

PROJECT SUMMARY

PROJECT IDENTIFIERS

1. Project name: <i>Sustainable protected area development in Namaqualand</i>	2. GEF Implementing Agency: <i>World Bank</i>
3. Country in which the project is being implemented: <i>South Africa</i>	4. Country eligibility: <i>South Africa has ratified the CBD and meets all other requirements</i>
5. GEF focal area: <i>Biodiversity</i>	6. Operational program: <i>OP1 – Arid and semi-arid ecosystems</i>
7. Project linkage to national priorities, action plans, and programs: <i>Nationally, Namaqualand is recognized as a priority for expansion of the protected area system. South African National Parks are committed to the establishment of three large (40 – 50 000 ha) parks in the area. WWF:SA are allocating funds from a trust to acquire the land for these parks</i>	
8 GEF national operational focal point and date of country endorsement: <i>Ministry of Environment Affairs and Tourism</i>	

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

9. Project rationale and objectives <i>(1) To identify and establish a protected area system for conserving the globally significant biodiversity of Namaqualand;</i> <i>(2) Training for, and involvement of local communities in park development, thereby improving attitudes towards conservation as an alternative to communal grazing.</i> <i>(3) Assessment and valuation of different forms of land use.</i>	Indicators: <i>(1) Efficiency and effectiveness of protected area system;</i> <i>(2) Direct benefits of park development accrue to local communities;</i> <i>(3) Increasing support for the protected area system among local communities;</i> <i>(4) Spontaneous initiatives for conservation-based business development on communal lands.</i> <i>(5) Estimates of the ecological and economic sustainability of different forms of land use.</i>
10. Project outcomes: <i>(1) Regional and global impact of preserving the world's richest arid-land biota;</i> <i>(2) Replicable models for training of local communities in the conservation and ecotourism business;</i> <i>(3) Dynamic ecological-economic models for land use policy in arid regions.</i>	Indicators: <i>(1) Biodiversity is preserved in a minimum of 6.5% the world's only significant arid-land "hotspot";</i> <i>(2) Tangible benefits (i.e. employment and training opportunities) from reserve system to four communities on communal lands;</i> <i>(3) Demonstrable improvement in attitudes of local communities towards conservation as a form of land use;</i> <i>(4) Establishment of at least two eco-businesses in communal lands;</i> <i>(5) Ecologically and economically appropriate land use policies are enacted.</i>
11. Project activities to achieve outcomes (costs in US\$) <i>(1) Planning for and acquiring land for a</i>	Indicators: <i>(1) Representative protected area system;</i>

<p><i>representative protected area system (US\$2 million);</i> <i>(2) Baseline development of the protected area system (US\$2 million);</i> <i>(3) Refurbishment of training and resource facility (US\$200 000);</i> <i>(4) Training activities (US\$440 000);</i> <i>(5) Resource economic workshop (US\$30 000).</i></p>	<p><i>(2) Functional system in terms of economic sustainability, adequacy of management, information, tourism opportunities etc.;</i> <i>(3) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the facility to fulfill its functions;</i> <i>(4) Employment of trainees in park system and adjacent ecotourism business; development of ecobusiness entrepreneurs;</i> <i>(5) Implementation of policies to reverse desertification trends</i></p>																		
<p>12. Estimated budget (in US\$):</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>PDF</td> <td>\$ 10 000</td> <td>Funded by SA Nat. Parks & UCT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>GEF:</td> <td>\$ 748 000</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Domestic co-financing</td> <td>\$2 400 000</td> <td>Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust (WWF:SA)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$2 125 000</td> <td>South African National Parks</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$ 105 000</td> <td>University of Cape Town</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL:</td> <td>\$5 738 000</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		PDF	\$ 10 000	Funded by SA Nat. Parks & UCT	GEF:	\$ 748 000		Domestic co-financing	\$2 400 000	Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust (WWF:SA)		\$2 125 000	South African National Parks		\$ 105 000	University of Cape Town	TOTAL:	\$5 738 000	
PDF	\$ 10 000	Funded by SA Nat. Parks & UCT																	
GEF:	\$ 748 000																		
Domestic co-financing	\$2 400 000	Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust (WWF:SA)																	
	\$2 125 000	South African National Parks																	
	\$ 105 000	University of Cape Town																	
TOTAL:	\$5 738 000																		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Rationale and objectives

Namaqualand, a winter-rainfall desert region of some 50 000 km², is recognized as a significant and threatened global center of plant diversity and endemism. It is home to the world's largest and most charismatic succulent flora and is internationally renowned for its annual spring flowering display. The area is also a center of diversity and endemism for reptiles and many invertebrate groups. Ecotourism, particularly during the spring season, is a relatively small but rapidly growing component of the region's economy. This unique ecosystem is seriously threatened by mining and overgrazing, especially on communally-owned lands. For these reasons, Namaqualand has been identified as a priority for expansion of the reserve system in many documents, including the South African white paper on biodiversity.

The proposed activity is consistent with GEF operational program 1, "Biodiversity: Arid and semi-arid ecosystems". The first major objective is to plan, and acquire land and develop a system of protected areas that is representative of Namaqualand's biodiversity. The second objective is to strengthen these conservation initiatives by creating opportunities for local communities to benefit from these protected areas. The third objective is to assess the economic value of conservation in comparison to alternative, often competing forms of land use and to use the results of the analysis as a means of influencing policy on land use.

Current situation

The current protected area system is grossly inadequate, including only three reserves that together comprise 3.5% of the region. One of these reserves, the Richtersveld National Park (162 445 ha), has been established on the basis of a contract between SANP and the community who own the land and continue to use it for grazing, albeit under certain restrictions. Another, Goegab Nature Reserve (14 856 ha), is a provincial (Northern Cape) reserve managed by its seriously weakened conservation authority. The last reserve is the tiny (900 ha) Skilpad Wildflower Reserve, a matrix of old fields and natural habitat managed as a tourist facility by WWF:SA.

Owing to financial constraints within SANP, and institutional weaknesses and drastic budget cuts for provincial conservation agencies, insufficient state funding is available for acquiring land for expanding the protected area system in Namaqualand. However, a number of initiatives are nonetheless underway.

1. SANP is establishing a contractual national park (hereafter referred to as "Coastal Park") on land owned by De Beers Consolidated Diamond Mines along the coast. This 45 000 ha park will provide access to the region's diverse coastal and marine ecosystems, and will provide opportunities for year-round tourism.
2. WWF:SA have recently purchased, using finances from a trust fund, 45 000 ha of land from De Beers to expand the Skilpad reserve. This area, which was proclaimed a national park in July 1998, will conserve a diverse array of montane and lowland ecosystems; it also has excellent potential for supporting large game

species (e.g. black rhinoceros, gemsbok). The proposed park is adjacent to communally-owned land and a small settlement (Soebatsfontein), where a resource and training center will be established. SANP have committed themselves to establishing several posts to initiate park development.

3. WWF:SA are contributing, via the trust fund, a series of studies undertaken by the University of Cape Town, to identify an efficient and effective protected area system for Namaqualand. At this stage, recommendations are to establish an additional large (ca. 50 000 ha) reserve in biologically unique Knersvlakte in southern Namaqualand, using trust funds for land acquisition. SANP have committed themselves to establishing a national park in the area. Western Cape Nature Conservation initiated a biosphere reserve planning process in the same area several years ago. The two organizations are collaborating in park development for the area.

While local finances and resources are available to expand and, to a lesser extent, develop the protected area system in Namaqualand, there are inadequate funds to ensure that the impoverished communities, who occupy some 25% of the region, will receive immediate and direct benefits from these developments. The communally-owned lands, once known as "Coloured Rural Reserves", support about 45% of Namaqualand's population and are severely overstocked and overgrazed. With the projected decline of the diamond mining industry, many people will again depend upon already exhausted natural capital for a livelihood. These pressures are likely to be manifested in demands for more land that will result in further desertification. An alternative is to develop a viable and effective protected area system that can contribute meaningfully to the gross geographic product and provide employment opportunities for local communities. However, no assessments of the relative costs and benefits of different forms of land use have been undertaken.

Expected project outcomes, with underlying assumptions and context

The outcome of the first objective will be the establishment of a representative protected area system for Namaqualand. The establishment of the Coastal, Skilpad and Knersvlakte parks will increase the protected area system in Namaqualand to some 317 500 ha, or 6.35% of the area. The new park system will protect many of Namaqualand's unique habitats and species, and offer tourists opportunities to experience the full range of attractions, from the Knersvlakte in the south to the Richtersveld in the north.

The outcome of the second objective will be the provision of training and resource facilities, which will enable local communities to benefit from the protected area system in Namaqualand. Specifically, the project will involve the establishment of a centralized facility to offer training opportunities in resource management, ecotourism guiding, hospitality and conservation farming. Some of the trainees will be employed by SANP as the park system expands; others will be employed in the private conservation and hospitality industry; yet others may start their own conservation- and ecotourism-related business on communal lands. The facility will also be used as a resource center (computers, telephones, faxes etc.) and environmental education center for the community.

The project will offer immediate and direct benefits and opportunities for the inhabitants of Namaqualand's communal lands, thereby providing positive evidence for conservation as an economically and ecologically sustainable form of land use. In the long term, this will reduce the potential for conflict around the establishment of protected areas. A stable conservation system in Namaqualand will result in a net global benefit for biodiversity.

The outcome of the third objective (resource economics of different forms of land use) will be dynamic models and predictions of the monetary costs and benefits of different land use policies for Namaqualand.

Ultimately, the representative park system will be marketed as an ecotourism package and provide for year-round tourism. A likely outcome is that a representative system of reserves will, after about 5 years, attract sufficient tourism to economically sustain conservation activities and, at the same time, provide economic opportunities for Namaqualand's marginalised inhabitants.

Activities and financial inputs needed to enable changes

In order to achieve the first objective, a conservation planning exercise for Namaqualand must be conducted. This activity has already been initiated by the University of Cape Town using trust funds administered by WWF:SA. Standard, minimum set techniques are being used to identify an efficient and effective reserve system. Since reserve acquisition is invariably constrained by land availability and other practical issues, the "ideal-world" plan can be used to assess the effectiveness of the real-world system.

A second component of the first objective is the establishment of the parks through the investment in infrastructure such as fences, roads and tourism facilities. In order to achieve this, staff must be employed.

This brings us to activities related to the second objective: training and involvement of local communities in park development. Owing to the absence of suitably qualified personnel among Namaqualand's local communities, the bulk of the park staff would normally be recruited from outside of those communities directly impacted by park development, resulting in limited benefits accruing to them. In this scenario, the baseline activities associated with first objective will enable the establishment of a protected area system; however, owing to anticipated local community hostility and resultant land-use conflicts, these baseline activities will not ensure the long-term viability of the protected area system.

Therefore, funds are required for additional activities to effectively implement the second objective, specifically for providing the necessary training so that local communities are in a position to benefit directly from these conservation initiatives. Funds are also required to provide additional benefits in the form of an SANP-sponsored resource and environmental education facility. These developments have the potential to enhance the value to local communities of conservation as a meaningful form of land use, thereby promoting the long-term viability of Namaqualand's protected area system.

An important component of project implementation is the establishment of training facilities. Suitable infrastructure, in the form of a disused school with boarding facilities, exists at Soebatsfontein, the small town adjacent to the Skilpad park in central Namaqualand. This facility is centrally located, designed as a school, and has the capacity to house trainees from distant areas.

There are significant human resource limitations to achieving these additional activities. The level of education, environmental awareness, entrepreneurship and sense of service among the target communities is very low. However, SANP has a Social Ecology program and the skilled personnel to facilitate the requisite specialized training.

A further barrier is a knowledge barrier, namely a widespread ignorance among policy makers, civil servants and local communities of the relative costs and benefits of the prevailing forms of land use in Namaqualand, i.e. communal pastoralism, commercial pastoralism, conservation farming and conservation (protected area management). As outlined under the third objective, there is a need to develop, in a workshop format, dynamic ecological-economic models based on these different forms of land use¹.

In summary, the project involves the following activities over the next five years:

1. Planning for and acquiring land for a representative protected area system in Namaqualand (US\$2.5 million domestic co-financing);
2. Baseline development of the protected area system (US\$2 million domestic co-financing);
3. Refurbishment of training and resource facility (US\$200 000 GEF financing);
4. Training activities by SANP Social Ecology programme (US\$125 000 domestic co-financing; US\$523 000 GEF financing);
5. Resource economic workshop (US\$5 000 domestic co-financing; US\$25 000 GEF financing).

Sustainability analysis and risk assessment

The project has strong government support, in particular the national Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, and the provincial (Northern and Western Cape Provinces) conservation departments. The SANP will be responsible for co-ordinating the project.

The project also has the support of the local communities and NGOs active in development work in Namaqualand.

¹ Prof R Costanza of the University of Maryland has agreed to co-run the workshop with Prof RM Cowling of the University of Cape Town. Given the generic problems that this workshop will address, namely the resource economics of alternative and potentially conflicting forms of land use, it is intended to invite participants of the other South African Medium-sized Projects in this cluster (Eastern Cape Thicket Biome Conservation and Conservation Farming)/

After the initial five year period, it is envisaged that tourism revenue from Namaqualand's protected area system and, if necessary, funds from the central reserves of the SANP, will provide the necessary finances to support the project. At this stage, the bulk of the staff training requirements would have been fulfilled and activities would focus largely on environmental education, entrepreneurial enskilling and in-service training.

Stakeholder involvement and social assessment

Key stakeholders include the affected local communities, the national Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, the provincial (Northern and Western Cape Provinces) conservation departments, and NGOs involved in development issues in Namaqualand. A workshop has been held to explain the design and implementation of the project and ensure buy-in of the stakeholders.

Initially, the community adjacent to the proposed extension to the Skilpad reserve (Soebatsfontein) as well as the nearby Leliefontein community, will benefit from employment opportunities associated with the park expansion. The training facility will be used to train personnel, recruited from the Spoeg River and Knersvlakte communities, to develop the Coastal and Knersvlakte parks, respectively. It is envisaged that by 2000, at least 20 people, recruited locally, will be permanently employed by SANP in the parks. Many others will be employed on a temporary basis during the wildflower season.

Social assessments will be held by an outside review panel to analyze the costs and benefits of the project in terms of community upliftment and empowerment, employment, other economic opportunities, attitudes towards protected area development, and biodiversity conservation. The last mentioned is a crucial component since it represents the global environmental benefit of the project.

INCREMENTAL COST ASSESSMENT

The project activities must be assessed in terms of two scenarios: baseline activities without GEF (conservation planning, purchase of land and limited management opportunities); and baseline plus additional activities (training and involvement of local communities in park development) funded by GEF. The GEF scenario is incremental in that it builds the necessary capacity, awareness and opportunities that will enable local communities to benefit from the reserve system and encourage them to adopt conservation-oriented land use practices. The results of the workshop activity will be used to inform policy makers of the relative benefits of biodiversity conservation when valued in a resource economics framework. The global environmental benefit will be the establishment of a sustainable protected area system in that it will not be jeopardized by land reform initiatives or land invasions. As shown in the matrix below, the incremental costs are associated with these additional activities.

INCREMENTAL COST MATRIX

Scenario	Baseline without GEF funding	Baseline plus additional activities using GEF funds	Increment (Additional – Baseline)
Global environmental benefits	Conservation planning, purchase of land and limited management opportunities	Baseline plus training and involvement of local communities in park development; economical-ecological evaluation of conservation as a viable form of land use	Creation of capacity, awareness, commitment and opportunities for local communities; socially sustainable reserve system; ecologically and economically sound land use policies
Costs (US\$)	Baseline Costs	Additional Costs	Incremental Costs
Activity 1: Planning and establishment of a representative protected area system	2 000 000	-0-	-0-
Activity 2: Development of the protected area system	2 000 000	-0-	-0-
Activity 3: Refurbishment of training and resource facility	-0-	200 000	200 000
Activity 4: Training activities by SANP Social Ecology programme	125 000	645 000	523 000
Activity 5: Resource economics workshop	5 000	30 000	25 000

BUDGET

The project requires from the GEF a sum of US\$748 000. The breakdown of the budget is given below. Project development has been funded entirely from local sources and is estimated to have cost US\$10 000.

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

Item	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Training personnel	50 000	55 000	61 500	67 000	74 000
(i) social ecologists (2)					
(ii) curriculum consultant	7 500	8 000	0	0	0
Refurbishing of facility ¹	200 000	0	0	0	0
Workshops					
(i) resource economics w/shop	0	25 000	0	0	0
(ii) other workshops	5 000	5 500	6 000	6 500	7 000
Equipment					
(i) computers, faxes etc.	50 000	5 000	5 500	6 000	6 500
(ii) teaching materials	10 000	5 000	5 500	6 000	6 500
Travel (local only)	5 000	5 500	6 000	6 500	7 000
Evaluation	0	0	4 000	0	5 000
Miscellaneous	4 000	4 500	5 000	5 500	6 000

¹Local and regional (Namaqualand) contractors will be used in refurbishment

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Year Month	1999			2000			2001			2002			2003		
	0	6	12	0	6	12	0	6	12	0	6	12	0	6	12
Conservation planning, protected area acquisition/ development	—————														
Refurbishment of facilities	—————														
Recruitment of social ecologists	—————														
Establishment of training capacity	—————														
Delivery of training courses				—————											
Environmental education				—————											
Resource economics workshop				—											
Land use policy development				—————											
Evaluation							—————						—————		

The implementing agency and grant recipient will be South African National Parks. This organization will be responsible for subcontracting associated with the project.

The conservation planning exercise will be executed by the University of Cape Town's Institute for Plant Conservation who have considerable expertise and experience in this field. Reserve acquisition will be executed by the Trustees of the Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust – administrative functions will be performed by WWF:SA - and SANP will contribute extensively, particularly on strategic and practical issues.

The remainder of the project will be executed by SANP. A regional office will be established in central Namaqualand near the proposed facility. A project steering committee will be organized and chaired by the SANP regional officer. The committee will be composed of representatives from the regional conservation departments (Western and Northern Cape), the local communities and NGOs). Decision making regarding strategies and approaches for design and implementation of project activities will be made by the steering committee.

Training and environmental education will be facilitated by three social ecologists employed by SANP and permanently based at the facility. SANP will contribute costs of its existing training staff but will need to take on and train additional staff for this project; by the end of the project their costs will be assumed under the regular SANP budget.

The dissemination to policy makers of knowledge gained from the workshop will be facilitated by WWF:SA and the Institute for Plant Conservation.

Criteria for awarding subcontracts for refurbishment and procuring of equipment for the facility, as well as curriculum development, will be determined at the start of the project through a sub-committee of the project steering committee.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Stakeholder identification

In addition to GEF, the World Bank, and the other co-financing agencies, the key stakeholders in the project are: the affected local communities, the national Department of Environment Affairs, the national and provincial (Northern Cape Province) Department of Education and Training, the provincial (Northern and Western Cape Provinces) conservation departments, and NGOs involved in development issues in Namaqualand.

Information dissemination and consultation

A regional workshop has already been held to explain the project to these stakeholders. Ongoing stakeholder involvement and public participation will become a routine function of the SANP's Social Ecology Programme. WWF:SA and UCT will

be responsible for disseminating implications of the resource economics workshop to policy makers and forums.

Social participation issues

An issue that will require special attention is recruitment of trainees, especially with regards to gender equity, income levels, cultural diversity and history of tenure in the region. Careful consideration must be given to the integration of indigenous technical knowledge into scientific assessments, and curriculum development. Initiatives to establish eco-businesses on communal lands must be mindful of the complex tenurial arrangements over natural resources. Concerns of commercial pastoralists must not be ignored.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

Monitoring and evaluation of the conservation planning, and reserve acquisition components of the project will be the responsibility of the Trustees of the Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust. Park development will be evaluated by the Board of the SANP.

Monitoring of the training component of project will be undertaken as a routine function of the SANP's Social Ecology Programme. Evaluation will include data on performance indicators. A description and analysis of stakeholder participation in the project design and implementation, and an explanation of how the monitoring and evaluation results will be used to adjust the implementation of the project, if required and/or to replicate project results throughout the country.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

PROJECT ACTIVITY CATEGORIES	
Biodiversity	X
Protected area zoning/management	X
Buffer zone development	X
Inventory/monitoring	X
Ecotourism	X
Agro-biodiversity	X
Trust fund(s)	
Benefit sharing	X
Reversal of desertification	X
TECHNICAL CATEGORIES	
Institution building	X
Investments	
Policy advice	X
Targeted research	
Technical/management advice	
Technology transfer	
Awareness/information/training	X