointed in secretarial function.
<i>Indicator 1.2 Office of project manager and assistant established</i>	Office was established for the GCBC co-ordinator at the regional offices of WCNCB.
<i>Indicator 1.3 Steering Committee for the Cederberg Megareserve established.</i>	Established a formal steering committee from the interim steering committee that was elected at the Action Planning Workshop. A constitution was established, a chair elected for the first two years. Regular meetings were held, with feedback from co-ordinator at each of these meetings. Special working groups were established to assist in focus areas, such as tourism, community involvement, project reviews etc.
<i>Indicator 1.4 Lessons learned exchanges and collaboration established with other Megareserve projects</i>	Involved in the Megareserve Forum under leadership of Conservation International whereby forums are scheduled to exchange lessons learned and collaboration are enhanced between landscape projects.
<i>Indicator 1.5 Project manager established as public outreach facilitator and assist with project monitoring and evaluation.</i>	Working closely with C.A.P.E. / SKEP and CEPF in assistance to project applicants from the GCBC domain. Assisted projects in their project scoping and LOI development. Assisted C.A.P.E. / SKEP and CEPF with the review process and initiate a review schedule with members of the Steering committee.
<b>Output 2: Domain and key activities required for each sector of the Cederberg Megareserve determined through a CPLAN exercise and its findings captured in a GIS database</b>	

<i>Indicator 2.1 Conservation Planning Unit for CPLAN and GIS database appointed.</i>	Appoint the Conservation Planning Unit to do the spatial plans for the GCBC.
<i>Indicator 2.2 Workshop with terrestrial and aquatic scientists completed and data captured.</i>	This was done by the Conservation Planning Unit - a number of individual meetings with the respective experts were scheduled, as finding a time towards the end of the year seemed problematic.
<i>Indicator 2.3 Comments of stakeholders incorporated into resistance layer for GIS database and spatial plan</i>	Presentations of findings were presented to the steering committee and key roleplayers, with their comments incorporated. A technical committee was established at the beginning of the process to ensure continued input from especially expert spatial planners.
<i>Indicator 2.4 Results of financial feasibility study incorporated into GIS database.</i>	Proved to be difficult at the scale that the spatial plans are done, but does provide some guidance.
<i>Indicator 2.5 Land-use options for each sector of Megareserve determined and incorporated into final vision and objectives document</i>	Land-use options and priority areas determined and incorporated into a final spatial plan provide by CPU.
<b>Output 3: Stakeholders identified and consulted</b>	
<i>Indicator 3.1 Extended stakeholder database compiled from spatial plan for Megareserve</i>	Updated on on-going basis.
<i>Indicator 3.2 Potentially affected stakeholders consulted after each of the three draft spatial plans has been produced for Megareserve and their comments incorporated into draft vision and objectives document for the Megareserve.</i>	A technical committee review and a general stakeholder review were done by the various roleplayers and comments were incorporated into final plan.
<b>Output 4: Financial feasibility study for Cederberg Megareserve conducted and business plan prepared.</b>	
<i>Indicator 4.1 TOR for consultant prepared and suitable candidate selected</i>	Prefeasibility study completed by Setplan. Reviewed and comments added to draft final document. From the pre-feasibility study the importance of tourism was very eminent. As such a Tourism Development Plan was developed by Dreamcatcher. Focus was on emerging smme's, the linkage to existing tourism establishments, the transformation or involvement of local communities, the marketing and the road to be followed to ensure the establishing of the GCBC as a must see destination by domestic as well as foreign tourism.
<i>Indicator 4.2 Spatial plan data incorporated into first draft of business plan and presented to project team and key stakeholders.</i>	Comments included. Spatial plans included in the GCBC management and business plan.
<i>Indicator 4.3 Consultation process established between business plan consultant and project team.</i>	Ongoing process. Different scenario's to be tested during the implementation phase.
<i>Indicator 4.4 Final business plan in which the financial implications of objectives for various sectors of the Megareserve are indicated completed.</i>	Management and business plan completed for the GCBC landscape initiative.
<b>Output 5: Strategic management and business plan developed, agreed upon by stakeholders, partnerships with civil society secured for all the identified projects and the Cederberg Megareserve vision and objectives integrated with government regional plans.</b>	
<i>Indicator 5.1 Projects required to ratify objectives of each of the Megareserve sectors, their financial feasibility and socio-economic impacts identified and listed in the vision and objectives document.</i>	Projects identified to be supported through project initiation and assistance in securing financial support.
<i>Indicator 5.2 Core and transitional conservation sectors of Megareserve identified in consultation with stakeholders and spatially indicated in final plan</i>	The Biodiversity Profile completed for the GCBC, with recommendations and findings included in main management and business plan. Plan was

<i>for Megareserve.</i>	reviewed and comments from technical committee, stakeholders and biodiversity experts were included.
<i>Indicator 5.3 Key cultural historical sites within Megareserve identified and captured in spatial plan and priority projects determined in consultation with civil society and NGO stakeholders.</i>	Key historical sites included in final spatial plan.
<i>Indicator 5.4 The socio-political requirements of civil society identified during consultation process incorporated into final plan for Megareserve and its associated GIS database.</i>	A thorough socio-political survey was undertaken by consultants with the support of local champions from the various regions of the GCBC. Strong support was identified for the roll-out, but also a huge need exist for detailed awareness raising within the GCBC about the biodiversity importance and how local communities could become involved. The plan from the socio-political study highlighted various strategies that must be followed during the implementation phase to secure and build on existing relationships with local communities.
<i>Indicator 5.5 GIS database with objectives for each of the Megareserve sectors and their agreed upon spatial occurrence presented to relevant District and Local Municipalities.</i>	Ongoing process of involvement and collaboration with local and district municipalities.
<b>Output 6: Agreed upon management and business plan for the Cederberg Megareserve presented to stakeholders, present and future potential partners, civil society and the media.</b>	
<i>Indicator 6.1 Potential partnerships for the identified projects secured, listed in the management plan and the associated GIS database.</i>	Ongoing process. The GCBC received a lot on support through project initiation and development.
<i>Indicator 6.2 Potential funding institutions for projects secured, listed in the management plan and the associated GIS database</i>	Ongoing process. Submit applications for select projects.
<i>Indicator 6.3 Final agreed upon plan printed and released at public function to media</i>	Launch of GCBC was very well received with about 90 stakeholders / roleplayers attending. The GCBC received very good airtime - both on national TV as well as on various radio programmes.

***Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.***

During the planning phase we were able to surveyed, research and recommend actions for the implementation phase in the following documents:

(1) GCBC Pre-feasibility study. This document investigated existing and potential land uses in terms of economic and financial viability, and their sustainability. Assess the economic potential likely to be released if a co-ordinated and integrated approach to land use and development is followed in the GCBC. It investigates the impact of a mega-reserve on the status quo, with attention to benefits accruing to local communities. It further explores alternative institutional models for the mega-reserve initiative to promote co-operative, co-ordinated and integrated land use within the GCBC. Identify incentives, within the existing legal framework, that could be used to encourage landowner participation.

(2) GCBC Strategic Management and Business Plan. This document provides a strategic guidance to the next five years of the GCBC implementation phase. It contains the vision, mission and objectives as collectively drafted by the GCBC Steering committee. Members of the Steering committee were also involved in the drafting of the

document and specialists on the Steering committee in various sectors; provide input and assistance in the drafting of this document.

(3) GCBC Biodiversity Profile: Clear descriptions of the main characteristics of the landscape; identify the particular qualities that make it so special and the main issues to be faced within the next 10 years. It should include information relating to its natural values - wildlife, biodiversity and landscape; and its cultural and heritage values. Levels of biodiversity and endemism. The current conservation status and the main research needs for the regions.

(4) GCBC Socio-political (community involvement strategy) Profile: Consultation was targeted at leaders of previously disadvantaged communities, and municipalities and provincial initiatives. Workshops were held with these target groups to explain the GCBC initiative and explore community engagement and local economic development. Municipal IDP's (Integrated Development Plans) and the state's rural development programmes were reviewed to check alignment with GCBC objectives. The participatory process served to inform GCBC socio-economic strategy.

(5) GCBC Tourism Development Plan: The tourism development plan consolidated existing tourism strategy plans and provided a detailed list of tourism roleplayers in the GCBC. Through a series of participatory, consultative action planning workshops, specialist meetings with the broader communities, key community leaders and tourism establishments, operators and roleplayers of the GCBC, the potential for tourism to supplement the income for rural communities through biodiversity conservation. The planning and development of market related tourism attractions and provision of tourism products. The marketing and branding of the GCBC. The expected challenges for implementation and sustainability.

(6) GCBC Spatial Plans and Priority Areas. This document provided a suitable planning domain boundary. The collection of all available spatial data for the area was done. It created new spatial data where required. An analysis of the data to identify broad areas, which are important for biodiversity pattern and process. This project provided the GCBC Project Management Unit with a database of spatial data, maps and a technical report which describes the procedures followed and the data collected.

These documents will be available on the Internet and the GCBC website as soon as the website has become "live" during the implementation phase.

During the Planning phase we were also able to formalize the stakeholder involvement through a mutually agreed upon Steering committee constitution. The Steering committee is supported through the actions of various action or working groups. Partnerships and project development is two of the main building blocks for community participation in the GCBC planning phase - this aspect will be carried over into the implementation phase of the GCBC.

***Were any outputs unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?***

As this project was a new approach to conservation in South Africa we had to continuously ask ourselves if we are achieving the targets as planned initially. Where challenges were raised, adaptive approaches were used to overcome the challenges.

For example:

We grossly underestimate the time necessary to achieve meaningful public participation and collaboration during the planning phase. This was rectified through consultation with CEPF and an extension period to our grant's time-framework was provided.

## V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

***Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.***

No environmental or social safeguards were triggered.

## VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

***Describe any lessons learned during the various phases of the project. Consider lessons both for future projects, as well as for CEPF's future performance.***

(1) During October it became very clear that the PMU **need to plan with implementation / action in mind**. Stakeholders are tired (in this region anyway) to hear about new plans or to be put on the waiting list until the planning phase is completed. Stakeholders want to see results, they want to see their time and resources spend on attending meetings to be time and resources that initiate actions and not paper-products...

As a result of this the PMU made two decisions (1) Always plan for implementation. If a plan does not lead to an Action plan for implementation, there is no use for that plan and will usually result in valuable resources wasted. (2) Secondly, we will promote implementation, even during the Planning phase. This will take shape through project development, active stakeholder engagement and support to civil society for funding applications. Where possible no projects will be put on hold till after the planning phase, assistance to be provided with business plans, management plans, capacity building where needed, strategic direction and monitoring during implementation. Also use WCNCB staff and resources where possible and available.

Due to this very simple alignment of planning with implementation than rather planning and thereafter implementation – we received huge buy-in from stakeholders and a number of project applications are underway, that also support awareness raising of the Cederberg Corridor process.

(2) **Stakeholders were involved right from the start**. We initiated this project through an Action Planning Workshop over two days where we asked the stakeholders to assist us in the planning of a broad framework for the planning process. From that workshop an interim steering committee were elected that was formalized into a Steering committee as part of this period of the planning phase. Regular steering committee meetings where the coordinator and various consultants provide feedback on the



progress are held and where the steering committee has the opportunity to provide input and or assistance.

Steering committee members are invited and actively take part in all consultants appointed, all feedback sessions and reviews of the various projects under the planning phase. Further, regular meetings are scheduled, also specific focus group meetings where aspects of particular concern or importance are discussed and action plans drawn up to address relevant issues or aspects of importance. Steering committee members and roleplayers can also act as champions for the GCBC whereby they take the leading role in a project or aspect that needed to be done.

***Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/failure)***

(1) The Action Planning Workshop. This provided a draft strategy to focus on during the planning phase and it provided the opportunity for stakeholders to be involved from the start of this project.

(2) Secure good working relationships, trust and a focus approached between the Co-ordinator and the implementation agent - Western Cape Nature Conservation Board. This was achieved very successfully and it means that not only works a co-ordinator on this project, but an entire management team from the regional conservation authority. Because the regional conservation officials have taken ownership of this project - we were very successful in including a wide variety a partners and stakeholders from the onset.

(3) The dedicated, hands-on involvement of the Steering committee. The members represented a wide variety of important role-players in the region and each member acts as a champion for the GCBC process. Although there is still opportunity for improvement, the Steering committee is an integral part of this project.

(4) Some aspects of the logframe changed a little during the planning phase – but good communication and assistance from the CEPF Grant Director ensured an easy process.

(5) Our biggest failure during the design was the timeframe allocated. It put huge pressures on the Project Management Unit in keeping to deadlines as well as on the consultants appointed. Originally designed as an eight-month planning phase, it ended in an 11-month project and should have ideally being an 18-24 month process. Although all outputs were achieved (some might even say why the additional time then) we feel that the conceptualization and partnership formation should never be rushed.

***Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)***

(1) Transparent communications with all roleplayers were extremely important during this process. We also relied heavily on the support and assistance from C.A.P.E. and SKEP. To view a challenge from different perspectives and/or different point of views greatly assisted us in finding the solution or road to solutions.

(2) The facilitation of Conservation International and later on C.A.P.E. regards the megareserve forum and later called the protected areas forum was very valuable. Topics

relevant to the programmes were discussed and information was exchanged were appropriate. It also provided an opportunity to discuss challenges, alternative methods of planning and the different strategies followed for implementation.

(3) The GCBC was very fortunate with the quality of reports drafted by the various consultants and the meaningful engagement with and by stakeholders and roleplayers. Some people drove many, many kilometers to attend these workshops - providing us with a high quality and high degree of public support/confidence for/in these documents. All documents were subjected to a technical committee review (expert review on applicable topic under investigation) as well as by a stakeholder review (general stakeholders, roleplayers and interested parties).

(4) Our "land consolidation strategy" through partnerships and stewardship, and not to buy priority areas at all costs - enable us to build a relationship with the private landowners. Through this relationship, it was easier to involve landowners with the planning process, and thus achieving the output level targets.

(5) In a developing country like SA, funding for such conservation initiatives will always be difficult to obtain locally when it competes for funding with programmes such as housing, basic education and medical initiatives. Thus the opportunity to use the CEPF funds for this project was of utmost importance from a conservation perspective. We were able to do conservation planning and initiatives that would have otherwise never been possible. We have gathered support and momentum from civil society groups / stakeholders in this process and need to grow and keep momentum for and during the implementation phase.

## **VII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

(1) International exposure to other similar programmes / projects of a landscape scale would have provide a much needed insights / alternatives / considerations – as these are the first landscape-scale projects of their kind in South Africa. From a project perspective – this is something that we should consider as a fairly important aspect for our team members to stimulate growth / knowledge / lessons shared during the implementation phase.

(2) It was a great experience for the Project Management Unit to work in collaboration with the CEPF fund, and specifically with the Grant Director. The Grant Director was always available for assistants, questions and/or support. She visited us during the Planning phase and discussed various aspects that could be considered. We also received a visit from a CEPF monitoring and evaluation team. It was a good experience to exchange thoughts and discussions. The Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor is privileged to be part of the CEPF family of projects and want to extent our gratitude to the Grants Director – Nina Marshall and to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.

## VIII. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF aims to increase sharing of experiences, lessons learned and results among our grant recipients and the wider conservation and donor communities. One way we do this is by making the text of final project completion reports available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and by marketing these reports in our newsletter and other communications. Please indicate whether you would agree to publicly sharing your final project report with others in this way.

Yes

No

If yes, please also complete the following:

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