

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa
Project Title:	Strengthening Sustainable Land Use Practices, Management and Local Economic Opportunities in the Ntsubane Forest Complex
Date of Report:	30 September 2015
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CEPF Region: Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany

Strategic Direction: 2.Conservation and land use in 22 KBAs

Grant Amount: \$80,000

Project Dates: April 2014 – July 2015

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

<p>Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF)</p> <p>State steward for indigenous forest resources. Active partner through CEPF grant # 59591 (2012 – 2013) and active partner through this grant. DAFF support included strategic and operational input from the National Office, Provincial Office, Estate Managers and Forest guards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engaged in concept development, project design and project implementation - engaged in selection of invasive alien plant eradication sites - collaborated in development of Invasive Alien Plant and Restoration Strategic Corridor Forest Management Plan - collaborated in Village Based Participatory Land Use Plan (forest mapping) - collaborated in the management of the Community Works Programme invasive plant clearing teams - collaborated in the revitalisation of the Dedeni Participatory Forest Management Committee (PFMC) - participated in workshops and training, including leading key capacity building sessions on forest utilization for livelihoods, forest governance and Participatory Forest Management Committees - participated in multi-stakeholder project events such as the arbour day forest celebration, school events and led certain activities related to forestry education at the events - strategized with WESSA on planning and proposal development for expansion of work undertaken as part of CEPF grant - liaising with WESSA as it relates to strategic planning for protected areas of forest resources - collaborating with WESSA on NRM Working For Forests proposal submission for Ntsubane
<p>Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs & Tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provided compliance support in response to poaching concerns in Ntsubane - overseeing agent to school competitions entered by forest schools as part of this project
<p>Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA)</p> <p>Mandated by the state for the expansion of protected areas in the Eastern Cape Province and active partner through CEPF # 59591 and this project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engaged in development of concept note and provided strategic input through the

<p>implementation of this initiative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supported rationale for protected areas and assisted in identifying areas for protected area expansion - provided foundation and inroads for effective community liaison through the track record of the Wild Coast Project - enhanced mapping activities by sharing past work undertaken by the Wild Coast Project
<p>Wild Coast Farm and Forest Organization (WCFFO) [local NGO]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engaged in development of concept note - driver in the establishment of the Wild Coast Forest Users Association which is inclusive of the craft user group which this project worked with - WCFFO have a strong track record with the affected communities and this has contributed to the development of trust relationships between these communities and the project team as well as providing an established foundation from which the project could drive multi-stakeholder collaboration towards improved forest management and sustainable livelihoods in the Ntsubane Forest Complex - supported work related to tree nurseries and forest restoration
<p>Wild Coast Forest Users Association (WCFUA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provided strategic direction to the development of the concept note - members facilitated and supported events at local schools, arbor day ceremonies and stakeholder engagement sessions - members co-facilitated workshops on Community Based Natural Resource Management, species utilization for craft or other uses and provided inroads for effective community liaison
<p>Traditional Leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provided strategic direction to the development of the concept note through participation in previous funding cycle, CEPF grant # 59591 - provided strategic direction and support to the project for the formation of PFMCs - utilized their influence over communities to support the project objectives - utilized their influence in government to facilitate commitment to project deliverables
<p>Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support to the project as co-managers of the Community Works teams involved in alien invasive plant clearing and forest restoration
<p>Department of Basic Education [Provincial and District Offices]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - endorsed the international Eco-Schools Programme which was expanded to influence five forest schools of the Ntsubane forest complex - endorsed the training of teachers from four forest schools as part of this project
<p>FEE Eco-Schools Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provided the framework for training of teachers from four forest schools as part of this project - provided the framework for support to five forest schools of the Ntsubane forest complex
<p>Local Economic Development Agency – Port St Johns & Ingquza Hill Local Municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support to the identification and development of economic opportunities for forest communities - facilitated market opportunities for the crafters

Conservation Impacts

Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

This project contributed to CEPF Strategic Direction 2 – Expand conservation areas and improve land use in 19 key biodiversity areas through innovative approaches. 2.1 Develop and implement innovative approaches to expand private and communal protected areas, particularly for habitats underrepresented in the current protected area network.

The project is an integrated landscapes approach that worked in collaboration with forest communities and key stakeholders to achieve social and ecological benefits for the Ntsubane environment. It contributed to Strategic direction 2 of the CEPF ecosystem profile –

1. Partnered with government funded jobs programme to create long term employment directed to conservation objectives in the MPAH
 - a. Invasive alien plant clearing in three priority forest sites
 - b. Forest restoration of three priority sites, inclusive of reforestation specifically targeting high demand, vulnerable tree species
2. Advanced appropriate environmental awareness, education and training in forest schools
 - a. Teacher training as part of the international FEE Eco-Schools Programme
 - b. Five forest school conservation action projects
3. Mediated stakeholder engagement for enhanced collaboration towards effective natural resource management
 - a. Enhanced stakeholder buy-in for the conservation of natural resources
 - b. Enhanced long term partnerships towards forest conservation and improved management of forest resources
4. Enhanced community-centered conservation of natural resources through a deliberative Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) approach
 - a. Facilitated a more enabled environment for sustainable livelihoods for forest user groups
 - b. Facilitated enterprise development for sustainable livelihoods of forest communities
5. Enhanced co-management capabilities for the protection and sustainable utilization of natural resources
 - a. Conservation orientated human capacity development across stakeholder groups
 - b. Developed and introduced (as pilot) forest management tools for co-management through participatory processes and provided a platform for indigenous knowledge insights to enhance management tools
 - c. Mapped priority forest corridors for heightened conservation attention
 - d. Developed strategic forest use planning and management document for improved co-management of natural forest resources and the protection of genetic diversity
 - e. Revitalized Participatory Forest Management Committee (PFMC)
6. Contributed towards elevating the profile of the forest complex to a high priority conservation status within National government's protected area strategy
7. Engaged in high level discussions towards a strategy for the proclamation of the forest complex as a Special Forest Reserve

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.

Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal):

The long term impact of the project (20 year period) will result in collaboratively managed biodiversity conservation areas with improved stakeholder participation processes and founded on an increased conservation awareness and biodiversity value return from all stakeholders through:

Restoration of 20,000 hectares of degraded forest sites will be rehabilitated and become accessible to community users under the management of conservation agreements.

Increased revenue and local economic growth for approximately five hundred forest users through green economies initiatives, craft development and other livelihoods.

Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:

The project has developed and piloted initial tools and mechanism for collaborative management. Parallel to this, the project is working with the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) , Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) and Eastern Cape Parks, Tourism Agency (ECPTA) and traditional leadership structures to develop the strategy for the proclamation of the Ntsubane forest complex as a Special Forest Reserve which could span an area in excess of 20 000 hectares. This is a sensitive initiative due to locality (former Homeland State), the role of the House of Traditional Leaders, socio-economic challenges and the negative legacy associated to the proclamation of protected areas. It is agreed that the strategy must take cognizance of the need for community integration and collaborative management. It is recognized that the success of a protected environment in isolation of collaborative management is highly unlikely. Furthermore, current capacity across stakeholder groups is lacking for effective co-management and therefore the work piloted and implemented under the CEPF is to be up-scaled across the forest complex.

To this end, WESSA, together with relevant high level stakeholder input is developing for submission proposals for an integrated landscape investment in excess of \$ 3 500 000 and to be effected across the entire forest complex.

In a meeting held with DAFF National representatives on the 19 August 2015 it was confirmed that Ntsubane is in South Africa's top five priorities for forest conservation and proclamation. It was further suggested that it sits at the top end of the five sites identified. See Appendix 1a and Appendix 1b for minutes and details regarding DAFF liaison for Ntsubane conservation and strategic planning.

Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal):

- 56 - 66 hectares of forest cleared of Invasive Alien Plants
- 36 project beneficiaries trained in IAP clearance and forest rehabilitation skills
- 36 project beneficiaries employed by the Community Works Programme for 10 days per month on an indefinite contract
- 56 - 66 hectares under improved forest management
- 10 forest users improved their livelihood opportunities and income
- 1000 youth have improved their capability to undertake local conservation biodiversity projects

Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:

- IAP clearing for project duration at 40 hectares
- 36 project beneficiaries trained in IAP clearance and forest rehabilitation skills
- 36 project beneficiaries employed by the Community Works Programme for 8 days per month on an indefinite contract
- Quantifying actual hectares under improved management is difficult at this point as the progress with Participatory Forest Management Committees, the elevated status of Ntsubane for conservation, the high level government attention to the complex and the repercussions of all of these factors to management at the local and provincial level for the complex falls outside the scope of this project. However, the project success to improved forest management exceeds the conservative figure of 66 hectares presented to the CEPF at the start of the project
- 25 forest users improved their livelihood opportunities and income

- 1000 youth improved their capability to undertake local conservation biodiversity projects

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: Community-centered conservation practices are, although in their infancy, starting to positively affect close to 5000 hectares at the Dedeni pilot site. Initial mapping has identified high value potential protected areas, and positive discussion towards protected area status at Dedeni continues between key stakeholders. Beyond this the project is working with DAFF towards proclamation of the complex as a Special Forest Reserve (see Actual Progress towards Long-term Impacts at Completion above).

Species Conserved: The Pondoland Centre of Plant Endemism is one of the smallest and most vulnerable of the 235 internationally recognized endemic centers and as such the project has not worked to protect individual species but protect the ecological integrity through an eco-systems based approach. Within this biologically diverse eco-system, forest communities over utilize numerous species due to livelihood dependency (see Table 1 below), large scale poaching, particularly for medical plants and bush meat is rife and forest management is challenged by capacity constraints, and at times political will. Affecting this requires an integrated systems approach for the protection of an eco-system of which the species most relevant to this project are listed below. Although there is an indirect effect on the conservation of forest fauna, this was beyond the immediate scope of this project and requires further investment and investigation for conservation purposes.

* Table 1 – Target forest species for conservation & utilization

Xhosa & Common name	Taxon	Preferred use
Umnga/Thorn Tree	Acacia natalia	Fuel
Umquma/Wild olive	Olea europa var. Africana	Fuel
Umxgam/Boerboon	Schotia species	Fuel
Isipingo/Droogies	Scutia myrtina	Fuel
Black ironwood	Olea capensis	Fuel
White stinkwood	Celtis Africana	Fuel
Ublekwan/Black Wattle	Acacia mearnsii	Fuel
Ungonothi/	Flagellaria guineensis	Basket weaving
Imizi/Laundry grass (sedge)	Cyperus textilis	Basket weaving
Umtati / Sneezewood	Ptaeroxolon obliquum	Residential, Fuel
Umsimbeet	Mellittia grandis	Residential & stick making
Umduli/Coastal silveroak	Brachyleana discolour	Stick making
Umthombothi/Tambotie	Spirostachys Africana	Stick making
Ithambo/Black Witch Hazel	Trichocladus crinitus	Stick making
Umkhiwane/Wild fig	Ficus sur	Wood carving
Umlungu Mabele/Knob wood	Zanthoxylum capensis	Wood carving
Umthunzi wehlati/Red Milkwood	Mimusops caffra	Wood carving
Umgubhe	Rothmania Globosa	Wood carving
Umvumvu	Celtis Africana	Wood carving

*Source - A Socio-ecological Review of the Pressures on the Ntsubane Forest Complex, WESSA, 2013, p 17)

Corridors Created: The purpose of this project was to begin the process of corridor identification through a mapping strategy. Despite the importance of Ntsubane as a biodiversity hotspot, there is currently very little information from which to work. Experts within the project team undertook two mapping exercises to develop tools towards corridor conservation - detailed participatory mapping of the Dedeni pilot site; broad based complex mapping for corridor identification and probable threat assessment. This work is informing the strategic planning for IAP clearing and restoration investment through further conservation initiatives such as the NRM Working for Forests – Jobs for Forests Project and the Darwin Initiative. WESSA have submitted proposals to both entities and is awaiting the outcomes of these applications.

Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

	Challenge	Success
Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stakeholder mistrust - stakeholder fatigue - diversity of agendas (and hidden agendas) across stakeholder groups - remote environment and logistically challenging working environment - low literacy levels - political conflict between government stakeholders and traditional leadership structures - stakeholder reliability to participate according to schedules was low, especially in initial stages of project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deliberative, interventionist approach found traction through the project period - enhanced communication mechanisms between stakeholders founded on growing trust relationships through the project period - identification of “champions” within stakeholder groups who facilitated more effective engagement opportunities - high level commitment and involvement by National Department of Forestry to the project, and specifically the collaboration towards long term objectives, was achieved
Political will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - resistance to project objectives experienced at local government level, perhaps due to misconception that the project brought added work or added responsibilities to the table - local level government disregard for traditional authorities resulted in challenge for authentic engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - high level buy-in to project resulted in improved political will at provincial and, more importantly, local level government role players
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of clarity as to methodology behind implementation of government Community Works Programme (CWP) - lack of capacity within the CWP implementation agencies - Poor communication from CWP implementers - inefficiencies in the implementation of CWP by implementing agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - opportunity to partner DAFF on the Ntsubane Special Forest Reserve proclamation process going forward
IAP Clearing & forest restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clearing teams poorly managed by CWP implementing agents led to frustrations on the ground - beneficiary turnover high in CWP - off track clearing target deliverables due to under staffing and poor management was beyond project control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - three high priority forest sites which contribute to healthy corridors under ongoing clearing and restoration strategy - 40 hectares of priority forest areas cleared of invasive alien plants and effective restoration techniques being implemented
Forest management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - critical government management challenges due to capacity constraints including insufficient budget, inadequate staffing and, at times, insufficient will - communities and traditional leadership structures disempowered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - progress at national level for heightened attention to management, specifically co-management, of Ntsubane - support from the House of Traditional leaders for co-management strategy for Ntsubane

	<p>in terms of forest resource management responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - large scale poaching inadequately addressed due to fear and management constraints - inadequate forest data and forest maps for forestry management requirements - stakeholder conflict over resource access and utilization requirements 	<p>southern forests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positive stakeholder deliberations to reach co-management agenda - formation of Participatory Forest Management Committee (PFMC) for Dedeni (pilot project for co-management) - development of co-management capacity, relevant maps and tools for more effective management strategies - development of PFMC roadmap to drive fair and equitable resource sharing and more effective management of natural resources
Awareness, Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - remote area with poor infrastructure - logistical challenge for implementation of awareness, education and training (AET) to take place - skeptical community audience in terms of the promotion of conservation objectives - identification of champions across AET target audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deliberative, interventionist approach gained traction from which expansive social learning emerged - creating safe environments where indigenous knowledge could inform expansive social learning processes - reaching 1000 school learners through environmental education - teachers implementing innovative environmental education lessons and projects from their training through the project
Enterprise development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - remote area for enterprise development initiatives - disconnect between producer and end user - low business skill sets for small/commercial enterprises - existing exploitative practices at social, economic and environmental levels - “locked in” mind sets as to what works in terms of craft products - distance from producer to end user and bulky product (such as baskets) affects viability - access to market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25 beneficiaries advanced their livelihoods through enterprise development - powerful collaborative relationship with Wild Coast Forest Users Association, and specifically the formalization of the Wild Coast Crafters - integrated, strategic capacity development of crafters to address challenges (highlighted left) - co-funding to enterprise development advanced project objectives to beyond stated deliverables - collaborated with forest expert Dr Derek Berliner to identify and undertake preliminary studies for alternative livelihoods, such as non-timber forest products like tree seed oils and super foods, for forest dependent communities
Maintaining momentum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short term project funding cycles have the potential to jeopardize long term objectives as maintaining momentum is critical to trust relationships, tangible benefit sharing for stakeholder groups, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - effectively using CEPF to raise the profile of the Ntsubane forest complex for enhanced conservation attention - using CEPF as catalytic to securing further long term funding

	avoiding repetition and minimizing the risk of stakeholder fatigue.	
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Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

N/A

Project Components

Project Components: *Please report on results by project component. Reporting should reference specific products/deliverables from the approved project design and other relevant information.*

Introduction

This section describes the activities undertaken during the one year project period, April 2014 to March 2015. A further no-cost extension to continue with the project until July 2015 was successfully motivated to CEPF as the project had secured exchange rate gains with the project budget being cost at ZAR9 to \$1, however, the fluctuating exchange rate averaged at ZAR10.98 to \$1 for the project duration.

It is important for this report to be considered as the follow on project to CEPF grant 59591 implemented by WESSA in the Ntsubane forest. This project capitalized on 59591 and reflections, lessons learned and outcomes may, at times take into consideration the influence and effect of 59591.

The project was developed in collaboration with communities, traditional leaders and key stakeholders who were participants and recipients to 59591 project investment. This has therefore governed the methodology by which CEPF grant 64008 was implemented.

To understand this foundation and the subsequent 64008 report below, an excerpt from the final CEPF 59591 report is copied below:

*The mediation of learning and empowerment of the affected communities and stakeholders became the main focus of this intervention to collaboratively enhance the targeted forest communities and stakeholders' capability for improved management and wise use of natural resources as well as the identification of potential sustainable livelihood opportunities. In the context of this project, it was important to understand **sustainable livelihoods** and its relation to socio-ecological integrity, particularly in relation to rural communities whose livelihoods heavily depend on their local forest ecosystems; as the following: "a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base" (DFID, 1996).*

*Another key aspect taken into consideration in the methodology designed for this project was the concept of supporting **human development** through improving ecosystems services associated to local forests by enlarging the 'wise' choices for all beneficiaries who have access to this natural capital or resource. These choices refer to the principles in which people decide to make use of fire wood, access building materials, medicinal plants, seek 'green' employment, well-being, associated cultural rituals, etc. in a way that the local forest ecological condition would be maintained or improved through appropriated practices and mechanisms. Therefore, the project methodology, methods and activities developed for this purpose adopted a people-centered*

approach by integrating participatory processes as a means to develop local capability and empowerment towards the wise use and management of forest resources.

This project, 'a collaborative approach to Ntsubane Forest Complex Management & Sustainable Livelihoods', provided an opportunity for particularly local forest communities to identify and voice what was important to them, what they aspired to, and how they felt they could get there. In other words, discussions and deliberations took place in many occasions between community members themselves; communities and local leadership; communities and government agencies; and among all stakeholders at both local and forest complex level. These took place through coordinated workshops at village level, cluster level and forest complex level.

The learning interactions facilitated by WESSA, together with the Wild Coast Project and the Wild Coast Forest and Farmers Association, provided the space for initiating an **expansive social learning**¹ processes supported by "Change Laboratory Workshops" or "Interventionist Workshops"; information sessions on for instance forest legislation; involvement in practical activities such as Invasive Alien Plant (IAP) clearance and forest restoration; horizontal skills transfer (e.g. craft development interchanges); etc.

It is important to note that expansive learning "involves the creation of new **knowledge** and new **practices** for a newly emerging activity; that is, learning embedded in and constitutive of qualitative transformation of the entire activity system. Such transformation may be triggered by the introduction of a new technology or set of regulations" (Daniels, 2008, p.126). This means that expanded forest management and wise use capability could be unlocked by, for instance, improving community access to a better managed and distributed forest harvesting permits which would allow for a more controlled way of having access and monitor forest products for craft production, etc. Coupled to this, Social learning is often referred to as "a way of organizing individuals, organisations, communities and networks, that is particularly fruitful in creating a more reflexive, resilient, flexible, adaptive and, indeed, ultimately, more sustainable world" (Wals, 2007, p.38). These theories of learning combined, *Expansive Social Learning*, lend themselves to engagement in participatory processes towards the co-construction of valuable new knowledge practices over time through a series of intervention workshops based on the expansive learning cycle. (CEPF 59591 Final Report, Conde.L, 31 January 2014, pp 10 – 12)

Component 1 Planned (as stated in the approved proposal):

Invasive Alien Plant clearance and restoration of indigenous forest (3 sites)

Component 1 Actual at Completion:

The South African government is highly motivated to reduce unemployment and has developed various programmes to stimulate employment opportunities. These include the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) which drives the Natural Resource Management budget through the Working for Programmes, managed by Department of Environmental Affairs, and the Community Works Programme (CWP) which is managed by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

¹ "Subjects are placed in a situation in which a problem is identified and provided with tools with which to solve the problem or means by which they can construct tools to solve the problem" (Daniels, 2008, p.131). However, the approach to this project is not to initiate the process by emphasising problems in relation to unsustainable natural resource management and use but rather to mediate a participatory vision building exercise of self-evaluation and reflexion where the mediation becomes the intervention from which positive change could evolve.

As part of this CEPF project objective, WESSA, together with other stakeholders, recognized the value for stakeholders in Ntsubane to collaborate and partner for the achievement of socio-ecological gain by maximizing the benefit of the jobs fund mandate. To this end, WESSA opened discussions with the Small Projects Foundation in 2013 as part of CEPF grant 59591 to discuss the migration of CEPF invasive plant clearing teams to the CWP. The CWP model differs from the EPWP model in that (1) it is not a three year fixed term contract for beneficiaries but continues as ongoing employment, and (2) it is part time employment at 8 days per month which allows beneficiaries to the CWP to maintain alternative livelihoods they may have such as household food gardens, the production of traditional craft or other.

By the time of writing the CEPF 64008 proposal, WESSA were at an advanced stage of negotiations with the Small Projects Foundation for the migration of project staff. However, Small Projects Foundation did not retain their CWP contract and by the start of 64008, WESSA were engaging new implementing agents of CWP in Ntsubane, namely Dhladhla Foundation and Teba Foundation. Although early engagement with Dhladhla and Teba was productive and commitment to collaborate towards a working partnership for the project sites of Dedeni, Khaleni and Goso were shared, it became evident early on that both implementing agents were faced with capacity constraints for the delivery of their contracts which in turn impeded on WESSA's operational schedule.

The medium to long term value of the partnerships cannot be underestimated and the project worked to support capacity deficits within the implementing agencies. Although some progress and successes should be acknowledged in this regard, it cannot be said that WESSA is confident that the agencies have the true will nor the competencies to maintain the necessary level of management and implementation of the CWP teams to optimize invasive clearing and forest restoration. Through the CEPF project period, WESSA enjoyed a fair amount of autonomy over the teams at the WESSA CEPF sites as it related to implementing the site management plans, day to day beneficiary training and management, herbicide management and safe utilization practices and capacity building of team members. Unfortunately Dhladhla and Teba did not actively embrace sustained efforts to drive closer relationships with the CEPF teams, but seemed content to rather shift operational responsibilities to WESSA where possible.

Some of the negative implications and challenges experienced through the partnership period included agency payroll challenges with beneficiaries not being paid on time which resulted in reduced work output by beneficiaries; shortfall in beneficiary numbers on site were not rapidly attended to; supervisor conflicts with teams led to low morale; failure of agencies to show recognition or appreciation for on the ground eradication successes by teams led to poor motivation. To mitigate against the negative influence resulting from capability concerns within the implementing agencies, WESSA (1) lobbied for the appointment of a supervisory position within CWP who was then seconded to WESSA for more effective management of teams on the ground; (2) applied pressure to bring about beneficiary appointments where shortfalls existed and (3) facilitated, on behalf of the beneficiaries, issues related to payroll concerns and service delivery concerns from implementers.

WESSA has raised these concerns with government and other stakeholders, including the House of Traditional Leaders through the Royal House of Bhakilali, and has drawn from the lessons learned to re-evaluate and revise how partnerships and implementation of government jobs funds can be improved for natural resource management. These lessons and revisions form part of the current strategy for funding which WESSA is driving with other stakeholders to both national and international funders.

Specific Activities as per log frame:

1.1 IAP clearance and restoration of indigenous forest:

- Stakeholder orientation: on acknowledgement of CEPF 64008 inception activities were undertaken to orientate stakeholders and secure the necessary infrastructure for project delivery.

- Beneficiary migration to CWP contracts: The project engaged with the Community Works Programme to initiate the signing on of 36 beneficiaries for ongoing CWP contracts. These beneficiaries had participated in 59591 on project contracts. Immediate challenges to this proposed partnership are outlined above.
- Clearing of 40 hectares over the three priority sites for the project accomplished
- Clearing continues under CWP
- WESSA has submitted proposals to the Darwin Initiative and Natural Resource Management jobs fund for increased investment into IAP clearing, amongst other objectives, across the complex

Appendix table of supporting documentation to 1.1

Appendix 2_ site verifications for CWP use
 Appendix 3_ training registers
 Appendix 4a to 4d_ Dennis Taylor training
 Appendix 5a to 5c_ PPE Issue Forms
 Appendix 21 to 28 for further supporting documentation (meetings and engagement)

1.2 IAP Restoration and Site Management Plans (1 year):

- Site visits with relevant stakeholders, including DAFF and community representatives, together with expert support from Dr Derek Berliner took place to identify potential sites
- Deliberative process for selection included consideration of (1) proximity to villages from which beneficiaries are selected, (2) contribution of work to corridor and eco-tone (habitat transition zones) enhancement, (3) suitable infrastructure for the management of herbicides.
- Short term management plans developed and verified for clearing and restoration activities
 - area mapped (corridors and eco-tones under threat prioritized)
 - invasive alien plants identified
 - herbicide requirements defined
 - training requirements outlined
 - procurement lists developed
 - storage requirements defined
 - signage requirements defined
- One year management plans maintained a degree of flexibility in order to accommodate unforeseen considerations which were presented by DAFF for the Khaleni site and at Dedeni to respond to rapid infestation caused by fire.
- One year management plans were incorporated into the participatory land use planning exercise and lessons learned through the process were considered in the development of the longer term management plans for the conservation of priority corridors.

Appendix 2 (Overview Mapping and site descriptions)
 Appendix 21 to 28 for further supporting documentation (meetings and engagements)

1.3 IAP and Restoration Strategic Corridor Forest Management Planning (5 year)

[* To be read in conjunction with Component 2 below]

The current status of management of the Ntsubane forest complex lacks coordination, is challenged by huge capacity constraints at government and community level, disempowers community forest user groups, is exclusive of participatory processes, undermines indigenous knowledge systems and is lacking relevant forest data for effective decision making processes.

The project continued to build on expansive social learning processes initiated as part of CEPF 59591 in order to drive a participatory process towards an effective co-management strategy for Ntsubane. Dr Derek Berliner of Eco-Logic was appointed by WESSA as the lead agent to undertake the development of the management plan and land use plan. While developing the

specific terms of reference for this, it was agreed to use language more specific to our objectives for the project and the word “forest” was inserted as part of the Participatory Land Use Planning to read Participatory Forest Use Planning, which is inclusive of IAP identification, coordinating clearing and forest restoration, establishing biodiversity corridors and looking to enhance sustainable livelihood opportunities. This semantic amendment prevented the project being drawn into stakeholder concerns which, although valid, fall outside the scope of this project. These concerns include, but are not limited to infrastructure for bulk water supply, upgraded or paved roadways, formal housing development plans etc.

Throughout the mapping process, the project encouraged participation of stakeholders, took cognizance of indigenous knowledge systems and liaised with forest user groups, state forestry departments and traditional leaders. Progress reporting and feedback across the stakeholder groups was undertaken to (1) ensure inclusivity of stakeholders, (2) maintain open sharing of information related to our work and (3) allow the mapping to be appreciated and understood as one of the interventions towards an improved understanding of the forest environment and the subsequent contribution to co-management capacity.

The management plan, see Appendix 9, has been shared with all stakeholders and is being referred to and utilized as a working document to stimulate discussions towards a way forward for Ntsubane. Currently, Ntsubane is very topical and is now one of South Africa’s top five DAFF identified priority forests for conservation and social development investments. The outputs from this project therefore provide the “way forward” deliberation with a number of tools from which stakeholders derive benefit. The project is engaging with DAFF National Scientific Services to support the motivation for Special Forest Reserve status for Ntsubane where the mapping undertaken for this project (1) highlights the priority corridors for immediate conservation efforts and (2) identifies and presents methodology towards co-management benefit for sustainable forest management.

Appendix 6_ Funding Mission Statement_ WESSA Ecologic

Appendix 7_ ToR Dr Berliner

Appendix 8_ Participatory mapping inception report

Appendix 9_ Forest Conservation Ntsubane Dedeni Forest mapping report _WESSA

Appendix 21 – 28_ meetings and engagements

Component 2 Planned (as stated in the approved proposal):

Participatory Land Use Planning (1 pilot site)

Component 2 Actual at Completion:

Component 2 of the project involved two specific activities, namely (1) develop a forest zonation map as a planning and management tool, and (2) build appropriate capacity to utilize the tool for planning and management purposes.

As outlined above, it was decided by the project team during the development of the Terms of Reference for this deliverable to reconsider a semantic amendment for the purpose of maintaining the project focus which substituted the word “Land” with “Forest” in communications with stakeholders. The fundamental output did not change as a result of this, but rather allowed the intended project output to remain the focus of deliberations, workshops, ground-truthing activities, stakeholder engagements and report backs.

Throughout this land use planning and participatory mapping initiative, the project worked on the second activity which was to seed and develop co-management capabilities across the stakeholder groups. It was important to enhance understanding of participatory management principles and re-focus stakeholder attention on the opportunities afforded by the Participatory

Forest Management Committee model which had failed to gain traction in Ntsubane since it was first tabled close to 10 years ago. These co-operations, structures and competencies are imperative to achieving the medium and long term goals of community-centered, sustainably managed forest conservation in the Ntsubane complex.

The rural forest village of Dedeni was selected as the pilot site for this exercise. Contributing factors to its selection included – (1) a willing community as per our experiences through CEPF 59591 and ground work undertaken in preparation for CEPF 64008; (2) active community members within the Wild Coast Forest Users Association; (3) positive relationship with traditional leaders; (4) degree of political will for exploration of initiative from DAFF Estate manager overseeing Dedeni forests; (5) community were recipients to development investments beyond CEPF.

To appreciate and understand the natural resource area of Dedeni, an intensive participatory exercise was undertaken by the project. Dr Derek Berliner was appointed as lead agent to develop the Land Use Plan and details of the Terms of Reference for Dr Berliner are presented in Appendix 7, with specific reference to Objective 1: GIS mapping of one forest cluster identified through the participatory land use planning exercise – Dedeni Community Resource Use area.

This component cannot be read, interpreted or evaluated in isolation to Component 1.3 above and with recognition that the social learning processes incorporated into the participatory forest use planning were of influence to work undertaken in Component 3, 4 and 5.

Participation in socio-ecological development processes, especially where it relates to governance, user rights and the perceived threat posed by conservation is a difficult and sensitive space within the Ntsubane forest complex. The historical legacy attached to natural resource utilization, community ownership rights, the disempowerment of user groups, modified forest boundaries, stakeholder mis-trust, conflicting needs, stakeholder fatigue to engage and previously raised expectations in communities as to what projects will deliver were realities with which the participatory mapping exercise had to consider.

The methodology and purpose of the participatory Land Use Planning process to understanding forest use, and its subsequent contribution to forest management, notably as a co-management tool, for the Dedeni area was critically workshopped by the project team and Dr Berliner with the Dedeni community, leadership structures and other key stakeholders. The project recognized the rich indigenous knowledge of the affected community and made a specific effort to build trust relationships with the user groups to create an appropriate environment for transformative social learning processes. Participants engaged in aspects that included the notion of resource ownership, utilization rights and restrictions, governance concerns, outsider impacts through poaching or other, livelihood opportunities and traditional leadership's geographical foot-printing of natural resources.

To achieve the acceptance of user groups and optimize their input and contributions, the project dedicated 5 months of fieldwork to the participatory land use planning exercise. Dr Berliner, together with the project team, specifically project facilitator Sithokozile Yalo and project assistant Lunga Mhlonyane, frequented the Dedeni area to workshop stakeholders. These “workshops”, or more accurately, engagements and knowledge sharing, typically took place in the village environment, and often times at an informal level – the rondavel belonging to the headman, outside under the meeting tree, on foot to specific vantage points overlooking the resource use area, in the homesteads of crafters, medicinal users and at times hunters (poachers). Beyond the village interactions, deliberation took place at a higher level and included formal traditional leaders' and with DAFF at their offices. Throughout the process, project manager Mike Denison availed himself to respond to and work with the team, specific stakeholders, convene meetings and undertake field excursions as required.

By October the project produced its results in a document titled *“Forest Conservation and Resource Use Planning for Ntsubane Forest Complex with Special Focus on Village Based*

Forest Use Planning for the Village of Dedeni – Mapping forest use, degradation, deforestation, corridors and Protected Area Planning” (Appendix 9). This in turn became the strategic document around which the project mobilized discussions, focused learning and informed co-management capacity building strategies with stakeholders such as traditional leadership structures, government stakeholders, communities through the Community Based Natural Resource Management meetings and forest user groups such as the crafters. Furthermore, this forest conservation and resource use plan contributed to raising the profile of the Ntsubane Complex for conservation attention.

Imperative to the success of a forest use plan as a management tool is, as introduced above, a capacitated management body to effectively understand and use the tool for management decisions. Therefore, and as part of the development of this tool, was the parallel human capacity development into participatory forest management principles through the revitalization of communities of practice incorporated into the principles underlying the Participatory Forest Management Committee (PFMC) model. Integrating specific skills development for effective co-management capabilities enjoyed opportunities and learning platforms beyond the CEPF project. Such opportunities include engagements with the Wild Coast Forest Users Association and the Wild Coast Crafters where sustainable utilization of natural resources, responsible utilization practices and sustainable livelihoods were of focus.

By February 2015 the community of Dedeni had elected community representation for the PFMC and the project was liaising and working closely with the Royal House of Bhekilali for high level traditional leadership support to co-management of natural resources, the consideration of protected area expansion as per the National Protected Areas Expansion Strategy and the development of new proposals to elicit support from international agencies and the national jobs fund to bring about project expansion across the forest complex (see Appendix 10).

In May 2015 the project team of Denison, Yalo, Mhlonyane and Dr Berliner, presented to a high level delegation that included representation from the DAFF national, provincial and regional offices and the Department of Environmental Affairs’ Compliance unit. Of importance to emerge from this presentation was (1) high level commitment to participatory planning and co-management going forward, (2) commitment to PFMC capacity building of stakeholders within the state departments, traditional leadership bodies and at community level for planning and management, (3) commitment to a collaborative strategy for appropriate, longer term support for the expansion of the CEPF approach to impact across the forest complex, (5) to continue to raise the profile of Ntsubane as an important case study towards a community-centered conservation model for forests of the former homeland states.

In July 2015 a two day PFMC Education and Training workshop took place in Port St Johns for 24 beneficiaries which included DAFF provincial, regional and local representatives, Dedeni committee representatives and House of Traditional Leaders representatives. See Appendix 11 for programme delivered and minutes. Critical outcomes to the workshop included (1) enhanced trust between stakeholders and commitment to pursue the PFM approach; (2) enhanced understanding and appreciation of the challenges and frustrations experienced by the stakeholder groups; (3) collaborative visioning on a way forward; (4) framework for a PFM Roadmap (see Appendix 12).

Project manager, Mike Denison and Dr Berliner have delivered presentations on participatory processes for forest use planning at the 2014 MPAH Forum, had papers accepted by FAO for publication at the XIV World Forestry Conference 2015, have applied for funding to replicate the work across the forest complex and are strategizing with DAFF’s Forestry Scientific Services for the proclamation of Ntsubane as a protected area where community-centered forest conservation, participatory practices, co-management and sustainable livelihoods are clearly defined drivers underpinning the protection of the forest resources.

Further supporting documents Appendix 21 to 28 for meeting and engagement notes.

Component 3 Planned (as stated in the approved proposal):

Sustainable NRM Education and Training (13 villages)

Component 3 Actual at Completion:

The project team developed a Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) awareness, education and training strategy for 13 villages spread across the project area. Experience gained from 10 years of working with Wild Coast forest user communities and traditional leaders allowed us to reflect on methodologies for the CEPF CBNRM implementation. A risk analysis for delivery of CBNRM was undertaken by the team with input from experts who had participated in the Wild Coast Project, members of the Wild Coast Forest Users Association, traditional leaders and other rural development agencies.

Of primary importance to effective CBNRM was the need to not contribute to (1) stakeholder fatigue related to community interactions with NGOs; (2) expectations that projects would bring unrealistic benefits; (3) the perceptions that conservation is in conflict to livelihoods.

CBNRM is to be non-threatening, relevant to community needs and interests, responsive to stakeholder challenges and inclusive of indigenous knowledge systems. CBNRM, when most effective, is of direct benefit to the participants who are being engaged and contributes meaningfully to improving their livelihoods. This project was able to build on CEPF 59591's introductory platform on natural resource management and draw on direct benefit returns which were brokered as part of 59591 in the form of employment.

From a project perspective, it was felt that deliberation leading to improved ecological understanding, raised awareness for improved livelihoods and enhanced competencies towards understanding and placing value on co-management would be of value.

To affect all 13 villages, the project strategy revolved around existing village cluster meetings which were convened by traditional authorities of each cluster. Through liaison with these structures it was agreed that CBNRM would be scheduled into the said meetings as an agenda item. This would optimize the project's ability to be responsive to issues raised, adopt a mediatory role between stakeholders where natural resource concerns are presented and provide a willing, leadership approved platform for NRM topics to be introduced.

Thematic content for the four workshops evolved as follows – (1) Ecological integrity and the value of biodiversity to sustainable livelihoods; (2) Introducing and building stakeholder relationships with communities and DAFF; (3) Roles and responsibilities of forest user groups; (4) Participatory Forest management principles and formalizing co-management structures.

Despite the planning and implementation strategy, it was noticeable that CBNRM was most effective within communities where WESSA had inputs into the area beyond the CEPF project. This is because communities respond to the co-benefit model for sustainable development. As

such, communities who were involved in IAP clearing, enterprise development, high levels of participatory processes and schools projects were more willing to engage conservation themes that looked forward as compared to communities who were not recipients to a broad range of benefits and who were more aggressive in wanting to explore delivery issues related to government.

It should be noted that one village cluster did not receive all planned workshops. This was beyond the management capabilities of the project team and such cancellations or changes of the agenda by the traditional authorities would not necessarily be communicated to the project team ahead of time but would happen when the team arrived on site.

Partial mitigation was achieved through the project delivering workshops to enhance the scope of the project's effect to communities where effective CBNRM was being achieved.

A stakeholder breakdown occurred towards the end of the project timeframe due to poor political will on the part of the DAFF regional office. Specific interventionist workshops took place with the communities of the Royal House of Bhekilali to enable the house to elevate their concerns to a provincial and national level and bring about more effective commitment from the regional DAFF representatives. This was achieved through a top down directive in government to maximize participation in the project, including a strong provincial representation to participate in the two day PFMC Capacity Building Workshop which was being developed for implementation.

As detailed above, the value of indigenous knowledge systems for transformative social learning cannot be underestimated. This project drew, wherever possible, and as outlined in detail on the participatory mapping exercise, on indigenous knowledge. Within the ambit of CBNRM, the importance of specific local informants is critical to the relevance of the work. To this end, the project drew on "indigenous specialists" in the field of natural resource use, species availability, degradation and governance. Through the input of these specialists, aspects such as responsible utilization, changing forest environments, governance conflicts, increased poaching impacts and invasive plant impacts were unpacked with a tangibility and meaningfulness that is catalytic to social learning and stimulates mind-set change for sustainable community-centered conservation through co-management principles.

Going forward, it is extremely important for CBNRM to be incorporated vigorously into any project plan. If one looks at some of the Wild Coast conservation efforts that have led to extreme hostilities between stakeholders, violence and near irreparable community fragmentation such as the Dwesa Nature Reserve and Marine Protected Area, Mkambathi Nature Reserve and the proposed Pondoland Park, one realizes the importance of awareness, education and training through CBNRM that talks to all sectors of affected communities. Just as important is for the CBNRM implementation strategy to prioritize participatory opportunities, maintain a reflexive and responsive stance while also driving certain agendas for change through the creation of a more enabling environment that delivers social and ecological benefits to surrounding communities. Conservation of forest environments is most likely to achieve when we transcend the notion that forests refer to the fauna and flora and fail to take cognizance of the human dimension. Conservation is recognizing and appreciating that forests are a complex and dynamic inter-relationship between people, nature and people in nature.

For thematic CBNRM programme see Appendix 13_ CBNRM workshops all villages.

Component 4 Planned (as stated in the approved proposal):

Entrepreneurship Development

Component 4 Actual at Completion:

The majority of communities around and within the Ntsubane forest complex live rural lives (village based livelihoods, often outside of basic infrastructure, have a high dependency on natural resources, high unemployment and with strong cultural and traditional value systems). The economic integrity of these forest communities is vulnerable and it is estimated that at least 80% live below the poverty line which is defined as R800 (ZAR) household expenditure per month (Department of Health Report, Achieving and Sustaining Universal Access to Antiretrovirals in Rural Areas, The Primary Health Care Approach to HIV Services in Lusikisiki, Eastern Cape, October 2006). There is little to no immediate economic opportunity and household income is typically dependent on government grants and financial support from family members, usually males, who have left the area to seek employment. This has resulted in a fragmented social make-up with a prominence of woman headed households as the male work force seeks employment in the industrialized sectors of the country. Although government figures put average household figures at 6, our interactions with community suggest this is closer to 8 or 10 which was supported by Dillon Woods of the Donald Woods Foundation during discussions associated to the challenges of health care in the rural areas of the Wild Coast.

In line with an integrated approach to conservation of biodiversity for Ntsubane, it is critical to build a resilient society through sustainable livelihoods. Resilience is considerate of the needs of people, natural resources and facilitates systematic wellbeing. The project, through the partnership with the CWP created formal employment and enhanced human capacity in relation to working with invasive alien plants (discussed above). However, this is limited in its reach and a broader investment to enhance livelihoods through enterprise development was implemented.

The project undertook three activities towards improved local economic development, namely, (1) work with existing forest related enterprises to enhance their impact on improving the lives of forest producers; (2) researched into WESSA's Stepping Up to Sustainability projects to evaluate utilization and functionality of low wood burning stoves in forest communities and explore this as a possible business for forest communities; (3) worked with Dr Berliner to evaluate the potential of non-timber forest products from Ntsubane.

(1) Existing enterprises – The art of traditional craft

Ten years ago WESSA was a founding member of the Wild Coast Forest Users Association (WCFUA), a voluntary association of forest user groups and stakeholders. The purpose of the WCFUA is to give user groups a stronger voice through collaboration, encourage dialogue between stakeholders and implement activities that contribute to sustainable livelihoods, encourage responsible resource utilization and create a broader awareness as it relates to forests and people. Within in the WCFUA there is the opportunity for specific user groups to mobilize as chapters. Of importance here, is the evolving Craft chapter which is representative of approximately 30 rural traditional crafters, of which 25 are active in the Ntsubane project.

Drawing on the report outlining the state of crafting and suggested way forward produced by craft expert Pru Bolus, which was compiled as part of CEPF 59591, the project initiated planning with the Ntsubane crafters. WESSA secured co-funding from The Blue Fund of ZAR 200 000 (approximately \$ 20 000) for the crafters which allowed an expanded implementation to be considered. A two day workshop was held in Port St Johns with field trips to local crafter villages. The experience included presentations from established crafters such as Tata Cwaba the local famed stick maker and Zolani Mpete, master sculptor. The purpose of the workshop was to understand crafter aspirations, immediate challenges and map the way forward.

Emergent priorities aligned closely with Bolus' observations and strategic direction as per her report and a year plan was compiled to address (1) craft quality, (2) product diversity by building on existing skill sets, (3) increased exposure and access to market, (4) brand development and craft identity, (5) crafter awareness raising for sustainable livelihoods, (6) capacity building through a mentorship programme and (6) creating an enabled environment for crafter livelihoods.

For the purpose of this report, the focus will be on advancements brought about from the CEPF, although it is important to appreciate the successes of the holistic investment led to unprecedented growth and development of 25 crafters which was the output of what evolved into the Wild Coast Crafter Project as part of the WESSA Ntsubane Living Forest Project.

For details of craft development workshops see Appendix 14 for Pru Bolus report to CEPF.

To increase crafter presence at a local level, the CEPF funding for a storage space in Port St Johns was upgraded to a fully functioning craft shop as a result of support funding from The Blue Fund. This shop has created full time employment for one previously unemployed woman from the area and through the CEPF she has received training and mentoring from project coordinator, Sithokozile Yalo, in small business skills, taking orders, stock control and front of shop communication skills. Further work in this regard is required to truly capacitate the shop with the business skills to sustain the potential growth through the expanded markets that are being accessed. The project liaised with DAFF to secure a donation for poles for the roof and a builder and a roofer were hired for the construction phase. Both the builder and roofer are members of the Wild Coast Forest Users Association. Crafters volunteered their time to cut and prepare the gum poles from the state forest for the roof and other construction purposes.

Two crafters were capacitated through a mentorship initiative under Bolus and Yalo to undertake the preparatory activities for representation of craft at a national arts fair and build skills related to customer liaison and market development. Bolus and Yalo spent field time preparing the interns and facilitating crafter preparations for the week long fair. The interns were supported by Bolus and Yalo at the fair where they represented the Wild Coast Crafters, undertook field trips to established craft retail outlets in Kwazulu Natal and presented the craft portfolio to potential bulk buyers.

To understand the larger successes of the Wild Coast Craft Project, now called the Ntsubane Living Forest Project through the CEPF and The Blue Fund total investment, the Wild Coast Forest Users Association newsletters have been included as Appendices 15a to 15d.

The project has brought about revenue generating opportunities that exceed the current supply capabilities of the crafters. This can be seen in the total potential orders for product that have been placed since the start of CEPF and The Blue Fund standing at ZAR 97 000 (\$ 9 700) but only ZAR 60 000 worth of output has been achieved. Importantly, this revenue has been, for the first time, secured at fair prices and with improved sustainability by the crafters.

WESSA, in collaboration with the Wild Coast Crafters, has developed and continues to submit proposals for further craft enterprise support as per our findings and successes from the CEPF. To date, we have not been informed of a successful application.

(2) Low volume wood burning stoves – Forest community enterprise or not?

The combination of resource utilization for fuel woods and the need for enterprise development present the low wood burning stoves, or eco-stoves, as they are also called, make for an obvious investigation. WESSA as part of their Stepping Up to Sustainability Project had undertaken a pilot project with Global Eco Projects to test and evaluate community receptiveness to the stoves. The CEPF project team liaised with the Stepping Up project team to direct the placement of stoves into eight different village environments, four forest villages and four coastal villages. It became evident early on that the village communities were finding value in the stoves and as a result of subsidized costs through the relationship with Global Eco Projects, a local crafter was trained up to undertake demonstrations, marketing and sales of the stoves with follow on demand from village users for the stoves being positive. After approximately five months of a new growing retail business, WESSA was informed that Global Eco Projects were selling and WESSA's details would be provided to the new owner to continue the relationship. To date, this has not been resolved, but the evidence that micro retail enterprises are worth further exploration should

subsidized stoves become available. In the absence of subsidization, the cost per stove will increase and it is our opinion, from the audit outlined below, that demand will dramatically reduce due to financial constraints in the buying market.

After 10 months the project team did an audit to evaluate utilization across the villages into which the test stoves had been placed. As mentioned above, forest communities had showed interest beyond the project test stoves yet not one of the coastal villages had requested information about acquiring further stoves. As such, the project team anticipated a variance in stove utilization between the coast and forest villages. It was not, however, expected to be quite the as dramatic. It was found in the coastal villages that only one of the four stoves had been used with any degree of consistency, and that was being used by the children in the house to boil water. In contrast, the forest village stoves were being utilized on an almost daily basis and they were finding uses beyond cooking stoves during winter as heaters in the sleeping rondavels (traditional wattle and daub house) due to their near smokeless design. The evaluation revealed (1) coastal villages had access to more revenue opportunities through the tourism industry and could afford to purchase gas or use electricity whereas the forest communities lived on a tighter budget, experienced inferior services and infrastructure and therefore had a higher dependency on natural resources for cooking, (2) forest communities had a ready availability of small, dry wood chips produced as a by-product to the crafting business which provided the stove design with the optimal wood fuel whereas the coastal villages would need to collect wood in order to use the stoves and even then, this was not as effective as the wood chips, (3) it would be unlikely that coastal villages would have a demand for stoves should they be sold, even at subsidized rate, whereas the forest villages would have a high demand at the subsidized price but the market would not be able to tolerate an increase in price.

The findings led the project to investigate the feasibility of producing stoves at community level. Although the stove design is relatively basic and materials are available from the economic hubs within a 50 to 75 kilometer radius of the villages, the costs associated with production could not compete with the price of the subsidized stoves and it was therefore likely that the demand price threshold would be surpassed.

WESSA had achieved success in a separate schools pilot project with eco stoves where they were piloting an initiative to produce and supply for school catering purposes. It was agreed at an organizational level to pursue funding for this project and the possibility of producing variations on the catering stove would be considered at a future point should the schools initiative gain traction and funding.

WESSA will continue to liaise with the network gained through Global Eco Projects to ensure it is positioned to partner future opportunities where eco stoves are subsidized and placed into wood burning communities as carbon off-set initiatives as this would provide the platform for local entrepreneurial development and education and training of field monitors for data collection and collation to meet the off-set model's requirements.

See Appendix 16 for email liaison and Appendix 17 for letter from Global Eco Projects.

(3) Non-timber forest products – Super foods, tree seed oils and medicinal harvesting businesses

As mentioned above, Dr Derek Berliner was an integral team member throughout the CEPF project. Dr Berliner is one of South Africa's leading researchers on super foods, forest fruits and tree seed oils. Furthermore, Dr Berliner was involved in his own CEPF research on the feasibility of Wild Coast forests contributing to the tree seed oils and super foods industry. His work for CEPF was concentrated on milkwood and cape chestnut species in coastal forests south of the Ntsubane forests.

As a result of our close working relationship with Dr Berliner in Ntsubane, a natural synergy emerged as it related to our shared interests non-timber forest products such as super foods, tree seed oils, the use of forest resources for medicinal purposes and the need to convert these opportunities into enterprises. The participatory mapping exercise and intensive community engagement, the effort to elicit indigenous knowledge and our discussions with medicinal harvesters as well as poachers throughout this project combined with Dr Berliner's expertise and inputs, we have begun the process of developing a concept to build social resilience through non-timber forest product enterprises across the forest complex.

An extrapolation of our preliminary findings in the Dedeni community forest resource use area and observations, although less exhaustive, from the Goso area suggest that a detailed feasibility study for the viability of non-timber forest products for the super food, tree seed oil and medicinal supply industries should be pursued. To this end, WESSA and Dr Berliner have signed an associate agreement to enhance our positioning through a collaborative approach. This collaboration will drive the strategy for investment and implementation towards the desired enterprise development.

Project manager, Mike Denison, has also met with Dr Cliff Dlamini of WWF Table Mountain Fund to collaborate more closely on non-timber forest products. Dr Dlamini is considered a leading expert in the field of non-timber forest enterprises and his thesis, *Towards the Improvement of Policy and Strategy Development for the Sustainable Management of Non-timber Forest Products: Swaziland: A Case Study* together with his many published papers on the topic, provide insight and guidance from which Dr Dlamini and WESSA will look to develop a concept for exploration in Ntsubane.

Component 5 Planned (as stated in the approved proposal):

School-based environmental learning

Component 5 Actual at Completion:

WESSA is the national implementing agent of the FEE Eco-schools Programme in South Africa with 908 schools registered and close to 54 000 learners benefiting through a structured, programmatic approach to environmental education.

It was from this depth of experience that the 5 forest schools were approached to participate in the CEPF professional development training and capacity building of ten teachers to improve the implementation and assessment of biodiversity-based learning activities as required by the South African formal school curriculum.

The project drew on the Eco-schools format and conducted four workshops, one per quarter with the target schools. The project focused on supporting teachers to design lesson plans that incorporate relevant curricula based learning objectives, biodiversity-based, inclusive of forest themes and activities, replicable and evidenced in a Portfolio of Evidence as per Eco-schools criteria.

Of the ten teachers, eight completed the training and four schools submitted portfolios of evidence. The two teachers who did not complete the training were both from one forest school and were re-located to schools outside of the project area, hence the failure of the school to submit. The school was offered special support to enable two further teachers to build capacity, but due to the short period in which this would have to take place and the timing with exams, the school replied that it would not submit but would like to be part of future projects. A sixth school invited WESSA to become involved with their environmental education planning and activity planning which was incorporated into duties of the project facilitator and project supervisor.

At the time of reporting, it is likely that at least five schools will submit portfolios at the end of 2015 as evidence of improved, integrated environmental education practices in the schools.

Beyond the lesson planning and implementation, schools are required to undertake field and practical learning activities and projects. Through the CEPF these activities were supported in the following manner by the project supervisor, Sithokozile Yalo, and project facilitator, Lunga Mhlonyane, who undertook three school visits per quarter to facilitate calendar planning, activities and provide practical learning support to the schools.

(1) School based indigenous tree micro-nurseries: Of the three schools identified for potential indigenous tree nurseries, two were selected and one nursery reached completion. Water scarcity remained a challenge at one of the schools, especially when the bore-holes did not produce the expected water supply. The third school experienced governance challenges which resulted in delays that were beyond the control of the project team. Project facilitator Lunga Mhlonyane, with a horticulture background, undertook supervision of the nursery project with the school and lessons with learners on seed collection, propagation and seedling care were included in the development of a school based micro-nursery. The design process received input from the Port St Johns based Umzimvubu Nursery. Following a major storm in the Pondoland area, the nursery suffered extensive damage and despite the school's commitment to revitalize the project to its potential, at the time of writing this report, the nursery remains damaged.

Some 100 plus, high use species, predominantly the protected Mzimbeet, which were propagated during the CEPF are currently being housed and cared for at the Umzimvubu Nursery until such time that the school is able to re-house them.

(2) Arbor Day celebrations were held at all schools. Activities included project team talking to students on biodiversity, tree planting and poetry and plays.

(3) Competitions – Khwezi Secondary School was mentored for their entry into the Food for Africa competition, May 2014, in which they came fifth. The learners were invited to the National awards in Johannesburg where they enjoyed a gala dinner and received 200 trees as their prize.

(4) Forest Celebrations – schools participated in a multi-stakeholder forest celebration where they performed poetry citations, performed plays and told stories related to forests. The audience included local municipality, crafters from the Wild Coast Craft Project, members of the Wild Coast Forest Users Association, DAFF, teachers, CWP IAP eradication teams and WESSA. Other activities on the day included talks from DAFF, an insightful and humbling account of what it is to be a crafter from a highly respected, old stick maker and the planting of trees as part of the CEPF restoration of an invasive plant cleared site.

Based on the success of the CEPF supported school-based environmental learning objective, WESSA has included in its proposal to the Darwin Initiative funding to pilot the FEE LEAF Programme which is more aligned to forest schools than the Eco-schools Programme and is currently not implemented as a programme in South Africa.

For details see Appendix 18_ School Technical Work Plan – Project Coordinator and Appendix 19_ Eco Schools Report

Component 6 Planned (as stated in the approved proposal):

Adherence to Pest Management Plan Safeguard

Component 6 Actual at Completion:

The project took cognizance of CEPF approved pest management and appropriate training for herbicide use in IAPs eradication, storage, mixing and application was implemented according to

international standards of best practice. Careful management of the sites, monitoring by the Herbicide Control Officer and strong team leadership ensured the project operated within the framework for CEPF approved pest management.

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

N/A

Please describe and submit (electronically if possible) any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.

Referenced as Annexes to support project component report above.

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

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

A major strength to the Project Design Process was that the project was a natural progression, or logical extension, of the work undertaken as part of CEPF 59591. Going into 59591, WESSA had track record and experience with the target communities and through the implementation of 59591, stakeholder engagement and the emphasis on participatory processes, expansive social learning and interventionist workshops led to an authentic collaborative design process for 64008.

The fact that this project design allowed for activity scaffolding, through an integrated landscapes approach, meant that affected stakeholders were afforded the opportunity to identify areas of need, contribute to the visioning process and experience the outputs of their deliberations through specific project activities that talked back to their project inputs (59591) and brought about direct, tangible benefit (64008). Project design at this level instils a genuine sense of ownership on the project and facilitates the introduction of new or more controversial aspects of conservation to be tabled.

Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

Challenges & Lessons learned:

1. *Unforeseen Project Partners*: This project found capacity constraints, and at times stakeholder will, across new, unforeseen partners and stakeholder groups to be greater than one would anticipate, and greater than the existing partnership relationships that were already in place and formed part of the planning phase. Despite the foundation of CEPF 59591 and WESSA's track record in the area, the project experienced numerous difficulties in maintaining the desired momentum that projects require in order to meet (1)

stated project deliverables and (2) community expectations as to the tangible benefits they would like to see through project implementation.

Most challenging in this regard was the unforeseen constraints on the project team to mobilize effectively, efficiently and professionally on the IAP clearing due to the inhibiting and restrictive nature in which the partnerships with the CWP evolved. These were new, unexpected partnerships and assumptions on capacity for implementation on the part of partners could therefore not take into account the amount of time it would take to operationalize some aspects related to the CWP teams.

2. *Traditional leadership and local political dynamics:* Ntsubane sits within an area widely regarded as one of South Africa's most difficult areas of operations for NGOs. The political landscape is dynamic and often driven by dramatically different agendas. It is not uncommon for these agendas to be influenced by corruption and self-gain. As a project, one needs to remain acutely aware of the local political dynamics and work extremely hard to maintain transparency, avoid raising expectations and refrain from pre-empting decision making processes as it is not always easy to understand what motivates these.
3. *Local champions and the value of indigenous knowledge systems:* identifying, building capacity and working closely with local champions is one of the most important success criteria to maintaining momentum, ensuring communication flow and facilitating the "message in context" is maintained through the project cycle. WESSA is most strong in communities where local champions are developed and active. A local champion is different to a project team member such as a Community Extension Officer and Community Liaison Officer in that they are not inherently part of the project team, stand to make no direct financial gain from the project (although they may gain in other, more broader ways) and are imbedded in the community, its daily trials and tribulations, its life. These champions become key conduits to information flow and assist the project team in how they choose to position themselves, what approach to take with specific individuals in a community or how to best present new concepts etc. At project design phase, one may not immediately know who or if there will be emergent champions, but should a project be privileged enough to encounter champions, it should be a relationship that is nurtured and developed over the project cycle.

Valuing and drawing on indigenous knowledge systems has been referred to and reported on extensively above. Rural communities are diverse, dynamic and unique. A project that omits efforts to draw on local resources and build through participatory processes of knowledge sharing and collective understanding is at risk of becoming an externally, ill-informed development silo with little sustainable impact for change.

This in itself can pose challenges to contemporary development approaches as prior knowledge of the indigenous knowledge value to a project may often not be known and is difficult to quantify. As such, projects that allow for authentic activity scaffolding and work through an integrated approach are more likely to succeed as they allow room for the influence of indigenous knowledge systems to contribute to the true, long term project impact by shaping it in the short term.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Additional Funding

Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of the CEPF investment in this project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
The Blue Fund	B	\$ 20 000	Reported on above and further evidence of the funding enhancing the CEPF is evident through Appendices provided as supporting documents to enterprise development.

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

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

Sustainability/Replicability

Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.

The project model is one of collaboration and strategic partnerships across the relevant Ntsubane stakeholder groups. This is the second year of CEPF funding and the project has, in many instances, delivered beyond expectations. This is most evident in the emergence of increasingly strong relationships of trust between stakeholders and WESSA which have allowed WESSA to play a valuable role as a conduit through which stakeholders are communicating more honestly and more willingly than prior to the CEPF investments of 59591 and now 64008.

This project has allowed multiple stakeholders to engage through expansive learning processes towards a collaborative conservation vision, including improved, shared management opportunities and proposing areas for the expansion of protected areas. The role of the project team has been to facilitate and scaffold the fora in which these shared conservation outcomes can be identified and developed.

The model as it is grounded in informed decision making processes and is inclusive of affected community users. Government has shown commitment to the participatory management and community stewardship models in South Africa. Capacity building and up-skilling of community decision makers as it relates to conservation, places communities in a position of ownership of a valuable resource and therefore endorses sustainability.

Responsible forest user projects, coupled to the potential of stewardship initiatives, provide a strong working model that is largely replicable in the rural communities of the Wild Coast as the community requirements from the forest habitats are usually similar and there are community parallels throughout the Wild Coast in terms of traditional, social and cultural aspects for consideration. Where the model becomes un-replicable or unpredictable is when too many parallels are lost. This could occur in areas of high density populations, political instability, areas

of inter-tribal conflicts or where there is insufficient accessible natural resources for forest community needs.

Strong partnerships with stakeholders such as DAFF, EC Parks & Tourism Agency, Wild Coast Forest Users Association, Traditional leaders and civic organizations are crucial to the sustainability of the projects if one is to realize the ongoing management and implementation of these projects that have local through to national support as well as access to high quality organizational capacity.

This project has been successful in securing on going employment of trained beneficiaries into the CWP and has begun to work more intensively with forest users such as crafters. These are two economic returns to community and enhance the sustainability of the work that has been done as well as contributes to ongoing, capacity induced green jobs which contribute to the sustainability of the conservation vision as communicated in and through this project's objectives.

Importantly, this project has contributed to towards elevating the profile of Ntsubane to a national high priority conservation site and through the project, WESSA is engaging at a strategic level to bring about the protection of the forest complex with DAFF.

The pilot participatory forest mapping projects, the developments and stakeholder buy-in to Participatory Forest Management Committees, the involvement of the Royal House of Bhekilali and the strong relationship between the project and DAFF's National Scientific Services office, together with improved commitment at Provincial level suggest Ntsubane is strongly positioned for an extensive up-scaling of the CEPF project to encompass the entire forest complex. This is evidenced in the collaboration of all stakeholders to develop the submission to the Darwin Initiative and the NRM Working for Forests calls that continue to promote the integrated approach to forest conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

Professional assistance and expert support has been sourced at all stages of identifying forest rehabilitation sites. All sites have been identified with the assistance of the provincial forestry department scientific section as well as local ecologist.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

Appendix 30_ Budget Summary attached for your use.

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.ceph.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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*****If your grant has an end date other than JUNE 30, please complete the tables on the following pages*****



Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF Global Targets

(Enter Grant Term)

Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant.
Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved during the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.	Describe the principal results achieved from July 1, 2013 to May 30, 2014. (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	No			Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one. Working towards the Dedeni Protected Area (identified as a proposed PA) and we are working with the state for a forest complex wide Ntsubane Special Forest Reserve.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	No			Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	yes	5000 hectares	5000 to 8500	Community based natural resource management; capacity development of stakeholders (government, traditional leaders, community leaders, participatory forest management committees, local NGOs) Sustainable resource utilization by forest user groups, particularly crafters; information sharing across traditional authorities.
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	yes	5000	5000	Participatory (indigenous knowledge) mapping; forest use planning (short and long term); co-management competencies
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	yes	5	13	Human capacity development for sustainable livelihoods and fair and equitable genetic resource benefits; formal employment contracts for on-going work; small business skills development; education and training for enhanced capabilities for co-management of natural resources

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table

Table 1. Socioeconomic Benefits to Target Communities

Please complete this table if your project provided concrete socioeconomic benefits to local communities. List the name of each community in column one. In the subsequent columns under Community Characteristics and Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit, place an X in all relevant boxes. In the bottom row, provide the totals of the Xs for each column.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics							Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit													
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists/nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Communities falling below the poverty rate	Other	Increased Income due to:				Increased food security due to the adoption of sustainable fishing, hunting, or agricultural practices	More secure access to water resources	Improved tenure in land or other natural resource due to titling, reduction of colonization, etc.	Reduced risk of natural disasters (fires, landslides, flooding, etc)	More secure sources of energy	Increased access to public services, such as education, health, or credit	Improved use of traditional knowledge for environmental management	More participatory decision-making due to strengthened civil society and governance.	Other
									Adoption of sustainable natural resources management practices	Ecotourism revenues	Park management activities	Payment for environmental services									
Dedeni forest community	X	X	X				X		X										X	X	X
Goso forest community	X	X	X				X		X										X	X	X
Khaleni forest community	X	X	X				X		X										X	X	X
Caquba forest community	X	X	X				X		X										X	X	X
Noqhekwana forest community	X	X	X				X												X	X	X
Total	5	5	5				5		4										5	5	5

If you marked "Other", please provide detail on the nature of the Community Characteristic and Socioeconomic Benefit: Enterprise capacity development micro forest user group enterprises

