

# CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

## I. BASIC DATA

**Organization Legal Name:** Namibia Nature Foundation

**Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement):** *Aus Tourist Information Centre*

**Implementation Partners for this Project:** CEPF /SKEP

**Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement):** February 1, 2005 – July 31, 2008

**Date of Report (month/year):** 30 September 2008

## II. OPENING REMARKS

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

### **Aus Information Centre**

#### *Project Summary*

In partnership with the ACCT and the European Union (EU) fund the Aus Information Centre was built. During the construction of the Info Centre a proposal was submitted to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership fund and an amount of **US\$ 117, 350.00** was granted to the project for implementation of activities over a period of three years and seven months. The idea to investigate the possibility of the centre was conceived through the Aus visioning process, and a feasibility study was commissioned. The result of the feasibility study allowed for further funding to be solicited from the Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme (SKEP) Namibia for implementation. The feasibility study investigated the tourism potential of Aus under the categories of space, safety, excitement / adventure and freedom, and was found to adequately comply.

The Aus Information Centre was identified by stakeholders in the region as being a catalyst for renewed economic upliftment in the village. It was seen as an icon development for Aus to catalyse tourist interest and inspire entrepreneurial development.

The SWOT Analysis illustrated below summarises the context of the Aus Information Centre:

### Strengths

Location  
Attractions in area  
SKEP support  
Nature Investments partnership  
Tourist volume in area  
Culture and history  
Sperrgebiet  
Infrastructure – roads, telephone network

### Weaknesses

Capacity  
Building design (size, shape)  
Low local population numbers  
Aus status (Not official town)  
Long way from supply markets  
Lack of groundwater  
Not part of mainstream tourist routes

### Opportunities

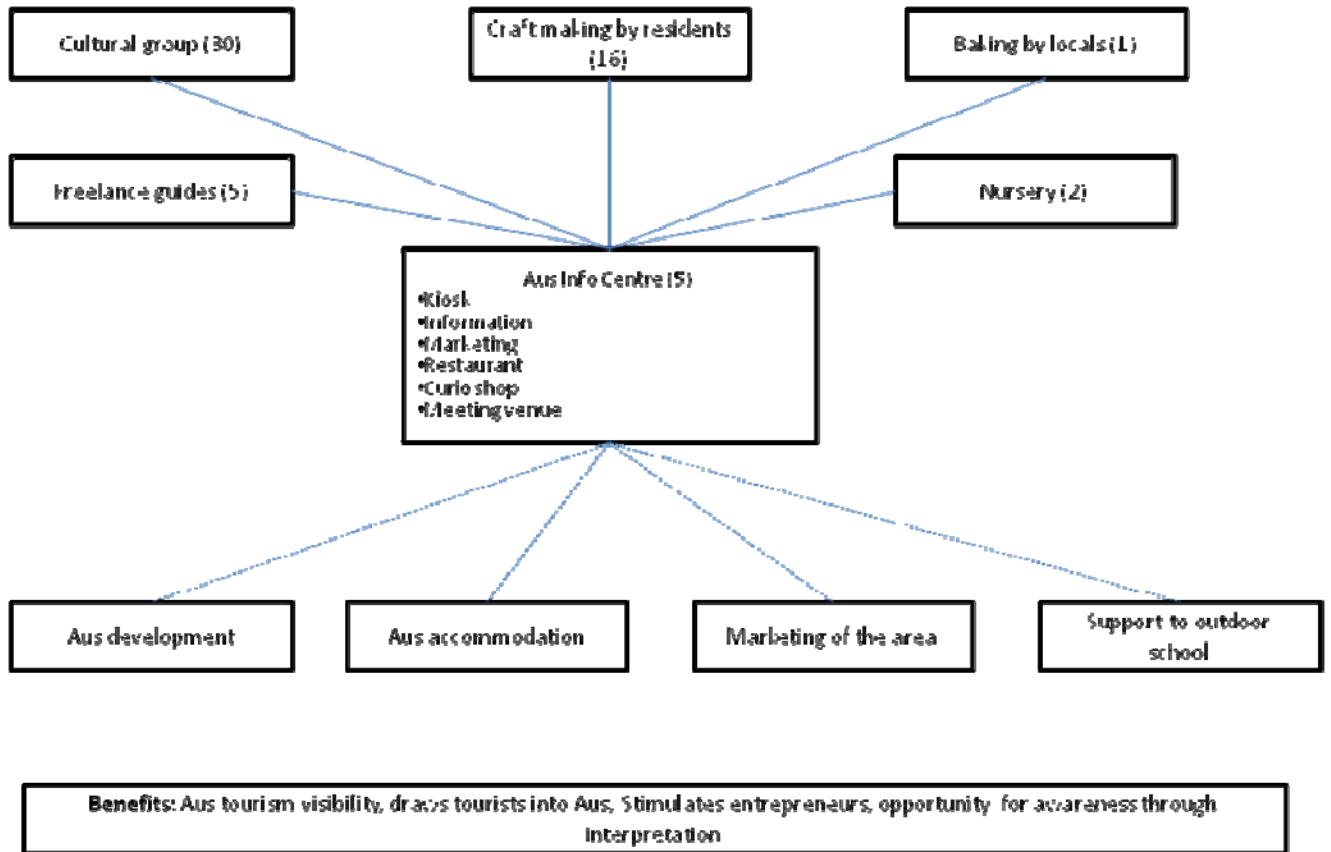
Many tourists attractions  
Sperrgebiet proclamation  
Researchers  
Townlands  
Outdoor school nearby  
Meeting of 3 biomes  
Entrepreneurial spirit  
Completion of railway-line  
Resurgence of other Aus tourist establishments  
Wild horses

### Threats

Political agendas  
Unemployment  
Global economics  
Resurgence of other Aus tourist establishments  
Delays in proclamation of SNP

### *Unique model*

The Aus information Centre functions as a tourist-friendly facility where information on the attractions of the region is made available. The centre provides a service of directing tourists to these attractions and markets tourist accommodation facilities in the area. This provides a base for local entrepreneurs to provide complementary services.



\*Numbers in brackets represents number of people employed

The diagram above illustrates the activity model for the centre.

Core activities, providing direct revenue for the centre are:

- Refreshment sales from the kiosk
- Sale of brochures and booklets with information on the area
- Restaurant sales
- Marketing fee for the promotion of Gondwana Desert Collection Sites

The centre has also attracted a number of independent entrepreneurs which benefit from the traffic to the centre,

### III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

**Project Purpose** To develop a tourist information centre in Aus that harbors strong linkages between conservation of the Aus town lands and the socio-economic upliftment of local residents.

#### Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	

<p>1. By December 2006 the level of understanding is increased among local residents about the ecological and economic value of the succulent Karoo.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved level of understanding among local residents is evident in their willingness to participate in sustainable practices</li> <li>• Increased Tourism activities in Aus have been well received by the local residents</li> </ul>
<p>2. By December 2006 the majority of local residents identify tourism related activities as being a viable livelihood option.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in tourism related activities have encouraged entrepreneurship among residents</li> </ul>
<p>3. By December 2006 an additional 20 local residents are involved with tourism related enterprises.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 persons worked as Coordinators at the Aus Info Centre,</li> <li>• 4 people are employed fulltime at the Info Centre,</li> <li>• a craft group was established and trained with 7 members and 4 school kids, making and selling handmade crafts to local communities and tourists</li> <li>• 2 cultural groups established for tourist entertainment and additional fundraising for community activities and awareness raising of the SKEP project and Aus township</li> <li>• The Nursery domes employ one person and three (3) volunteers</li> </ul>
<p>4. By December 2006 50% fewer local residents graze their livestock within ecologically sensitive areas.</p>	<p>Less than 35% farmers graze their livestock within the sensitive areas, with the help of the training they underwent.</p>

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

### **Aus Townlands visioning process**

The Aus Community Conservation Trust in partnership with the community of Aus (120 km east of Lüderitz) conducted a visioning process to plan for the effective management of the Aus Townlands (25.25 ha). The aims of the process were as follows:

- To develop consensus among residents for best practice future land-use and natural resource management
- To develop a vision and objectives for the Aus Townlands
- To identify a number of potential Natural Resource or tourism related enterprises for which viability studies can be carried out
- To develop an action plan for the implementation of the objectives, and
- To examine future institutional options for the management of the Aus Townlands.

#### *Process Outputs:*

The process produced the following outputs:

- Identification of Natural Resource assets and threats to their sustainability
- Solutions to the threats facing Natural Resources in the Aus area
- Proposals on institutional structures for Aus
- Proposals for economic growth, and promotion of the area
- A vision and objectives for the Aus Townlands

- An action plan to implement the objectives

*Outputs catalysed through the Process*

Implementation of the action plan enabled the following projects:

- Tourism study of the Aus Townlands – identified tourism potential and opportunities for tourism in the Townlands
- Draft management and Development Plan for the Aus Townlands – Provided management guidance and options following zonation of the Townlands. The document is grounded on sustainable development, and conservation of the succulent ecosystems within the Townlands, also promoting the value of the Succulent Karoo as a threatened and endangered system
- Capacity building within the Aus Community Conservation Trust (ACCT) through funded workshops on Local Level Monitoring, Planning and Meeting Procedures. SKEP Namibia enabled constant exposure to ACCT trustees to workshops and meetings, as well as dialogue with local and regional government, as well as private sector stakeholders
- Aus household survey to identify pressure on natural resources in the area
- Livestock production and management training for livestock farmers in the Aus Townlands
- The development of the Aus Information Centre concept (discussed in 4.11)
- Feasibility study for craft development on Aus

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

**Positive-** The Aus Townlands Visioning Process through this project was identified by a number of stakeholders as the catalyst for the upliftment of the Aus community. It enabled the community to connect with private sector companies operating in the area, forming an understanding of issues (biodiversity and other) from all perspectives. It was an important platform for introducing SKEP to the community, and raise awareness of the conservation value of the Succulent Karoo, and threats to it. It stimulated the development of a number of sustainable development projects, and created a community sense of hope and upliftment.

**Negative-** Government stakeholders at a regional level expressed their concern over communication between the process as regional government in the initial stages, causing a sense of mistrust. This was dispelled through subsequent engagement and evidence of constant collaboration, the regional governor expressing his appreciation and sense of ownership of the process.

The process serves as a model which can be used in other buffer communities to the Sperrgebiet National Park, as well as further afield. With this in mind, the Best Practice Guide on Community Visioning (through SKEP Namibia) was produced documenting methodology, successes and lessons learned.

*Additional Outputs catalysed through the Process*

- Upgrading of the Bahnhof Hotel and Service Station in anticipation of increased tourism traffic attracted to the Info Centre
- Increased occupancy in tourist facilities from marketing at the centre

- Increased awareness of attractions of Aus
- Increased awareness of the Succulent Karoo
- A cultural drama group
- Craft-making for sale in the centre
- Baking of goods for sale in the centre and catering for events in the centre
- The Aus community nursery, situated adjacent to the Aus info centre
- Aus Community Caring Hearts SKEP Bakery

#### IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

##### **Project Outputs:**

##### Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
<b>Output 1: Ecology of the Aus town lands and sensitive neighboring areas documented and promoted as an important biodiversity hotspot.</b>	
<i>1.1. By September 2005 baseline information on the Aus area is gathered and presented to ACCT by the appointed specialist.</i>	The following baseline information was collected by the appointed specialists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation survey (2005)</li> <li>• Household survey (2005)</li> <li>• Townlands Management Visioning workshop (2005)</li> <li>• Workshop for local farmers on livestock and grazing monitoring methods (2007)</li> <li>• Tourism Development Assessment (2006)</li> <li>• Management and Development Plan (2007)</li> </ul>
<i>1.2. By October 2005 baseline information is compiled into a resource map and brochure, and submitted to the ACCT by the appointed specialist.</i>	A Specialist was contracted to compile the above information into a Resource Map. The map however still needs to be published.
<b>Output 2: Tourist information centre developed and operational.</b>	
<i>2.1. By July 2005 the information centre is constructed, equipped, operational and officially open for business.</i>	The Info Centre was completed and opened for business in September 2006  By March 2008 the Aus info Centre was refurbished and is now currently attracting 15 % more tourists.
<i>2.2. By July 2005 display materials on the succulent Karoo is developed and installed into the information centre by the appointed specialist.</i>	The centre is currently equipped with various visitor information on Aus, its inhabitants, history and succulents
<i>2.3. By September 2005 botanical nature trails are identified, marked and mapped by an appointed specialist.</i>	Two succulent trails have been mapped out and are operational. Seven guides have been trained on a freelance basis.
<i>2.4. By April 2005 centre management options are analyzed and the preferred approach adopted by ACCT.</i>	The ACCT has decided to rent the building to local business people, bought 2 computers for internet and email services to the local people as well as

	tourists, for copy and fax use and computer training for the locals at no cost. Local craft groups sell their products at the Info Centre.
<b>Output 3: Three natural resource based enterprises developed (possibilities include food &amp; beverage kiosk, succulent nursery, craft, guiding).</b>	
<i>3.1. Feasibility studies undertaken to determine which business opportunities are potentially most viable. Four small business courses held for 8 local entrepreneurs by December 2006.</i>	Feasibility studies for business operations were undertaken and the following services are now fully up and running at the centre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A food and beverage kiosk</li> <li>• Succulent nursery</li> <li>• Craft</li> <li>• Guiding services</li> </ul>
<i>3.2. Twelve enterprise development training events undertaken involving 20 local residents by December 2006.</i>	The Trust conducted the following training activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Range and Product Management courses for local farmers.</li> <li>• 6 locals trained in the field of tour guides(level1&amp;2),</li> <li>• 18 locals got Small and Medium Enterprise training,</li> <li>• 14 locals got Project and Financial training in Keetmanshoop</li> <li>• Sustainable Development training was held in two phases</li> </ul>
<i>3.3. Ad hoc business advice / mentorship provided by project team to ten local entrepreneurs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SME - Entrepreneur training held on 21-25 Of May 2008 for 18 local residents</li> <li>• Proposal development courses were held as well as constant mentorship and advice from project and NNF staff.</li> <li>• Mentorship and craft production training was provided to Crafts and Art developers (Sida Hagu- meaning "our horses") were trained. These groups of 8 are currently providing curios to the Aus Info Center and Klein Aus Vista.</li> </ul>
<b>Output 4: Environmental planning undertaken and management of the Aus town lands and surrounding sensitive areas commenced.</b>	
<i>4.1. A land use / natural resource management plan for the Aus area developed by April 2006.</i>	A comprehensive Natural Resource Management Plan for the Aus Townlands was developed and endorsed by the Karas Regional Council and the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement.
<i>4.2. Two community resource monitors employed and trained by June 2006.</i>	The two community resource monitors have yet to be employed and trained. This activity is envisaged to be completed towards the end of 2008.
<i>4.3. Resource monitoring systems developed and implemented by June 2006.</i>	The resource monitoring systems are in the process of being developed and implemented. The delay in the endorsement of the Management and Development Plan had derailed this activity. It is to be completed by the end of 2008.
<b>Output 5: Institutional capacity of ACCT improved and cooperation with other relevant authorities undertaken.</b>	
<i>5.1. ACCT activities are integrated into the national CBNRM program by December 2006.</i>	ACCT activities that fall outside the Management and Development Plan were integrated in the National CBNRM Plan. Upon the completion of the plan, the remaining activities will be integrated for the following year.
<i>5.2. ACCT field coordinator is appointed by</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Benedictus Dors has been appointed</li> </ul>

March 2005.	<p>as the fulltime Field Coordinator in April 2008. He took over from Mr. Llewellyn Klukowski and Ms. Claudia Baisitse before him. All three are Aus Community members that were trained by a consultant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACCT field coordinator assistant was appointed by January 2008</li> </ul>
<b>5.3.</b> <i>By March 2005 a needs assessment is undertaken to determine training and institutional development needs of the Trustees.</i>	A needs assessment was done and training needs for the Trustees were identified and carried out.
<b>5.4.</b> <i>By December 2006 eight training events are undertaken with Trustees, as identified by the needs assessment.</i>	<p>4 trainings activities were conducted with the Trustees, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Development</li> <li>• Project Management,</li> <li>• Finance Management and</li> <li>• Facilitation skills trainings as well as how to conduct an AGM or meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>5.5.</b> <i>By June 2005 mechanisms are developed by ACCT to provide project information and general feedback to the community.</i>	<p>The following mechanisms were developed by the ACCT through this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual General Meetings as a mechanism to provide feedback on project activities to general public.</li> <li>• Traditional Authority Community meetings</li> <li>• Information dissemination on Notice Boards at the Info Centre to promote special events</li> </ul>
<b>Output 6: Political and Local Buy-in with Regional Council and local authorities for implementation of the AUS MP and endorsement of the Land uses Lease agreements</b>	
<b>6.1.</b> <i>Conduct Meeting to get Political Buy-in from Regional Council and the Governor for the Aus MP as well as getting the Lease Agreement and the Resettling of farmers to resettling farms endorsed by 9 Feb 2008</i>	<p>Regular meetings on local, constituency, regional and national levels were conducted in order to obtain political buy-in and endorsement of the Aus Management Plan, which was signed on 22 July 2008.</p> <p>The Minister of Lands and Resettlements with his high levels officials held a meeting on 23 July 2008 to discuss opportunities for resettlement of farmers out of the ecologically sensitive areas</p>

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

The project's major activities under the intended outputs have been implemented successfully. Although there are 2 or 3 activities which need implementation, all major areas were covered. A significant number of benefits for the community of Aus, and the conservation community have been established through the outputs of the Aus Information Centre Initiative, which in itself is a major achievement.

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

The appointment of two resource monitors and their training has not been realized. This was resulted by the fact that the Management and Development Plan wasn't in place at the time. The plan was endorse on the 22 July 2008, but it did not had a huge affect on



the progress of the overall impact of the project because all outputs were almost implemented.

## V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

There was a need to resettle farmers that lived inside and adjacent to ecologically sensitive areas in Aus. The Ministry of Lands and Resettlement's Policy on Land Reform served as a guide for this process to be facilitated smoothly. The Minister of Lands and Resettlement held a meeting with all the subsistence and communal farmers in Aus and its surrounding areas to sensitize them about his office and opportunities for farmers to get resettled to less sensitive areas.

## 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.***

As this was the first such Information Centre established in Namibia, it provides a number of useful lessons to help guide the establishment of other Information Centres.

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

Namibia Nature Foundation-NNF provided an enabling environment for implementation of project activities in terms of staff support and development, a conducive policy environment and a highly effective and relevant network of partners. Further on the NNF administers the Funds of the Info Centre and in the process ensuring speedy release of funds for implementation of activities and project support.

The institutional arrangement dictated that the Aus Community Conservation Trust, a charitable organization, acts as the umbrella body of proponents of the project ensured that local development of Aus was beneficial to the residents of the area.

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

The Project Coordinators and assistants are all residents of Aus, which made it easy for ensure community buy-in. The Aus Community Conservation Trust played an extremely active role in terms of implementation and stakeholder involvement. This lead to the success of implementing the project

## VII. 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.***

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Date Received	Notes
Namdeb	C	\$ 28,169.00	Oct 2006	Water Recycling Project
European Union	A	\$ 98,591.00	Jan 2005	Construction of Information Centre
Nature Investments	A	\$ 14,084.00	May 2006	Contribution to Succulent and Historical Information inside Info Centre
Karas Regional Council	C&D	\$ 1,800.00 (payment over 5 years to Regional Council at \$ 30,00/month)	Nov 2004  22 July 2008	Lease agreement for the 5 ha land for the Aus Info Centre  Further lease of 26,000 ha for management of the Aus Townlands
Namibia Nature Foundation	B	\$ 21,000.00	Mar 2006	Research and capacity building

**\*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.)*

**Provide details of whether this project will continue in the future and if so, how any additional funding already secured or fundraising plans will help ensure its sustainability.**

Submissions of proposals were submitted to:

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism's Support fund for a Community Lodge and campsite, and an application for a concession area adjacent to the Sperrgebiet  
The UNDP/GEF- Small Grants Programme, for climate change and firewood projects  
C.I- for Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Community Development and Conservation  
Skorpion Zinc Mine for expansion of the Info Centre and ACCT offices

## VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A significant number of benefits for the community of Aus, and the conservation community have been established through the Aus Information Centre Initiative. Further investment in the centre, to increase its capacity for visitor numbers, and adding the Science on Safari aspect can be expected to produce further benefits, and add to the sustainability of the centre.

Capacity building among staff and support activities to the centre needs to be undertaken. Business capacity remains low, although improvements are visible.

## VIII. 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](http://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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