

**GLOBAL
ENVIRONMENT
FACILITY**

Gabon

**Conservation of Biodiversity through
Effective Management of Wildlife Trade**

Project Document

*This Project Document has been edited to facilitate public dissemination.
The original is on file in the GEF Office at UNDP Headquarters in New York.*



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ABBREVIATIONS

AECG	African Elephant Coordinating Group
CITES	Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
DFC	Directorate of Wildlife and Hunting
ENEF	Ecole nationale des eaux et forêts
EU	European Union
NGO	Non-governmental organization
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

Project of the Government of Gabon

Title: Conservation of Biodiversity through Effective Management of Wildlife Trade

Number: GAB/92/G31

Duration: Three years

Project Site: Gabon

UNDP Sector: Natural Resources

Subsector: Biological Resources

Government Implementing Agency: Ministère des eaux et forêts, de la pêche et de l'environnement

Executing Agency: Office of Project Services (OPS) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP Approval: August 1994

Estimated Starting Date: July 1994

Government Inputs: CFA 34.2 million (in kind) (US\$ 63,882)¹

UNDP/GEF Inputs: US\$ 1 million

Brief Description:

Although domestic and international trade in wildlife species plays an important role in the national and local economies of many countries in Africa, much of this trade is unregulated and almost nothing is known about its impact on biodiversity. Improved knowledge and management of wildlife and its trade is urgently needed to protect biodiversity in the region, ensuring sustainable use of the resource and its continued contribution to economic development. Protection of wildlife resources requires an improved capacity of government agencies in wildlife management and conservation, and empowerment of rural communities to monitor, manage, and derive benefits from wildlife utilization. This project, to be implemented in Gabon, where bushmeat constitutes a major source of protein for rural communities, aims to:

¹ According to the official exchange rate in the third quarter of 1994, US\$ 1 = CFA 535.36.

- Develop the country's indigenous capacity to effectively monitor wildlife populations and trade
- Improve knowledge of the impact of trade on wildlife populations and on biodiversity in general
- Assist in developing and implementing sustainable trade strategies to ensure the long-term survival of wildlife species and their ecosystems.

A. CONTEXT

1. Description of subsector

Biological diversity is the term used to describe the total variety of living organisms on earth—the millions of plants, animals, and micro-organisms, the genes they contain, and the intricate ecosystems they help build and sustain. Estimates of the global number of species range from 5 to 30 million. Of these, only 1.4 million species have been named. Scientists have warned that the projected rate of extinctions is much higher than the historical rate of extinctions. In tropical regions this rate appears to be about 1,000 to 10,000 times the historical rate. The loss of the unknown value of these species (from such uses as medicines or food sources) constitutes a very real cost associated with the loss of biodiversity, and a loss of the potential development capacity for the countries concerned.

The motivation to conserve biological diversity is not an altruistic one. Clear and positive links exist between biodiversity and human development. At the global level, the loss of biodiversity means the irreversible loss of options for present and future generations. The variety of microbes, plants and animals that have only recently been discovered as being of use to humans demonstrates the value of the undiscovered.

The rosy periwinkle from Madagascar is perhaps the best known example of a plant species providing critical medicinal products for humans. The periwinkle remains a critical substance in the treatment of leukaemia. The species *Prunus* found in the highlands of Cameroon produces compounds important in the treatment of benign prostate hypertrophy, a disease that afflicts a majority of males over the age of fifty. Many of these substances have not as yet been synthesized in the laboratory, resulting in continued reliance on the plant in the wild.

Recent studies of the use of bushmeat, a major contributor to the economy in West African countries, show that rural people make rational choices about hunting based on a variety of factors such as the price of ammunition, the distances between villages, the size of animals, and the need for food and cash. In Liberia the traded value of bushmeat was estimated to be on the order of US\$ 24 million (3 percent of GDP) and the subsistence use (at rural trade prices) was worth US\$ 42 million. This compares with the 1989 earnings of US\$ 20 million in tax revenue from timber exploitation. Although Liberia, along with most other countries and donors

such as the World Bank, tend to regard bushmeat as a common resource of no specific value, the costs to the state of substituting for lost bushmeat resources by importing beef or pork from abroad provides clear evidence of its real economic worth. This is a powerful argument for investing in a sustainable yield of bushmeat and the diversification of domestic meat production.

In addition any unknown, future economic value, there is also the very real value of our ecosystems, and hence our economies, that depend on existing biodiversity. The crops and animals on which we currently rely are continually under threat from outbreaks of pests and diseases, and it is the diverse strains which exist in the wild that might ultimately offer more resistant strains. If such strains do not exist in the wild, it is conceivable that a major food crop could be lost.

Intensive harvesting can result in extremely rapid declines in species populations. A classic example is that of the black rhinoceros which has been reduced from 70,000 to about 2,000 individuals in less than 20 years, due to hunting for rhino horn to supply markets in the Middle and Far East. In such cases, the bulk of economic benefits do not even accrue to the country but usually to private illegal traders, who sell them on the world market.

The estimated minimum declared value for wildlife trade worldwide is US\$ 5 billion annually. This extensive trade depends upon a complex web of life that provides for many basic needs. Rural communities as well as governments rely upon these resources as sources of protein, building materials, clean water, and income from domestic and international trade in products, which are sustainably managed and harvested. The conflict between maximum immediate use and steady but sustainable use in the long term is the dominant issue for both commercially valuable and other useful species.

Much of the growing pressure on wildlife can be directly linked to development problems in the central African region. The current low prices for many of the region's export commodities have led to reduced expenditure in the public sector and economic downturn in the private sector. This has resulted in increased unemployment and greater pressure on the natural resource base as people look for other sources of livelihood. Interviews in Gabon indicate that many of the people currently hunting wildlife and trading in bushmeat had jobs and were part of the cash economy. The economic downturn and resulting loss of work has forced them to turn to hunting and the bushmeat trade as a way of maintaining their lifestyles. Many of them have indicated that if jobs were available they would abandon their current activities. Lower government expenditure has impaired institutional capabilities for research to understand the problem, resulting in a limited ability to develop strategies to manage and regulate the resource. The general reliance on the public sector, and corresponding lack of investment in the private sector, leaves little room for growth or improved entrepreneurial opportunities in natural resource management. Government control or ownership of natural resources has effectively precluded rural community involvement in, and benefit from, local natural resource management.

Much of the trade in plant and animal species in the central African region is unregulated. In fact, almost nothing is known here about the impact of trade on biodiversity. There are clear indications, however, that trade emanating from central Africa is significant. If domestic and international trade is to be managed to ensure its sustainability and its benefits for national economies and local needs, those charged with trade management must address issues as wide-ranging as international treaties, domestic legislation and policy, rural community empowerment to manage natural resources, law enforcement, as well as research and long-term monitoring trends affected by trade in biodiversity. The tools required to meet these needs include clear policies regarding trade, management and the use of resources, regional and international cooperation, improved training opportunities, and better public awareness and education. Without strong institutions at the government and local levels to manage trade in products resulting from the region's biodiversity, the loss to national economies and local communities are losses of the potential value of the unknown. Where identified, these economic values have been shown to be significant.

Regional biodiversity

The countries of central Africa are extremely rich in species and have very high levels of endemism. There are thought to be at least 8,000 species of plants, of which more than 80 percent are endemic. The forests of southern Cameroon and Gabon are very rich in species and local endemics, and are interpreted as Pleistocene refugia for forest flora and fauna. Central Africa is by far the richest in Africa for butterflies, and also exhibits very high endemism for this group. The region has the highest levels of bird diversity, with 655 species and subspecies of passerines with a level of 36 percent endemism. It is also the richest in mammal diversity (based on ungulates and diurnal primates), with 58 species and very high levels of endemism (45 percent).

The region contains a number of wildlife species of economic significance, such as elephants (ivory), crocodiles (food and skins), primates (for pets, food and biomedical research), birds (food and pets), and numerous ungulates and fish that are locally important as sources of protein. The forests contain many tree species of high timber value and silvicultural potential. The value of plant species as new food sources as well as medicines is currently being explored but largely unknown. Available information indicates that for some products trade is significant, but its value to the economies of the region is poorly understood and rarely acknowledged.

Gabon

Gabon has an 800-kilometre coast with the Atlantic Ocean and comprises most of the drainage basin of the Ogooué River, together with the basins of several smaller rivers. Geomorphologically, the country can be divided into two zones: the sedimentary basin along the coast, and the uplands in the interior. The sedimentary basin is a low-lying and rather flat coastal zone, about 50-150 kilometres wide, with massive sandy deposits. Long-shore drifts deflect river mouths northwards behind sandy spits. The Cretaceous sedimentary rocks underlying the entire area yield oil at shallow depths.

The interior uplands consist mainly of plateau surfaces of about 450 to 600 metres, dissected by the Ogooué River system into distinct blocks. The plateau surface is broken by the Monts de Cristal in the north and the Massif du Chaillu in the south. The highest mountains rise to just over 1000 metres. In some places the Precambrian matrix has been covered by sediments of later geological eras.

Gabon lies entirely within the Guineo-Congolian regional centre of endemism, the most biologically diverse region on the continent. Tropical forests cover about 85 percent of the country. Differences in the tropical forest structure are primarily based upon rainfall distribution and geographic barriers such as rivers and mountains. The country is characterized by coastal evergreen forest in the north, and semi-deciduous forest in most of remaining area, with high density *okoumé* stands. In the north-east of the country, the mountains are covered up to a height of about 950 to 1000 metres with a type of vegetation known as "elfin thicket," found nowhere else in Africa. Regions of the south-east and south-west are largely savanna, which is thought to be a climatic remnant from a drier past. Only some savanna strips parallel to the coast seem to be in a stage of succession between bare sand dune and forest. Gallery forests occur throughout the savanna areas. Tidal mangrove forests occur in all estuaries, bays and lagoons along the coast. The total area of tidal forest is probably in excess of 350,000 hectares. Numerous shallow lakes fringed by extensive swamps occur on the coastal plain.

Gabon is one of the few countries in the world that still offers exceptional potential for conservation. Along with the adjacent areas of Cameroon and Congo, Gabon forms what is probably the largest intact forest block remaining in Africa. The major ecosystems too are largely intact. Although many areas of forest have been exploited to varying extent for either timber or shifting cultivation, large tracts of forest remain untouched, and the general opinion seems to be that forest degradation will not be as drastic as in many other tropical countries. Deforestation rates are very low (less than 1 percent per annum), and of all the African countries, Gabon is expected to lose the smallest portion of its forest area during the next 50 years. Forest exploitation is highly selective, with 90 percent of the trees cut being of one species—*okoumé* *Aucomea klaineana*, an important species for use as plywood and veneer. The ecological impact of shifting cultivation is not serious as population densities are very low. As people have become more sedentary, human activities have had less influence on the forest. As a result, secondary forests are found in remote, presently uninhabited places.

Rural communities in Gabon rely upon bushmeat to meet a major part of their protein requirements. Since independence in 1960, the country has experienced a rural exodus as people leave economically depressed areas in search of employment in the cities. Three residents out of four are living in cities, and have brought the habit and preference for eating bushmeat, thus creating a market for these products. Initial studies indicate that as much as four tons of bushmeat may be entering Libreville every month. What was essentially a subsistence-based activity is today an extensive commercial trade. A current project of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is looking into bushmeat trade; its final report at the end of the year will give this project more detailed insight into this trade.

Various aspects of the trade indicate that bushmeat is not only an important contributor to Gabon's economic development, and possibly a major contributor to GNP, but also that it satisfies many of the criteria for what is termed "effective rural development." These criteria include the following: the trade is carried out in rural areas using the most appropriate forms of technology; there is a direct return to rural communities and households engaged in the activity; and there are few outside inputs upon which the activity depends. The lack of attention to this sector means that questions of sustainability have not been addressed. Over-exploitation of the resource may result in reduced availability of bushmeat, possibly reduced access to protein, reduced income in rural areas, and increased import costs in an effort to replace lost protein sources. Improved knowledge and management of the resource could result in sustainability and improved financial benefits. Furthermore, Gabon is engaged in an elephant conservation programme, and as a member of the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), is applying the convention's rules and regulations to the ivory trade.

2. Host country strategy

Gabon, along with other countries in the region, addresses the issue of wildlife trade in three significant ways.

International commitments and treaties

As noted above, Gabon is, like most countries of the central African region, a member of CITES. CITES establishes the international framework for the prevention of trade in endangered species and for effective regulation of trade in others. It gives producer and consumer countries their share of the joint responsibility for wildlife conservation, creates the necessary means for the international cooperation which is essential for fulfilling this responsibility, provides for monitoring of international trade, and identifies the species of wild fauna and flora at risk.

CITES regulates international trade in specimens of species of wild fauna and flora on the basis of a system of permits and certificates issued when certain conditions are met. These papers need to be presented when consignments of specimens leave or enter a country. Each country designates one or more management authorities responsible for issuing these permits and certificates, subject to advice from one or more scientific authorities designated for that purpose. This is the most important international convention related to wildlife trade.

Gabon is also a member of the following conventions: the African Convention, the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar), the World Heritage Convention, and the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA). Additionally, Gabon is a member of two regional groupings affecting trade—Union douanière des états d'Afrique Centrale (UDEAC) and Communauté économique des états d'Afrique Centrale (CEEAC).

National legislation and institutions

The most recent change in legislation regarding environmental protection and improvements is the adoption of law 16/93 of 29 August 1993, which complements forest law 1/82 of 22 July 1982. Chapter V of this new law proposes five items of which those most relevant to the current project are stated below:

- **Item 22:** The fauna and flora are managed on a rational basis, bearing in mind the need to avoid their overuse and extinction, to preserve the genetic stock and to ensure maintenance of essential ecological processes, in accordance with present governing law requirements.
- **Item 23:** Industrial, urban, agricultural, mining, tourist or other activities likely to harm fauna and flora, or virtually creating damage to their natural habitats, are either forbidden or subject to mandatory authorization from the ministry in charge of the environment, under conditions spelled out in legislative texts and of the requirements of the present law.
- **Item 25:** Animal and vegetation species which are rare or threatened with extinction, as well as their natural habitats, are subject to additional protection. Their exploitation, sale or export are controlled. Their use for the needs of scientific research is either forbidden or subject to prior authorization in accordance with current legislation. The requirements pertaining to the application of the present law, and those from current legislation, determine the listing of these protected animal and vegetation species, as well as modalities of their protection and the preservation of their natural habitats.
- **Item 26:** The introduction of exotic animal and vegetation species assessed by competent authorities as likely to harm native animal and vegetation species is either forbidden, or subject to prior authorization in accordance with legal requirements.

This project begins a new era in the management of biodiversity. During the last two years, Gabon has signed agreements adopted by the international community in Rio, notably the Convention on Biological Diversity. The country has also participated in all international, regional and subregional meetings concerning wildlife management.

The process to classify four sites as protected areas, in addition to such existing areas, is currently under way. These sites are:

- The forest zone of Nfoulezem, south of Libreville, covering 275,000 hectares which will serve as a site to train Gabonese in forest inventory and management

- The "réserve des monts Doudou," for which a preliminary study has been completed
- The Ogooué-Lékoni-Sébé zone, the decree for which has been approved by the council of ministers (cabinet)
- The "rivière des pélicans" reserve in the Moyen Ogooué province.

Gabon has several projects with conservation and wildlife management components, including:

- The project "forêt des Abeilles" for the conservation of the sun-tailed guenon, in association with the primate laboratory of PAIMPONT, several European university institutes, a non-governmental organization (NGO) and a logging company
- The forest ecosystems' project of Central Africa supported by the European Union
- The Gamba protected area complex management project supported by WWF through several countries and private industry.

By 4 March 1987, Gabon had adopted nine decrees to implement law 1/82 which regulates conservation, development, and forest exploitation within the forestry domain. Since the beginning of 1993, six new texts proposed by the wildlife department are being considered by the government, including:

- A decree for wildlife protection to complete Decree 189 of 4 March 1987
- A decree regulating hunting periods
- A decree for national parks regulation
- A decree to regulate the commerce in trophy-hunting products
- A law to regulate rates and taxes relevant to wildlife and hunting
- A decree determining the content, delivery modalities, and conditions of use for licenses for hunting and wild animal capture.

A new structure for the Ministry of Waters and Forests, Fish and the Environment (Ministère des eaux et forêts, de la pêche et de l'environnement) has recently been approved by the government. It anticipates:

- Staff redeployment to the field to assure efficient daily management and to supervise resource users
- Strengthening the qualitative capacity of the headquarters unit in conservation, and to elaborate national policy and implementation guidelines.

This rationalization of human resources use was the subject of an evaluation to restructure the national forestry school, Ecole nationale des eaux et forêts (ENEF), and is currently being implemented.

This UNDP/GEF project reflects Gabon's interest and commitment to sustainable natural resources management. It is characterized by defining the necessary needs (quality and quantity) to reinforce and improve institutional capacity (personnel and equipment). The implementation of the project will be within this context.

3. Prior and ongoing assistance

To date, there have been a number of efforts concerned with supporting conservation activities in the region. Primary support has come from three sources: international NGOs, bilateral and multilateral aid. There are also a number of collaborative projects involving a variety of these funding agencies. Past and current activities, both in the region and in Gabon, are listed below.

Regional

EU

The promotion of forest conservation by governments in cooperation with the EU. The program involves: developing an action plan for forest conservation by planning protected areas systems including rainforest habitats; formulating sustainable use programmes in the forest zone; assessing conservation needs of forest wildlife; and disseminating research results.

World Bank/United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/WWF

Developing a tri-national protected area spanning the frontiers of Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and Congo. This protected area will encompass a significant block of important wildlife habitat in central Africa. Discussion of including Gabon in a system of central African protected areas has taken place.

Gabon

WCI

Studies of the impact of hunting on forest wildlife populations in the Makokou region. Studies of the biological impacts of logging on forest wildlife based at the Lopé Reserve. Advice on protected area development. Surveys of forest elephants throughout the country.

WWF

The Government of Gabon and WWF signed an agreement on 12 September 1991 to establish a WWF representation and to recognize its contribution to government efforts in conserving the natural resources of Gabon. The country office is based in Libreville and is responsible for project development and coordination within the context of the WWF Gabon

Country Programme. It acts as a liaison between government agencies and departments, international aid agencies, and NGOs in Gabon, and provides technical assistance to the government's Department of Wildlife.

Institutional support to the Department of Wildlife

The economic crisis in Gabon, primarily due to the drop in world oil prices, has reduced government funding for the Department of Wildlife. As a first response, WWF provided funding to repair vehicles in the Lopé Reserve. This programme has now been expanded to provide material support to the Gabonese Department of Wildlife. At present, the department has a staff of sixty. There are three anti-poaching units in Moukalaba, Lopé and Setté-Cama, the last established with WWF funding. To date, funds have been used to repair and maintain vehicles in the protected areas of the country, and to purchase two vehicles for the mobile anti-poaching units. Funds have also been used to purchase radio equipment and to re-equip the wildlife department's office following a fire in 1990. The department has begun a public awareness campaign to inform people of the importance of environmental conservation, and the role that the department plays. Continued funding will enable the wildlife department to continue to expand its activities and will give it some flexibility to respond to specific conservation needs as they arise. In particular, the repair and maintenance of vehicles and radio equipment will be needed for the anti-poaching efforts. If conservation in the long term is to be successful in Gabon, it is essential that those charged with management of the country's natural resources be given the support and resources necessary to do the job.

Two efforts that are essential to conservation in Gabon are:

- Improving the management and infrastructure development in the Gamba protected area complex. Establish an administrative and management structure—housing and office construction—for the Petit Loango Game Reserve in Gabon. Develop a coherent management programme for conservation and exploring small-scale, locally-based development activities in and around the Gamba complex.
- Establishing a national environmental education programme. Introduce environmental education curricula into the Gabonese school system. Develop non-formal education and public awareness methods in both the rural areas and urban centres of the country.

Study of the impact of elephants on agriculture

In collaboration with the African Elephant Conservation Coordinating Group (AECCG), WWF began monitoring the impact of elephants on agriculture in Gabon in July 1993. As elephants are distributed throughout Gabon, the interface between humans and elephants covers a large area, and problems are widespread. If elephant conservation is to be successful in Gabon, this interaction must be better understood and solutions to conflicts must be found. It

is difficult to convince rural peoples who have been fighting against elephants raiding their crops that conservation of the species is important, without providing solutions to their problems. The first phase of this project, which examines the impact of crop-raiding upon rural communities, the distribution in time and space of raiding, and the elephants that do the raiding, will suggest solutions to address the problem. The project's second phase will test proposed solutions to crop-raiding and evaluate alternative wildlife control measures, using adaptive management in close coordination with ongoing WWF field-based projects.

The importance and value of wildlife use in the economy of Gabon

The abundance of wildlife provides the human population with access to diverse bushmeat sources—a dietary and cultural tradition. This is particularly true in rural communities where subsistence, and often commercial, hunting is practiced openly. Changing this dietary preference is extremely difficult because of bushmeat's cultural significance, and its value as an animal protein. Bushmeat is of particular relevance in Gabon where national cattle production constitutes less than 15 percent of domestic consumption demands. Unfortunately, little information is available on the actual extent and value of wildlife use in Gabon. Preliminary information collected by WWF from four major population centres—Libreville, Oyem, Franceville and Port Gentil—indicates that the amount of bushmeat currently being consumed is possibly far greater than previously estimated. The WWF bushmeat project will be completed by December 1993. Options and recommendations may include village organized anti-poaching projects (for instance, in the Gamba complex area), a pilot "game-ranching" project, and the commercialization of certain types and degrees of the bushmeat trade.

Training programmes in wildlife management

Training opportunities in conservation for Gabonese outside of the country have traditionally come from two sources: the Garoua Wildlife School, Cameroon; and Montpellier University in France. Garoua has trained a few mid-level Gabonese in wildlife management, and WWF provides two awards for the training of Gabonese students every two years. The Garoua School provides the sole wildlife-oriented training programme in francophone Africa, and serves as a valuable experience for wildlife students. Two upper-level Department of Wildlife personnel have recently received Master's degrees in wildlife management from Montpellier University. WWF will explore funding sources to continue the support of Gabonese to attend such a programme.

Development of an in-country training programme is taking longer than planned due to attempts to link up the ENEF programme with field work at the Institut de recherche en ecologie tropicale (IRET)-Makokou. Initial discussions were carried out with the staff at ENEF on upgrading their wildlife curriculum two years ago. There is an excellent infrastructure, both classroom and field, to improve local capabilities. Various agriculture and rural development training centres, and existing and planned WWF supported field projects could be used. Funding for fieldwork is to be included in the project site-specific budgets. With the broad spectrum of its activities, WWF is addressing country-wide conservation issues institutionally.

Two other international NGOs are conducting conservation efforts in Gabon. MBG is performing botanical surveys and rainforest conservation studies, while IUCN is reviewing and planning a protected area system for the country. IUCN is also conducting an institutional survey regarding NGOs active in the central African region. The results of this survey might be used to select Gabonese NGOs to collaborate with this GEF project.

Bilateral aid

Bilateral aid projects are underway with the following partners.

- *Germany.* Support for the rehabilitation of the ENEF, the primary training institution in forest and wildlife management in the country.
- *France.* Support for improved silvicultural techniques in the propagation of *okoumé* in both natural stands and plantations. Coordination of the country's Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP).
- *Holland.* Research on the sustainable management of tropical forests in collaboration with TROPENBOS.
- *United States.* Support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for conservation activities in the Gamba protected area complex, and equipment support to the wildlife department from the U.S. Department of Defense.

Multilateral aid

Gabon receives aid from the following multilateral donors for conservation projects including:

- *World Bank.* Development of a forest/environment project focusing on restructuring agencies charged with environmental management, better forest management practices, and improved wildlife management.
- *UNDP.* Support for the development of a National Environmental Action Plan. Support for the preparation by Gabon for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).
- *EU.* Improved management of, and sustainable development in and around, the Lopé Reserve.
- *Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).* Past studies of forest productivity and wildlife management needs and potential.

4. Institutional framework for subsector

Due to the multitude of institutions involved in environmental matters, it has not been possible to clearly define a strategy on the environment. This multiplicity of institutions has resulted in an overlapping of institutional functions, a duplication of efforts, and a waste of resources. This problem has been partially addressed by combining the Ministry of Waters and Forests with the General Directorate for the Environment to form the Ministry of Waters and Forests, Fish and the Environment (MEFPE).

The MEFPE is the primary institution responsible for implementing the government's strategy for the forestry sector. Within MEFPE, the main implementing institution responsible for conservation issues is the Directorate of Wildlife and Hunting (DFC) which supervises two services and three field brigades (Moukalaba, Lopé and Setté Cama), with a total staff of seventy-five. DFC is responsible for:

- The formulation of a master plan on wildlife conservation
- The implementation of sound management and conservation techniques for wildlife resources
- The coordination and supervision of activities pertaining to wildlife
- The collection of statistics on, and monitoring of, wildlife populations
- Collaboration with national and international organizations involved in wildlife issues.

The DFC, the CITES management authority for Gabon, is responsible for ensuring adherence to CITES regulations. All international movement of wildlife products is controlled by DFC, as are policies relating to the utilization of wildlife within Gabon.

The Directorate for the Environment and the Protection of Nature (DGEPN) has recently been added to the MEFPE and is responsible for:

- Elaborating and implementing government policies pertaining to the environment and the protection of nature
- Protecting and preserving natural systems
- Studying and monitoring the environment and ecosystems
- Promoting and facilitating contacts with the donor community on matters relating to the environment.

The National Centre for Anti-Pollution, the National Committee on Man and the Biosphere, and the National Council on the Environment also fall under the tutelage of DGEPN. MEFPE is represented in all nine provinces of the country. However, the number of technical staff posted to the field is minimal, and, as a result, technical capabilities are poor and need to be improved.

The Ministry of Tourism and National Parks (MTPN) was established this year as a result of the DGEPN moving to the MEFPE. The central organization of MTPN consists primarily of the General Directorate of Tourism (DGT), which is responsible for the formulation and implementation of tourism policy. MTPN has no representation outside of Libreville, and is therefore unable to undertake any activity in the field.

B. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

1. Problem to be addressed and the present situation

The central African region is acknowledged today as one of the most important areas in Africa for the conservation of biological diversity. Wildlife use and trade, both within the region and internationally, have played a significant role in regional development as both a source of income and as subsistence-level support. As populations grow, and more efficient methods of exploitation are put into practice, pressure on the resource base increases. Governments in the region have indicated that they lack the financial and technical resources to address over-exploitation of resources and uncontrolled trade. Until now the role trade and commerce plays in biodiversity conservation, and the institutional basis required to ensure sustainable use, have not been addressed by the international community or the countries of the region.

The knowledge of the resource base upon which sound policies and decisions can be made is poor, both in terms of what is available and the levels of utilization. The government agencies charged with management, monitoring, and control of natural resource exploitation have limited human and material resources available. The Gabonese government, in collaboration with the international community, however, is putting in place mechanisms to avoid future resource over-exploitation and uncontrolled trade to assure sustainable management of fauna and flora. The experience gained in the present project will serve as a reference for future action on a larger scale in the subregion for the conservation of biological diversity.

2. Expected end-of-project situation

The project should result in improved conservation of biodiversity through effective management of wildlife trade in Gabon due to:

- Improved knowledge of major wildlife resources impacted in trade
- The review and development of conservation and trade legislation that is adapted to reality

- Better knowledge of the conservation status of major species in trade through field surveys
- Greater appreciation by the authorities of the value of specific species in trade;
- Development of management plans for specific species of value (for example, sustainable exploitation of grey parrots)
- Improved institutional capacity by the Directorate of Wildlife and Hunting (DFC) to manage wildlife resource trade
- Development of a framework for long-term monitoring of local and regional wildlife trade
- Training of management and control personnel.

The project will allow the Gabonese government to develop an efficient methodology for the monitoring and control of wildlife trade. It will also allow the government and local communities to benefit from this trade. The objectives of the project are to put in place the mechanisms to mobilize the financial needs of the institutions charged with conservation and management of wildlife resources, and to ensure that the profits generated benefit local communities. Overall, the project is expected to contribute to effective wildlife management in Gabon.

3. Target beneficiaries

The project will directly benefit the government agency charged with wildlife management, the Direction de la faune et de la chasse, as well as outside agencies who are concurrently involved with trade control (such as customs officials and security forces). The project will provide them with a structural framework providing long-term efficiency in their work, well-trained personnel, and a mechanism to continue training staff. The formulation of pilot projects for the improved valuation of wildlife trade (which are outputs of the project) will allow the agencies to initiate programmes that reconcile the economic development, the conservation of biodiversity, and the financial benefits to local communities from sustainable wildlife trade.

The project will also aid the rural communities who rely on wildlife as part of their livelihood. It will work with these communities to develop systems whereby they become directly responsible for management of wildlife resources, and will receive benefits directly. The project will train rural communities in monitoring wildlife populations important for consumption and trade.

The project will also benefit, indirectly, the entire population of Gabon through better management of wildlife resources and reduced threat of wasteful exploitation. In the long term,

the country will benefit from legal, sustainable exploitation of bushmeat, as well as access to legal and sustainable sources of income from national and international wildlife trade. The sustainable use of wildlife resources will conserve biodiversity, and maintain ecosystems and the life support systems that communities rely upon to fulfill their basic living requirements.

4. Project strategy and implementation arrangements

There are three primary avenues for start-up of the project. First, a formal mechanism of project implementation will be established in collaboration with the Gabonese government, with technical assistance from WWF. The project will ensure a transfer of knowledge between international experts and national managers, administrators, and members of local communities. Special attention will be given to the reinforcement of management capacity and functioning of the DFC in the domain covered by this project.

The second aspect of project start-up is the training of national managers charged with project execution. Within the DFC and the project sites, a needs evaluation will be conducted on which a training programme will be based. The Ecole nationale des eaux et forêts (ENEF) and the Lopé Programme will serve as priority frameworks for training and/or upgrading of national managers.

Finally, start-up will involve identifying competent local partners (for example, scientific institutions and local NGOs) for the joint realization of specific studies and activities. Rural communities will be selected to participate in developing a programme of local management of natural resources.

Project activities will be conducted in buffer zones that will be identified on the basis of current hunting activities, and with particular reference to:

- The extent of the territory, the forest density, the importance of biological diversity and in particular of wildlife trade
- Insufficiency of available staff
- Coordination with other relevant wildlife conservation projects
- Possibilities for sharing human resources and materials with other directorates within the Ministry of Waters and Forests, Fish and the Environment (MEFPE)
- Possibilities for developing an efficient methodology for monitoring and controlling wildlife trade.

The project will be initiated in a step-by-step process. Project staff will consult with government agencies to fix the development modalities of the project's activities. These consultations will be followed by:

- Review of the existing legislation on wildlife management, review of the situation in the field, and discussion of possible changes
- Preparation of training programmes for the different categories of agents involved in implementation (Eaux et forêts, customs, gendarmerie)
- Review of DFC structure and function for improvement of its management capabilities
- Development of a wildlife trade monitoring programme, creation of a database, and study of possible means of regulation.

Local community partnerships will be identified to assist the project in field studies to investigate:

- The conservation status of species exported for the international trade, where the volume of exports could pose a threat for the species' survival
- The conservation status of species that are traded for consumption at the local level, for which demand and the level of trade might be a potential threat
- The feasibility of experimental captive breeding operations for the grey parrot with the aim of alleviating pressure on wild populations and providing a sustainable and legal source of animals.

The project will also conduct field trips to countries engaged in similar wildlife conservation programmes.

On the basis of the results of the previous steps, the project will develop several actions to implement mechanisms improving enforcement of national legislation and international agreements, and sustainable management of wildlife trade. In particular, the following documents will be drafted:

- A proposal to reinforce and improve domestic legislation as it is related to utilization and trade in wildlife
- A practical manual for the identification of species in trade, containing summaries of legislation
- Specific management plans for some species important for trade
- A national strategy to improve monitoring and management of wildlife trade related to the conservation of biological diversity and sustainable development.

5. Reasons for UNDP/GEF assistance

UNDP/GEF support will aid the Gabonese government in reinforcing the institutional foundation to strengthen regulatory factors, and in improving its management of natural resources, contributing to global protection of biodiversity on a sustainable basis. UNDP/GEF assistance will improve management of wildlife trade for sustainable use of the natural heritage of the country, balanced development within the national economy from revenue generation where wildlife trade contributes significantly, and the maintenance of an important food source for the local population (85 percent of total protein need).

Where the trade in wildlife is well managed, it can be a sustainable source of income for both the management agencies responsible for wildlife conservation and for rural communities.

The choice of WWF as the implementing subcontractor of this project is justified for the following reasons. WWF is an independent, non-party, non-political, multicultural organization. It cooperates with other conservation organizations, environmental and population institutions, governments, and the public. To achieve its aims, it uses the best available scientific information and listens to local communities, respecting their positions and addressing their needs. It draws its support from a widening spectrum of individuals and organizations. WWF plans its work on a long-term basis, taking into consideration the wider environmental context in which its conservation work takes place. With over thirty years of practical conservation experience, WWF is one of the world's largest independent organizations dedicated to the conservation of nature.

In Africa, WWF has established regional and country representatives who supervise conservation strategies, review programmes, and coordinate activities. The work of WWF is supported by a regional office in Nairobi and country offices in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Madagascar, Tanzania, Zaire and Zambia. Through this network, WWF can access institutional and staff expertise in Africa through staff exchanges, short- and long-term technical assistance, ongoing country and regional programme oversight, and technical backstopping.

6. Special considerations

Participation of local governments and NGOs

In addition to collaboration with the participating government agencies, the project will work with other governmental organizations (GOs) and NGOs to realize several activities for which they have specific skills. Among the GOs within Gabon, Centre national pour la recherche scientifique et technique (CENAREST) is a likely partner for field research and monitoring activities that are foreseen in this project. The Ecole nationale des eaux et forêts (ENEF) will be considered at an early stage of the project as a partner in training.

To be successful with rural communities, this project must address the needs of these communities, and work through traditional authorities and rural government agencies where they

exist. WWF has had some success in contacting these groups through its environmental education programme.

The outcome of conservation action in Gabon depends on the active and effective involvement of its population. Currently, Gabonese NGOs are fairly inexperienced regarding nature conservation issues. It has been demonstrated throughout Africa that collaboration with the local population on conservation or development processes is effective only when it is done through the intermediary of structured legal organizations. Priority objectives can only be reached in the middle or long term if the local populations are active participants through NGOs.

There currently exist in Gabon a few NGOs interested in conservation, including Club des écologistes et naturalistes Africains (CENA), Front des écologistes Gabonais (FEG), and the Inter assistance pour le développement rural (IADR). Currently, these groups are primarily city-based with few activities in rural areas. In order to assure future protection of nature and natural resources by increasing Gabonese participation, it will be necessary to:

- Identify all Gabonese NGOs working on conservation
- Study the operating structure of the most legal and viable of these organizations
- Propose a lasting and autonomous functioning system
- Determine adequate financing criteria
- Identify the relationships between local NGOs, international NGOs, and international agencies.

Participation of other organizations

TRAFFIC

Given its international nature, the TRAFFIC network is well placed to provide support to the project, particularly in terms of documentation, technical assistance, and so on. TRAFFIC participation provides unique access to CITES and other databases, computing assistance, and provision of technical documentation. The project will be in close contact with the TRAFFIC international structure.

WWF

A representation office that has developed a country programme and administers projects is based in Libreville. This office already brings an important institutional support component to the national agencies in charge of conservation. The competence and experience of WWF in certain fields justifies the implementation of the project through WWF, in particular:

- Institutional support to, and a close working relationship with, the Directorate of Wildlife and Hunting (DFC), the primary agency charged with wildlife management in Gabon.

- The monitoring of bushmeat markets, which is already the subject of an active project in Gabon.
- The development of an awareness campaign, a subject in which WWF has much experience in other Africa countries. National public awareness campaigns are currently in existence in Cameroon, Gabon, Madagascar, Tanzania and Zambia.

CITES Secretariat

The Secretariat plays an important role in coordinating and supporting the management authorities of countries that are a party to CITES. The expertise of the Secretariat in several technical subjects will be required for the realization of some project activities. In particular, the collaboration of the CITES Secretariat will be solicited for:

- The production of an identification manual, which is an essential tool for the work of the implementation officers
- The facilitation of two regional training seminars for CITES management authorities, field personnel and customs officers
- The printing of CITES permits on security paper and the printing of security stamps, the use of which prevents to a large extent the falsification of documents, and allows for homogenization of permit types and of the information provided.

World Bank

As a follow-up to World Bank forest/environment assessment missions some years ago, and the development of Bank projects, the governments of the subregion have been reviewing their conservation legislation. Some laws have been altered, or are in the process of being altered, and changes have been brought about in the reorganization of Gabon's Ministère des eaux et forêts, with which the Directorate for the Environment and the Protection of Nature has now been consolidated. To be successful, the project must collaborate closely with the World Bank on legislative and institutional issues.

EU

The European Union, through its European Development Fund, has begun a major regional programme, Conservation and Rational Utilization of Tropical Forest Ecosystems, with projects in seven central African countries including Gabon. While these projects are not all linked to sustainable management of wildlife resources, some of them could prove to be complementary to some project activities. For example, the EU project in and around the Lopé Reserve (central Gabon) intends to develop local capacity to sustainably manage wildlife resources. The project could envisage the development of a joint field effort of captive breeding of game species in villages in the surrounding zone.

Negative aspects of the project

There is growing pressure on the government to reduce public spending, when most of the actions recommended here require increased support. It is thus hard to request extensive support for this project from government authorities. Empowering rural communities to benefit directly from natural resource utilization may reduce the pressure on government to provide more funds.

Funds for this project may be insufficient for institutional support to participating agencies. The government reserves the right to request finance from "Capacity 21" to mobilize additional financial resources.

There are few environmental NGOs with the capacity to contribute to the project from its beginning. Additional funding (for example, from Africa 2000, or in the form of small GEF grants for NGOs) should be sought from sources outside this project to develop and reinforce the capacities of local NGOs.

7. Coordination arrangements

There is no other project in the central Africa region which has an objective similar to this one. However, numerous projects do contribute to conservation and management of protected areas, training, institutional support, public awareness, research, and the sustainable utilization of natural resources. These projects are financed and administered by international NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. Specific forms of support are described in section A3.

To ensure effective project coordination from the ministry directorates, a working group will be created including the National Director, operating under the authority of the minister. The local management structure of the project will collaborate with the international experts under the principle of co-management. This working group will ensure liaison and collaboration with other projects: the World Bank forest/environment project, the European Union project in the Lopé reserve, and the tropical forestry action plan financed by France. This working group should avoid overlapping or duplication of efforts, and should lead to optimal integration of activities and exchanges of information. This coordination should be eased by the fact that both the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of eaux et forêts are partners in most of the other complementary projects discussed in section A3.

8. Counterpart support capacity

The support required from the Gabonese government is diverse in nature and will require the collaboration of several directorates or ministries. It is difficult to assess at this stage whether the government can ensure all aspects of the counterpart support required since it implies contributions in several different fields, including:

- Collaboration of jurists for the review of legislation
- Possible changes to national legislation to decentralize control over natural resources
- Active participation of the agencies responsible for wildlife management, customs, and the gendarmerie in the training seminars
- Secondment of researchers and technicians to participate in the field studies
- Restructuring of some services, and possibly retraining personnel, for the implementation of an appropriate mechanism to manage wildlife trade.

All of the authorities interviewed during the formulation mission are willing to actively participate in this project. Support for the project's goals of implementing national environmental policies and supporting the specific activities outlined in this document, has been verbally expressed in Gabon. Government support capacity requires strengthening, particularly with reference to the allocation of adequate staff levels and the development of new mechanisms for the management of natural resources and wildlife trade. This capacity depends on budgetary levels allowing for staff to be trained, which is an aspect that the formulation mission has not been able to evaluate. For the continuity of project activities, the government should keep in place personnel training by the project for a minimum duration (for example three years).

C. DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

This project will directly contribute to national environmental policies establishing a realistic relationship between economic development and the environment by creating conditions for lasting development. Specifically, the project strives to develop indigenous capacity to:

- Monitor wildlife populations and wildlife trade effectively
- Understand better the impact of trade on wildlife populations and on biological diversity
- Assist in describing and implementing sustainable trade strategies to ensure the long-term survival of wildlife species and ecosystems.

This project supports some of the basic requirements of the government institutions responsible for the protection of the environment, including:

- Prevention of environmental degradation
- Appropriate information and training in environmental issues
- Improved knowledge of the habitat and the sustainable management of its resources.

In general, national environmental policies commit governments to follow, intensify, and enlarge actual activities that help conserve the environment. This project will reinforce appropriate institutional structures and improve procedures to reconcile specific, important aspects of economic development with environmental conservation.

The involvement of rural communities in the management and monitoring of wildlife species will help to increase the understanding of the direct links between the importance of wildlife and local economic needs. When rural communities realize direct benefits from wildlife use, it becomes a resource of importance to be conserved. Rural communities in Gabon must be empowered to manage their own natural resources if these links are to be strengthened. Monitoring of populations will be important to ensure sustainable use of the resource, and to demonstrate to rural communities the link between offtake and impact on wildlife populations.

D. IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES, OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 1

To create a mechanism to sustainably manage wildlife trade in Gabon, and reinforce government and local community capacity to ensure long-term sustainable management and conservation of biodiversity.

Achievement Indicators

The placement of an efficient mechanism to promote institutional strengthening in Gabon; sustainably manage wildlife trade; and satisfactorily fulfil its obligations under CITES. Rural community involvement in the development, management, and monitoring of local systems to sustainably use forest resources, most notably meat as a source of protein.

Output 1.1

Improved knowledge and implementation of national legislation and international treaties through training of personnel. The lack of knowledge about applicable law and poor training of enforcement agents are important causes of the gaps observed in the implementation of legislation and treaties. A training programme will produce personnel that are motivated, competent, and conscious of the role they play in the conservation of biodiversity and the economic development of their country.

Activities for Output 1.1

- 1.1.1 Organization of two national training seminars. The first seminar is for agents of the directorates charged with wildlife conservation and management, including CITES implementation. A second seminar is intended for other agents of control (for example, customs officers and gendarmes). Specialized training schools will be invited to attend these seminars (see Activity 1.1.2). The collaboration of the

CITES Secretariat should be solicited in the organization of these seminars. The Secretariat has extensive experience in facilitating such seminars and has permanent contact with the government's CITES management authorities in the country. The following themes will be included: implementation procedures of CITES and national legislation, role of the customs service, role of governmental departments and committees, fraud prevention, national and international cooperation, and identification of species.

1.1.2 As a follow-up to the training seminars (Activity 1.1.1 above), the implementing agency and the government will select the most qualified persons to ensure long-term future training seminars at the national level. These persons will follow a special training programme facilitated by the implementing agent and other selected partners. The objective is to train staff as resource-persons able to ensure continued technology transfer, and "recycling" of the agents in charge of law enforcement. Ideally, these persons will belong to training institutions or education centres so that the training programme is integrated in the standard course curriculum presented to future agents. The following institutions will be invited to the training seminars: the Ecole nationale des eaux et forêts (ENEF), Université Omar Bongo, and the Union douanière des états de l'Afrique Centrale (UDEAC).

1.1.3 Production of a practical manual for implementation agents. This manual will have two objectives:

- To facilitate the identification of various species of fauna that are important in local and/or international trade. This critical information is presently unavailable. Production of a manual will allow control personnel to identify precisely the species that enter the trade in the bushmeat markets, and those species that are imported or exported. The production of the manual section concerning species listed in the CITES appendices will be solicited from the CITES Secretariat, who already has experience in the development of these manuals.
- To present, in the form of a *vade mecum* or manual, the most important provisions of national and international legislation related to wildlife trade.

Output 1.2

National legislation on management and trade of wildlife adapted to the socioeconomic reality in Gabon and to CITES requirements. The situation prevailing in Gabon at the start of the project demonstrates that:

- Existing legislation is implemented in a very inconsistent and incomplete manner

- Socioeconomic reality has not been affected by adjustments in the legislation
- Central government control over natural resources does not allow direct rural management of, or benefits from, wildlife.

The first point is a matter of institutional capacity and will. The second aspect requires a thorough review of existing legislation and the formulation of proposals to correct distortions. Updated legislation will require important changes, including updating of the lists of totally and partially protected species, adjustment of penalties, and designation of a CITES scientific authority. The third aspect requires major legal and institutional changes in how wildlife resources are managed and to whom the benefits from these resources are distributed. The first two problems must be solved before the third aspect can realistically be addressed.

Activities for Output 1.2

- 1.2.1 Review of national conservation legislation and analysis of potential consequences of changes in legislation. This activity will require the collaboration of the Gabonese government and other concerned agencies. Such a review will focus on all legislation that require updating, and an analysis of present or potential consequences of these changes.
- 1.2.2 Recommend changes to national conservation legislation and requirements for local empowerment to manage natural resources, as well as improved law enforcement.

Output 1.3

Development of a framework for long-term monitoring of wildlife use and trade, and its impact on biological diversity. In most cases, the exploitation of wildlife species occurs without knowing whether the impact on wild populations is harmful, or if the level of exploitation is sustainable. Prior to formulating management plans for these species, it is necessary to undertake field investigations and feasibility studies to determine the impact of the trade, and species status. To ensure that monitoring is long term, rural community inhabitants will be trained to monitor wildlife populations.

Activities for Output 1.3

- 1.3.1 Develop a methodology for monitoring wildlife populations by rural communities. Develop a system of indices of changes in wildlife populations, such as sighting rates, which can form the basis of trade management decisions. This study will be facilitated by an experienced zoologist, in collaboration with rural communities and the national wildlife management authority (the Directorate of Wildlife and

Hunting (DFC)). It will develop a simple method for monitoring changes in the volume and pricing of bushmeat, and the occurrence of wildlife species for sale in the main markets, as well as in selected rural communities. The most feasible method of monitoring forest wildlife populations may be to develop a system of indices, monitoring these over time, and responding to their changes. Such a system has several advantages. It can cover a number of domains such as sighting rates of animals on predetermined, set transects monitored every month (for example, in protected areas, remote unprotected areas and near villages, to cover the range of impacts). The system could monitor trade movements, both legal and illegal (in the case of illegal trade it could be an index of the number of wildlife products—species of animal—confiscated per month). It could also measure changes in the prices offered for bushmeat over time and by area.

Relative changes in these indices, up or down, would serve as indicators of impacts on various species of wildlife. The government can establish allowable rates of change, and if the index falls below (for animal sighting rates), or increases above (if based on confiscated animals) this rate, or a combination, then trade could be halted. Changes in the opposite direction could re-open the trade in given species. The advantage of such an approach is that it is possible to begin almost immediately, it is easy to train people in its methods, and it gives relatively reliable rates of change over time. With the assistance of the implementing agent and DFC, members of selected rural communities will be trained to implement such a monitoring programme. This scientific approach should be seconded by native approaches (knowledge) used for wildlife monitoring. The traditional structure of society or local NGOs could play major roles in motivating people. The programme will be implemented in rural areas to aid communities in better management of their wildlife resources. A second mission by the expert consultant will help analyze the results, adjust methods, and assess the impact of the bushmeat trade on wild populations. A report will be produced by the consultant to recommend future management measures, taking into account the social, economic and managerial aspects of the trade.

Pricing is an important aspect in understanding both the impact of offtake on wildlife populations (i.e., prices rise as they become less available), and the effect of changes in price on consumption patterns. Data collection on pricing of the bushmeat trade will be an integral part of this activity.

- 1.3.2 A field study to assess the importance of wild populations of parrots (particularly *Psittacus erithacus*) and levels of sustainable offtake. The grey parrot is exported, both legally and illegally, by the thousands from the subregion. Its commercial value on the international market and its supposedly high population level justifies a specific study. This will be carried out by an experienced ornithologist who will produce an estimation of the parrot population in Gabon, along with recommendations of the possible sustainable offtake (quota for legal

export) using methods which are socially realistic and avoid high levels of mortality. An assessment of the feasibility of parrot captive breeding will also be made. A consultant, assisted by a national scientist, will train people in selected rural communities so that follow-up work is assured after the principal study. It is estimated that the study will take three months.

Output 1.4

Development of strategies to implement legislation and management policies on wildlife trade, and links with biological diversity conservation.

- 1.4.1 Elaboration of a practical method for decision-making, and for implementation and control of wildlife trade. Based upon the results of other activities (such as review of legislation, training seminars and wildlife monitoring), the implementing subcontractor will collaborate with the government to develop a plan outlining implementation measures that are required to improve management of wildlife trade at different levels in Gabon. This action will allow management authorities to develop systems to ensure improved implementation of CITES regulations. National conservation and trade laws can be upgraded through an appropriate collaboration between agencies, and simple monitoring and control mechanisms. Elaboration of this methodology will continue throughout the project.
- 1.4.2 Development of management plans for trade management in selected species and bushmeat. Based on the results of other activities (parrot study, parrot captive breeding feasibility study, bushmeat study, wildlife monitoring activities), specific management plans will be drafted by the implementing subcontractor and the national assistants who participated in the studies. These plans will include all elements necessary for the Gabonese government to make adequate decisions related to wildlife exploitation planning. In particular, these plans will propose the framework for the sustainable exploitation of parrots and the rational marketing of bushmeat. They will lay out agency responsibilities and the managerial measures required, including financial implications.
- 1.4.3 Formulation of a country strategy for the management of wildlife trade. This strategy will be drafted by the implementing subcontractor and the government on the basis of project activity results. It will constitute the final end-product of the first two years of the project and set the basis for a region-wide approach to this subject. This strategy will summarize the findings and recommendations from project activities in a set of practical guidelines ("actions"). In turn, these guidelines will provide a framework so other countries of the region can benefit from project outputs. Different chapters of the strategy should cover the themes developed in the project: training, legislation and policy, research and monitoring, strategy to implement legislation and management policies on wildlife

trade, and institutional structures. Methods of coordinating this project on a national basis will need to be developed as the project is replicated in the other countries of the region.

Output 1.5

Long-term maintenance of the directorates charged with wildlife conservation and management, and continuation of monitoring activities. Gabon remains a classic example of a centralized bureaucracy in terms of control over natural resources. As a result, management decisions are taken with little or no input from those rural communities most affected by the interaction with wildlife. These communities derive little or no benefit from the resources, and hence have little interest in their conservation. The Wildlife and Hunting Department is viewed as a policing agency, resulting in many of the public relations problems seen elsewhere on the continent. A review is urgently required of the ownership of wildlife resources in Gabon, their management, and their economic value, both to the state and to rural communities. Examples from elsewhere in Africa may serve as a starting point for creative management and financing methodologies.

The recent drop in commodity prices, most seriously oil, holds dramatic consequences for Gabon. Oil revenues are down by at least 50 percent from the 1980s, effectively halving the national budget. Pressure is now increasing to boost other sectors of the economy, with timber becoming particularly important. Support for wildlife management activities has suffered more than other sectors as a result of this loss of revenue.

The Directorate of Wildlife and Hunting (DFC) of Gabon is the poor cousin to the Department of Forestry within the Direction-Générale des eaux et forêts. The relatively recent creation of the DFC is a result of a reorganization in 1983 which created the Ministère des eaux et forêts.

Between 1988 and 1991 the operating budget for the DFC fell by 46 percent. External financing has been extremely limited. Of a total of seventy-four members employed in the DFC, twenty-three are permanent staff. Each permanent staff is therefore responsible for an average of 11,600 square kilometres of the country. The number of staff devoted to field conservation is insufficient, and the DFC has a limited amount of field equipment. During the social turbulence of 1990, the DFC lost its office and all its documentation to fire, effectively destroying its base of operations and all its equipment.

In summary, the capacity to conduct effective conservation in the field is low. There is not enough manpower to effectively manage the protected areas, much less to undertake management activities outside the reserves. The general lack of equipment makes such activities nearly impossible.

The aim of this project component is to improve the institutional capabilities of the DFC to manage Gabon's wildlife resource base. A project such as this, developed over a

three-year timeframe, will not reach a definitive end, but will start guiding the DFC towards improved wildlife management capabilities.

Activities for Output 1.5

- 1.5.1 Provide technical assistance to the DFC. An advisor knowledgeable in wildlife management techniques and development will be appointed to assist the DFC. It must be stressed that this is not a research position. As the project will be coordinated by WWF, it has been agreed that WWF International will recruit the principal technical advisor (PTA). He or she will be supervised by the WWF representative in Libreville.

The PTA will be the technical advisor to the Direction générale des eaux et forêts, and will work with the DFC to define realistic goals and objectives for organizational structure, staff rationalization or increase, and development and implementation of its programmes. The technical advisor will work with DFC staff to improve agency capabilities to develop project and programme proposals for funding by other agencies. The advisor's salary will be paid by the project. WWF will pay the difference in secretary and driver salaries fixed by the project.

- 1.5.2 Development of a process that promotes participation of all parties involved in wildlife resource use and management. The DFC is effectively seen as a policing agency, resulting in many of the public relations problems seen elsewhere on the continent. Gabon remains a classic example of a centralized bureaucracy in terms of control over natural resources. There is no framework that allows those people most dependent on the forest to participate in the policy-making and planning processes. The interaction between resource users and resource managers is antagonistic. This component of the project will develop a conservation strategy with the DFC that identifies attainable objectives and minimizes conflicts of interest.

Two current projects in Gabon may serve as models for this approach. With funding from the EU, a study has been developed on the impact of elephants on agriculture. With support from WWF and the World Bank, a study is being undertaken on the value and importance of bushmeat to the local and national economy, and its impact on wildlife populations. Both projects involve critical issues affecting both humans, notably rural communities, and wildlife, and will serve as important tests of involving rural communities and the DFC in wildlife management issues. Already the number of elephants killed on crop damage control operations has increased in Gabon. The project will work to bring together all parties to develop mutually agreeable solutions. In this regard, examples from elsewhere in Africa may serve as a starting point for creative management and financing methodologies. The project will bring together other African wildlife management agencies with DFC staff to introduce Gabonese

conservation professionals to the wide range of wildlife management techniques currently being tested in Africa. If feasible, site visits for DFC personnel will be conducted with these agencies. Such discussions will include issues such as agency budgets, conditions of service, policy, laws, anti-poaching, and community-based wildlife utilization.

- 1.5.3 Provide material support to DFC. None of the above activities will be possible without basic equipment and maintenance support. Currently, the DFC's fleet of vehicles is five to ten years old, poorly maintained, and expensive to operate. The project will bring in an experienced driver/mechanic to evaluate the state of equipment, identify needs, and help plan a maintenance programme. WWF has recently provided two new vehicles, and at least one other is required in the short term, along with boats to supply transport on the country's river system. The DFC has a basic radio network which requires improvement. Basic items such as uniforms have not been replaced for over two years. As the country's CITES management authority, communications is important and a fax machine is required. Perhaps most critical is a level of funding to deal with unexpected maintenance and other costs. The inflexibility of most budgets means that while expected costs are covered, unexpected expenses are not, though it is these that can bring a project to a halt or greatly reduce its effectiveness. This type of support will improve the ability of DFC to enforce conservation legislation and keep anti-poaching units in the field.

Other relevant ongoing activities

In addition to data collected in the parrot survey, the project will utilize data collected by the bushmeat trade market survey presently being carried out by WWF (as a component of the World Bank funded Forestry and Environment project in Gabon), and data from the WWF project on Impact of Elephants on Agriculture in Gabon. The project will also benefit from WWF's current public education and awareness programme; there is at present no need to duplicate these efforts.

E. INPUTS

1. **UNDP/GEF**
US\$ 1,000,000

Personnel

US\$

International experts

Principal technical advisor, an expert in wildlife management and training (one person for 36 months)	294,000
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Consultants

Expert in environmental/trade legislation (one person for 2 months)	24,000
Expert in wildlife trade issues (one person for 4 months)	48,000
Expert in community-based conservation issues (one person for 5 months)	48,000

Support personnel

Secretary (one person for 36 months)	15,000
Difference in salary fixed by the project to be paid by WWF	
Driver/mechanic (one person for 36 months)	12,000
Difference in salary fixed by the project to be paid by WWF	

Total **441,000**

Official travel

Project travel and study site visits for agency personnel	25,000
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Total **25,000**

Mission costs

Missions by UNDP/GEF office (years 2 and 3)	5,000
Evaluation (mid-term and final)	12,000

Total **17,000**

National professionals

Project administrator (one person for 36 months)	46,800
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Total **46,800**

Subcontracts

Subcontract to CITES Secretariat to carry out a training seminar on CITES implementation with wildlife/CITES management authorities, customs services and police	15,000
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Subcontract to CITES Secretariat to develop an identification manual for wildlife species on CITES appendices	20,000
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Subcontract to NGO/government agencies charged with

wildlife management to support information flow on trade issues between countries	10,000
Subcontract to NGO/government agencies to develop community-based monitoring system	20,000
Project monitoring, supervision and management by WWF	56,400
Total	121,400

Training

Group training (seminar by CITES Secretariat for wildlife management authorities, customs services, and police agencies on improved CITES enforcement); training of trainers	20,000
In-service training (training for host-country nationals on monitoring and trade management project components)	26,500
Rural community training (monitoring techniques)	10,000
Total	56,500

Equipment

Consumables (office supplies)	7,500
Non-consumables (capital equipment)	
4 x 4 vehicles (three at US\$ 31,500)	94,500
Computers/printers (two)	9,859
Telefax (one)	1,600
Habitation (budget currently assumes that this will be provided by the government)	
Total	113,459

Miscellaneous

Operations and maintenance

Telephone costs (US\$ 7,000/year for 3 years)	21,000
Vehicle running costs, maintenance and insurance (US\$ 12,901/year for 3 years)	38,703
Recurrent office costs (US\$ 3,000/year for 3 years)	9,000

Reporting	6,000
Contingency	6,300
Total	81,003

Office of Project Services (OPS) support costs

Total	97,838
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2. Government of Gabon

National personnel

Counterparts legislation (three people for 18 months)

Counterparts monitoring methodology (three people for 54 months)

Counterpart parrot study (one person for 3 months)

Counterparts strategies for wildlife management (three people for 54 months)

Counterparts participatory wildlife resource management (three people for 81 months)

It is expected that one of the counterparts will be given the responsibility of National Director.

In-kind contributions

Tax free, duty free status to project.

Facilities to hold seminars and meetings if necessary.

Access to media.

F. RISKS

One potential risk is a lack of government resources to support components of the project and the implementation of laws. As currently formulated, it is expected that the Gabonese government will provide staff and counterparts to be trained as well as to implement various aspects of the project. If staff is not forthcoming, the project will fail.

Another risk would be overwhelming the institutional capability of the DFC to carry out the project. There are currently two other major projects in Gabon that require a high level of input from the DFC. These projects are the EU central Africa regional project based at the Lopé Reserve in central Gabon, and the extensive Forest/Environment project funded by the World Bank. Both of these projects require staff inputs from the Gabonese government. With a limited number of trained staff available, it may not be possible to rely on the Ministère des eaux et forêts et environment to provide staff critically required for the success of this project.

Another risk is the creation of expectations among rural communities regarding rights, use and benefits from wildlife utilization. This project proposes changing laws and policies in Gabon to empower rural communities with the rights to manage, utilize, and benefit from

wildlife resources. Such activities may create expectations for immediate benefits that may not be possible to meet in the course of the project.

G. PRIOR OBLIGATIONS AND PREREQUISITES

The government should provide a suitable office for the principal technical advisor (PTA) and National Director. It must also inform UNDP/GEF and WWF of the names of counterpart staff prior to beginning the project. The signature of the Government of Gabon to this document indicates its agreement to provide the counterpart and in-kind support specified in sections B and E above, required for project implementation.

H. PROJECT REVIEW, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

1. Project review

The project will be subject to tripartite review (joint review by representatives of the government, executing agency and UNDP) at least once every twelve months, with the first such meeting to be held within the first twelve months of the start of full implementation. The National Project Coordinator shall prepare and submit to each tripartite review meeting a Project Performance Evaluation Report (PPER). Additional PPERs may be requested, if necessary, during the project. A project terminal report will be prepared for consideration at the terminal tripartite review meeting. It shall be prepared in draft sufficiently in advance to allow review and technical clearance by the executing subcontractor at least four months prior to the terminal tripartite review.

2. Evaluation

The project shall be subject to a mid-term evaluation approximately eighteen months after the start of full implementation. The organization, terms of reference, and timing will be decided after consultation among the parties to this document, plus any associated UN subcontractor.

3. Reports

Annual evaluation reports

Every twelve months, the project leader will submit an evaluation report on the status of the project to the Gabonese government, the executing agency, UNDP/GEF and the implementing subcontractor. This report, prepared in collaboration with other project staff, will serve as the primary document upon which the project will be monitored by UNDP/GEF, in addition to the PPERs submitted to the tripartite review meetings. It will describe programme activities and will furnish information to allow for evaluation of progress in relation to the accomplishment of the project's immediate objectives.

Interim reports

Six months after the start of the project, and six months after the submission of each annual evaluation report, the project leader (PTA), in collaboration with other project staff, will prepare a report on the state of the project conforming to requirements set out by the implementing subcontractor.

Final report

This report will be prepared by the project leader (PTA) in collaboration with other project staff, and submitted to the implementing subcontractor and UNDP/GEF four months before the end of the project. This document will describe project accomplishments, work completed, lessons learned, and results obtained. Recommendations will be made regarding future interventions.

I. LEGAL CONTEXT

This Project Document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of Gabon and UNDP, signed by the parties on 11 November 1974. The host country implementing subcontractor shall, for the purposes of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement, refer to the government cooperating agency described in that agreement.

J. BUDGET

The project budget is attached.

**PROJECT BUDGET COVERING GOVERNMENT OF GABON
COUNTERPART CONTRIBUTION
(in CFA)**

PROJECT COMPONENTS		TOTAL AMOUNT M/M	YEAR 1 M/M	YEAR 2 M/M	YEAR 3 M/M
*010	Project Personnel				
*17	National Professionals				
017-001	National Experts				
(3)	Counterparts Legislation	5.400.000	2.700.000	2.700.000	
		18.0	9.0	9.0	
(3)	Counterparts Monitoring Methodology	8.100.000		4.050.000	4.050.000
		54.0		27.0	27.0
(1)	Counterparts Parrot Study	450.000		450.000	
		3.0		3.0	
(3)	Counterparts Strategies for Wildlife Management	8.100.000		4.050.000	4.050.000
		54.0		27.0	27.0
(3)	Counterparts Participatory Wildlife Resource Management	12.150.000	4.050.000	4.050.000	4.050.000
		81.0	27.0	27.0	27.0
17-99	SUB-TOTAL	34.200.000	6.750.000	15.300.000	12.150.000
		210.0	36.0	93.0	81.0
019	COMPONENT TOTAL	34.200.000	6.750.000	15.300.000	12.150.000
		210.0	36.0	93.0	81.0
099	BUDGET TYPE TOTAL	34.200.000	6.750.000	15.300.000	12.150.000
		210.0	36.0	93.0	81.0

PROJECT BUDGET COVERING UNDP CONTRIBUTIONS

		(IN U.S. DOLLARS)											
		1994			1995			1996					
CMBL	DESCRIPTION	TOTALS	AOS	\$	AOS								
		\$											
COUNTRY: GABON													
PROJECT NUMBER: GAB/92/G33/A/1G/31													
PROJECT TITLE: GEF-WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PROJECT													
10	PERSONNEL												
1602	UNDP MISSIONS	5,000	450	0	0	2,500	225	2,500	225	2,500	225	2,500	225
1603	OTHER MISSIONS	12,000	1,080	0	0	8,000	720	8,000	720	4,000	360	4,000	360
19	COMPONENT TOTAL	17,000	1,530	0	0	10,500	945	10,500	945	6,500	585	6,500	585
20	SUBCONTRACTS												
2101	W.W.F.	779,203	85,712	331,550	36,471	257,350	28,309	257,350	28,309	190,303	20,933	190,303	20,933
29	COMPONENT TOTAL	779,203	85,712	331,550	36,471	257,350	28,309	257,350	28,309	190,303	20,933	190,303	20,933

PROVISIONAL WORKPLAN
(continued)

PRODUCTS	ACTIVITIES	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
		<p>4. DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENT LEGISLATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES ON WILDLIFE TRADE, AND LINKS WITH BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY CONSERVATION</p>	<p>1. ELABORATION OF A PRACTICAL METHOD FOR DECISION-MAKING, AND IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTROL OF WILDLIFE TRADE</p> <p>2. DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR TRADE MANAGEMENT IN SELECTED SPECIES AND BUSHMEAT</p> <p>3. FORMULATION OF A COUNTRY STRATEGY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE TRADE</p>										
<p>5. LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE OF THE DIRECTORATES CHARGED WITH WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUATION OF MONITORING ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>1. PROVISION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE DFC</p> <p>2. DEVELOPMENT OF PROCESS THAT PROMOTES PARTICIPATION OF ALL PARTIES INVOLVED IN WILDLIFE RESOURCE USE AND MANAGEMENT</p> <p>3. PROVISION OF MATERIAL SUPPORT TO DFC</p>												

Annex 2

SCHEDULE OF REVIEWS, PROJECT EVALUATION AND ACTIVITY REPORTS

Year 1

Month 6	Semestrial Activity Report
Month 10	Project Results and Evaluation Report
Month 11	Tripartite Review Meeting
Month 12	Semestrial Activity Report

Year 2

Month 6	Semestrial Activity Report
Month 6	Mid-term Evaluation
Month 10	Project Results and Evaluation Report
Month 11	Tripartite Review Meeting
Month 12	Semestrial Activity Report

Year 3

Month 6	Semestrial Activity Report
Month 10	Project Results and Evaluation
Month 11	Terminal Tripartite Review Meeting
Month 12	Final Report