# FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

## I. BASIC DATA

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

**Project Title:** Highlighting the Hotspots: Curating, Using and Sharing the C.A.P.E. Findings and Other Biodiversity Data in Support of Bioregional Planning and Land-Use Decisionmaking

**Project Dates*:*** July 2002 – September 2004

**Date of Report:** October 7, 2004

## II. OPENING REMARKS

***Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.***
The Conservation Planning Unit successfully completed it two-year LogFrame. It has managed to create a functional website to serve biodiversity planning information, it has reached out to train users, it has managed to influence users to include biodiversity information within local government planning processes and it has contributed towards the many other conservation projects of partner organisations. The Unit managed to execute the tasks although it faced challenges of staff shortage, skills gaps and loss of funding due to monetary exchange rate fluctuations. This success was achieved through the support of CapeNature (WCNCB), the Cape Coordinating Unit, South African National Biodiversity Institute, The Conservation Unit and the University of the western Cape.

## III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

***Project Purpose****:* Most recent and comprehensive biodiversity data widely used by decision makers, planners, consultants and researchers in land use management and decision-making.

### Planned vs. Actual Performance

| Indicator | Actual at Completion |
|---|---|
| **Purpose-level: Most recent and comprehensive biodiversity data widely used by decision makers, planners, consultants and researchers in land use management and decision-making.** | |

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| *Indicator 1 CPU's biodiversity data used in 90% of IDPs and SDFs, and 80% of EIAs submitted to relevant authorities, within 2 years of End of Project.* | The CPU has achieved its objective to have the data included into SDFs EIAs. All SDF's assessed have included or referred to the CPU for data. |
| *Indicator 2 Running costs for CPU secured to ensure sustainability of CPU for 5 years beyond End of Project, and a strategy identified to ensure sustainability of the Unit until 2020.* | The CPU costs are covered through the GEF grant and funding from the implementation agencies. A business and financial management plan has been drafted to ensure that the Unit remains operational over the long-term |
| *Indicator 3 Partner organizations continue to maintain databases according to agreed standards.* | Partner organisations are using the standards implemented by the CPU. |
| *Indicator 4 Improved co-operation and co-ordination between off-reserve conservation projects results in successful adoption of mechanisms and incentives in the CFR by 2015* | The CPU has focused on off-reserve information management, providing support for other projects such as the Conservation Stewardship Programme, and the Grater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor. |

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

The project was very successful in achieving its objectives. Land-use decision-makers, especially within local government, have become aware of the CPU as a resource and have been sensitized to the importance of using biodiversity information in planning processes. During the review of the CPU's performance, many users said that the CPU plays a critical role of bridging the gap between the scientific community and the decision-makers and that they would like to see the Unit grow and continue to deliver the service it does.

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

The greatest impact was the overwhelmingly positive response by the users to the services offered by the Unit. The drawback was that the Unit did not always have the capacity to assist with all the requests.

## IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

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

**Planned vs. Actual Performance**

| Indicator | Actual at Completion |
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| **Output 1: Comprehensive, up to date and reliable biodiversity data sets available to inform environmental sensitivity maps across the CFR.** | |

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| *Indicator 1.1 All available priority biodiversity data identified, collected from data owners, (cleaned, if necessary, according to special agreement), and collated within a central database within 18 months of receipt of funding.* | A data user needs analysis was completed and a report produced. All data collected and collated was cleaned and is listed in a data dictionary which is available on the website. |
| *Indicator 1.2 100% of CPU data holdings compliant with National Standards (e.g. with regard to accuracy, age, consistent terminology, projections and metadata format) as specified in Memorandum of Understanding by End of Project* | The CPU has adopted national data and meta-data standards, and has communicated this to our data suppliers and partners. |
| *Indicator 1.3 Refreshes of CPU database with new or refined data from partner organizations every 6 months, within 18 months of receipt of funding.* | The CPU is constantly refreshing it database as new data becomes available. |
| *Indicator 1.4 Data needs as identified by gap analysis (already carried out in user needs analysis– see progress report) - communicated to research institutions and State of Biodiversity database.* | The data gaps have been identified through the User Needs Analysis. |
| *Indicator 1.5 Partnerships reinforced and formalized by signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CPU and partner (Data Owner) organizations within 9 months of receipt of funding.* | MoU has been signed with all relevant partners. |
| *Indicator 1.6 Stable, secure and supported database and metadatabase system that houses relevant data from all important biodiversity data sources (i.e. partner organizations) by End of Project.* | A system is in place, based at the CPU and linked in with Jonkershoek (Stellenbosch) and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) systems as back-up support. |
| **Output 2: Needs analysis of database administrator skills in partner organizations carried out and training strategy implemented to address possible gaps.** | |
| *Indicator 2.1 Gap analysis of skills within participating organizations completed by end of Year 1.* | The GAP analysis was not completed as it was felt that the partners have sufficient knowledge. However, skills assessment were undertaken through informal discussions and meetings. |
| *Indicator 2.2 Training strategy to address gaps and schedule determined; implementation commenced within 18 months of receipt of funding.* | A training strategy was developed. The CPU coordinated a week training session on systematic conservation planning. CPU staff also attended training on conservation planning, GIS, C-Plan, Access, HTML, MS Word, Excel and Project Management. |
| **Output 3: Biodiversity data made available to users in appropriate format** | |

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| **including seamless links to adjacent biomes** | |
| *Indicator 3.1 User needs assessment completed by July 2002.* | A User Needs Analysis was completed. |
| *Indicator 3.2 MOU developed and signed with UWC web development team by June 2002.* | A MoU was discussed with the UWC and this has changed to the implementation of a Service Level Agreement. |
| *Indicator 3.3 Server and appropriate hardware and software purchased, installed and tested by July 2002.* | The Server was installed, tested and is running efficiently. |
| *Indicator 3.4 Secure, stable and user-friendly web site, serving queryable maps and associated metadata developed by December 2002.* | The website is developed and operational. |
| *Indicator 3.5 Web site is accompanied by a comprehensive help text (in both English and Afrikaans) by End of Project Year 1.* | The help text is available on the website. |
| *Indicator 3.6 Hard copy and CD format maps produced for use by planners and other decision makers within 6 months of receipt of funding.* | A map library has been developed and hardcopy maps are available for planning purposes. |
| *Indicator 3.7 New maps which show biodiversity sensitivity within 15 months of receipt of funding.* | New maps are continuously being produced. |
| **Output 4: CPU has coordinated implementation, motivated and trained users in appropriate use and integration of biodiversity data into decision-making.** | |
| *Indicator 4.1 Workshop for core user group (see attached list – core user group.xls) on the opportunities and constraints of using the C.A.P.E. data lead by Prof. Richard Cowling, within 6 months of the data being made available on the Internet.* | The subject matter was dealt with at two separate workshops. |
| *Indicator 4.2 Awareness campaign by one to one meetings, brochures, press releases and targeted e-mails ensures 95% of core user group (see attached list – core user group.xls) are aware of, and motivated to use, the CPU and its services, within 12 months of receipt of funding.* | The CPU is continuously meeting with users and is currently on a road show presenting all the products. A quarterly newsletter is circulated. |
| *Indicator 4.3 Telephone and e-mail help- and suggestions- line in place for queries not covered by the web help text in place by End of Project. Basic queries answered within 24 hours, more complicated queries dealt with within 5 working days.* | Help line, and email help facilities are in place and is operational. All queries are replied to within 24 hours and attended to within one week. |
| *Indicator 4.4 Training workshops around the CFR for core user groups commenced* | The CPU facilitated a 5 day training course for users of the data. The CPU |

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| *within 12 months of receipt of funding, refresher courses annually.* | continues to train users as it presents the data and information. |
| **Output 5: Financial plan for the ongoing sustainability of the CPU developed and in place.** | |
| *Indicator 5.1 "Accounting system" to monitor main CPU clients, rate of use, to enable placing a financial value on CPU's services to Planning, Consultants, etc., to support development of a financial sustainability model, established within 4 months of receipt of funding.* | The CPU is using internal CapeNature (WCNCB) procedures to monitor usage. The statistics provide information on requests, queries, and web –usage. |
| *Indicator 5.2 Five year and 2020 financial strategy developed in consultation with Steering Committee and completed within 12 months of receipt of funding. Five-year financial strategy implemented at End of Project.* | A Business and Financial Management Plan has been drafted.<br>(see attached file) |
| **Output 6: Monitoring and evaluation system designed and operational.** | |
| *Indicator 6.1 Evaluation of efficiency, effectiveness and recommendations data collection process through workshop involving data owners, CPU and database development company, within 15 months of receipt of funding.* | A knowledge and information management report has been produced to streamline the collection, collation and management of data and information, which would serve the needs of our partner organisations. |
| *Indicator 6.2 Survey of participating organizations to ascertain effectiveness of training courses to date, used to inform work planning session for future training strategy within 6 months after completion of project* | The partner organisations have responded positively to the training provided by the CPU. All suggestions for improvement are being followed up. |
| *Indicator 6.3 Annual needs evaluation to ascertain demand for the different products (e.g. hard copy maps, CDs, geographic extent of maps) produced by the CPU. First survey within 15 months of receipt of funding.* | A needs analysis was completed in 2004, and one is planned for 2005. All information needs are being attended to. |
| *Indicator 6.4 Bi-annual evaluations of web site development group and database development company "service agreement".* | The website content and structure was evaluated and a report produced on recommendations. The changes were made and a report produced on the method for implementing web changes. |
| *Indicator 6.5 Expert review of proposed financial and sustainability models, plus re-evaluation of budget, within 18 months of receipt of funding.* | The auditing company PriceWaterhouseCoopers evaluated the CPU finances. This company is used by CapeNature (WCNCB) as independent auditors. |

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

The project was very successful in bridging the gap between data and information generators and those applying it. Alongside new legislation, it has raised the awareness of the importance of information management in conserving biodiversity. It has also facilitated the networking of groups across organisations and institutions in achieving a common goal.

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

Output 2, *Needs analysis of database administrator skills in partner organizations carried out and training strategy implemented to address possible gaps*, was partially unrealized. The CPU does not have the resources or mandate to assess the capacity within partner organisations, and then to address the gaps. This output was therefore addressed in a cooperative manner in which synergy was sought between the partners rather than the CPU prescribing what it deems to be suitable database management skills.

## V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

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

None implemented

## VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

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

The major lesson learned throughout the project is that of consistent communication brining across a constant message. The major lesson was to make sure that all partners understand the objectives of the CPU and to communicate this to potential users. The review on the CPU's performance has shown that the partners were the primary promoters of the Unit to the general user. Another important lesson learnt is that clear project deliverables should be drafted for each active partner. The LogFrame should be the basis upon which the deliverables are unpacked and tied to timeframes. The CPU will be focusing on a managed network of partners for future execution of its activities. In the past it tried to create a myriad of partners and it became difficult to manage and service. The managed network of partners will allow the CPU to focus on key reciprocal partners and depend on them to leverage any of their partners to assist the Unit.

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

At the time of initiating the project the design was an appropriate response to the information coordination need. However, the design was not focused on the core function of biodiversity planning information management and as a result, there were varied expectations from the users of the Unit. Some of them could be met, while others were beyond the scope of the project.

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

The greatest threat to the project was the currency fluctuations. The Rand/Dollar exchange rate was threatening to stop the execution of many parts of the project. However, this was circumvented with the counterpart funding received from CapeNature (previously the WCNCB). The greatest success factor in implementation was the support the CPU received from its partners, the South African Biodiversity Institute, CapeNature, Cape Coordinating Unit, Conservation Unit and the University of the Western Cape. The project would have failed without support from its partners.

## VII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A very great thank you to CEPF for the support and motivation during the execution of this project.

**For more information about this project, please contact:**

Selwyn Willoughby
Western Cape Nature Conservation Board
Jonkershoek Nature Conservation Station
Stellenbosch 7600
South Africa
Tel: +27-21-889-1570
Fax: +27-21-889-1523
Email: Willoughby@nbict.nbi.ac.za
www.cnc.org.za