

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name:

Western Baviaanskloof Initiative

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement):

Western Baviaanskloof Initiative Community Planning Process

Implementation Partners for This Project: **Western Baviaanskloof Initiative, Baviaanskloof Mega Reserve Project**

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): **November 1, 2004-May 31, 2005**

Date of Report (month/year): **July 2005**

II. OPENING REMARKS

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

The Baviaanskloof Mega Reserve Project had challenged people to think about their future in the Western Baviaanskloof.. This project was initiated to provide a series of workshops in which the people of the Western Baviaanskloof could find a common vision for the area, and develop mechanisms through which this vision could be shared and merged with other key stakeholder. Through this process the community aimed to provide forums for open and honest communication with external stakeholders and change existing conflictual relationships. The project has succeeded to develop a local plan and vision, and create a forum for constructive communication with stakeholders.

III. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

1. What was the initial objective of this project?

During the initial stages of the Baviaanskloof Mega Reserve Project (BMRP) the local community living and working within the Western Baviaanskloof had many fears and concerns with regard to their future in the area. Initial relationships between the BMRP and some of the local residents were strained and conflictual, and there was historical conflict between some members of local communities and previous conservation institutions. In the winter of 2004 the local residents had a series of meetings with each other to discuss their future in the face of the BMRP. At these meetings it became apparent that the residential community did not have an articulated local vision for the future of the Western Baviaanskloof that would express their ideas, hopes and wishes. Without such a vision it was difficult to proactively engage with the BMRP and other stakeholders. This project emerged with four key objectives:

1. To develop a broad community response to the BMR and vision for the Western Kloof, with an emphasis on pro-active and constructive engagement.

2. To create clear channels for ongoing engagement with the PMU to facilitate the development of constructive and healthy relationships within the area.
3. To build links and relationships between the people of the Western Kloof, uniting a historically divided community.
4. To create a comprehensive vision document for the Western Kloof for all other roleplayers and stakeholders to engage with.

2. Did the objectives of your project change during implementation? If so, please explain why and how.

As the project developed it became apparent that the visioning process needed to go further by having a strong focus on creating opportunities for locals to improve their quality of life. The process therefore needed to focus on delivering real outcomes in terms of opportunities, and not just a vision. The creation of a good working relationship with the BMRP team occurred very early on in the project, allowing the project to focus on developing a community vision and identifying the opportunities that the BMRP could bring.

As the project would need ongoing support after the completion of the funding period, a need arose to look at how to spread the word about the project. The project was invited to the annual CAPE conference, and a decision was made to try and complete the remaining tasks on minimal budgets, and use whatever remained in the project budget to attend the conference and produce a video that could be used at the conference and afterwards with funding proposals.

3. How was your project successful in achieving the expected objectives?

All four of the initial objectives were successfully achieved. The challenge remains to build on what was started. Creating trust both between the various sectors within the community, and between the community and external stakeholders takes time. While positive starts have been made, deepening these relationships will be directly related to successful delivery of opportunities for people in the kloof.

4. Did your team experience any disappointments or failures during implementation? If so, please explain and comment on how the team addressed these disappointments and/or failures.

At the beginning of the process the project was overwhelmed by the huge level of involvement from almost everyone in the local community. The key concern driving this involvement was the need to secure a future for the people living and working in the area. This passion and commitment for remaining in the kloof was strongly articulated by all, and as a result was the first issue addressed during the project in meeting with our external partners. Assurances were given to the local communities by the external partners that this was always the intention.

Thereafter the level of participation dropped by as much as half as people waited for the steering committee and external partners to find all the solutions and start providing opportunities. The process had been designed in such a way that the content of the vision and plan needed to come from the community themselves. The dropping levels of participation was a huge disappointment to the steering committee. All measures had been taken to increase participation levels, including removing obstacles such as

transport and food issues, which were provided by the project budget, and scheduling meetings to fit in with community activities.

After talking with members of the community who no longer participated as to why participation had dropped, it emerged that members of the community felt extremely disempowered and skeptical as a result of the many planning processes over the last decade that had been aimed at improving the quality of life in the kloof, and had not delivered. A “planning process” fatigue had resulted. Their hope was that this process, which was different in that it was owned and developed from within, would work. However they would wait for initial signs of delivery before engaging in yet another process.

5. Describe any positive or negative lessons learned from this project that would be useful to share with other organizations interested in implementing a similar project.

The project was extremely successful in terms of allowing local people to begin to engage with the idea of the BMRP in a non-defensive manner, and build constructive relationships with key stakeholders. The key to this success was that the local population owned the process and the outcomes, and felt that they had a strong say in their own futures. This was supported by an extremely professional team from the BMRP, which supported and encouraged the local community to engage with them and each other about the future for the area.

Through looking at how a conservation initiative (the BMRP) can deliver opportunities for local communities and residents, the project was able to start shifting perceptions and attitudes around biodiversity conservation issues. However the misperceptions around their ability to continue living in the area and power in the decision making processes needed to be cleared up before people felt sufficiently secure enough to open themselves up to considering these possibilities.

At times the project slowed down due to the project team having to focus on their own livelihoods. If this project had to happen again, a dedicated and resourced project leader with a funded salary would be advised.

6. Describe any follow-up activities related to this project.

The project has resulted in a vision and plan for the Western Baviaanskloof with a list of 40 actions and projects that need to be implemented. Many of these projects are related to exploring the opportunities that the BMRP will provide for the local communities. Funding for the major projects will need to be secured and ongoing communication and cooperation with the BMRP and other stakeholders encouraged.

7. Please provide any additional information to assist CEPF in understanding any other aspects of your completed project.

IV. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
Baviaanskloof Community Policing Forum.	Project Co-Financing	R3700	The Community Policing Forum covered their own costs for the workshop they were allocated to run.
BMRP	Project Co-Financing	R10 000	Contribution to a video documentary for sharing the project at a CAPE conference.

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

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

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

V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

VI. INFORMATION SHARING

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

Yes

If yes, please also complete the following:

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