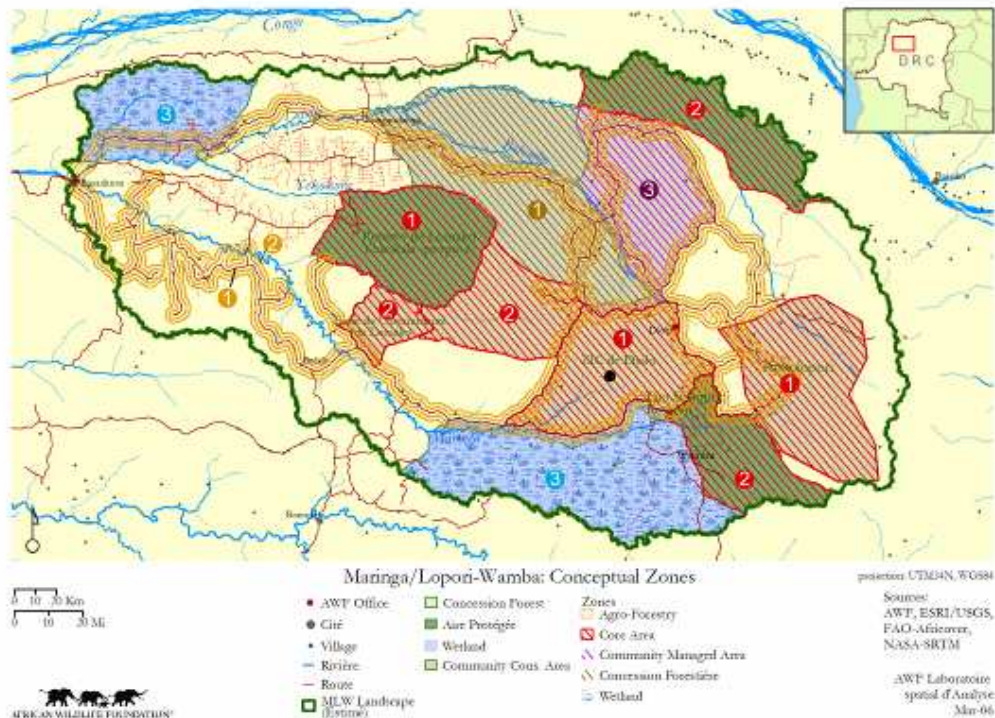


MARINGA LOPORI WAMBA

CARPE Final Technical Report 2006

31st October 2006



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Summary – the MLW Success Story

For the past five years the African Wildlife Foundation has led a coalition of conservation and development organisations, (CARE International and Conservation International), in search of improved and sustainable natural resource management in the Maringa Lopori Wamba landscape of remote, northern DRC.

Together with the DRC Government, its forest management and protected area authorities and local NGO and community organisations, the coalition has made considerable progress towards these goals. The values and approaches adopted by the AWF-led coalition have helped secure the commitment of local people to conservation strategies that both conserve globally and locally important biological resources as well as safeguard livelihoods of the many thousands of poor people who live in this landscape.

Most recently, AWF is happy to report that the DRC Government has formally gazetted the new 3,600km² Lomako Yokokala Faunal Reserve, as the culmination of a process of local consultation and national and local leadership, and that the management of this reserve will actively include local communities. AWF is now working with local communities to develop opportunities for scientific tourism to the reserve.

Furthermore, early and participatory analysis of threats and opportunities for sustainable resource management in the landscape identified local people's needs to re-activate agriculture in order to decrease commercial hunting pressure on MLW-s biodiversity. With USAID support a boat project was launched to help stimulate agricultural trade along the critical rivers in the landscape, and thereby to reinvigorate agricultural livelihoods. A boat with 700ton capacity barges went upriver mid-2005 and returned fully laden in January 2006. There is early evidence that this initiative has delivered conservation gains by encouraging farmers to return to their preferred activity of farming having been forced by poor agricultural markets to turn to bushmeat hunting.

Capacity building of nationals has been a big part of our program. We trained 95 local assistants and 4 leaders in participative mapping, 2 leaders and 171 local assistants for bio-monitoring, and 19 local assistants for bush meat monitoring. Trained 30 local assistants in monitoring of population of large mammal and human activities, and 4 senior community forestry team leaders.

The success at this landscape has required continuous re-evaluation of priority settings and strategies to respond to the dynamics of DRC political environment. The changes made regarding programs activity priorities depict a balanced approach and adaptive management that emphasized biodiversity conservation, livelihood issues and capacity building for governance of natural resources.

The strong focus on spatial mapping and zoning of the landscape as a whole, in partnership with the DRC Government and with support NASA and University of Maryland, combined with strong on the ground partnership with communities throughout the landscape has helped to build a sound understanding of the nature of the challenges all stakeholders face in this landscape, and, more importantly, helped to turn opportunities for improving both livelihoods and conservation into reality. AWF is now about to launch a new five year phase of this work with a new set of coalition partners, building on the relationships and progress already established.

Introduction

This narrative report is the final report to USAID-Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) for Maringa/Lopori-Wamba landscape in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for period 2003 – 2006. The report relates to all the activities and accomplishments for the entire period and provides recommendations for future programming structures and lessons learnt.

A. The MLW Partners

The African Wildlife Foundation is the leader of the implementing coalition. AWF is the longest serving international conservation organization working solely in Africa. For forty-five years AWF has fostered Africa-led approaches to building partnerships, tools and capacity for conservation. Together with the people of Africa, AWF works to ensure that the wildlife and wild-lands of Africa will endure forever. AWF now has 115 staff, more than 90% of them African citizens, working from a network of eleven field offices in Africa and one support and fund raising office in Washington DC, with our organizational Headquarters in Kenya. AWF is highly regarded for its Africa-centered philosophy and practical approach to conservation, as well as its strong capacity building and science base, for innovations in working with communities and, more recently, for its private sector partnerships that leverage wildlife enterprise development and for strategic planning at landscape level.

CARE International is a humanitarian organization working to end world poverty. With programs in over 65 countries, CARE impacts the lives of over 30 million of the world's poorest people. Whether supporting primary health care, promoting sustainable agriculture or developing savings and loan schemes, its programs promote positive and lasting change and reduce long-term dependency. CARE International was sub-granted to take the lead on the implementation of IR 2.1 on civil society strengthening and legislation of community forest management while assisting with other components of the program i.e., development of micro-enterprise and community reserves.

Conservation International is one of the largest conservation organizations in the world. Its mission is to conserve the Earth's living natural heritage, global biodiversity, and to demonstrate that human societies are able to live harmoniously with nature. Since 1987, CI has worked with local partners to apply innovations in science, economics, policy and community participation to protect the Earth's richest regions of plant and animal diversity in the hotspots, major tropical wilderness areas and key marine ecosystems. CI works in more than 45 countries on four continents. As much as possible, CI takes the role of mentor to help local partners develop and implement conservation efforts, rather than of implementer. This is key to CI's long-term success in conserving biodiversity.

B. Funds Received and Cost Share:

The total budget for implementing this project over the three year was calculated to be \$2,289,867 out of this amount our coalition will contribute \$674,566 distributed annually over the three years. Each partners received the following from USAID: AWF \$1,596,611, CARE \$731,256.

To augment and support the budget requested, AWF and its partners succeeded in securing a mixture of complementary funding mainly drawn from non-USG bi/multi-lateral sources, private foundations, the Global Conservation Fund, major donors and contributions from the private sector. Total match to USAID funding from each partners was: AWF \$550,240, CARE \$124,326.

C. The Maringa/Lopori - Wamba Landscape

The Maringa/Lopori–Wamba landscape encompasses 7.4 million hectares of lowland rain and swamp forest in the Equateur province of Democratic Republic of Congo. It falls within the districts of l'Equateur, Mongala and Tshuapa. Available population statistics indicate that about 0.5million people might be living in the target landscape (State of the Forest Report, in press). The ecological significance of the landscape is high, not only because it is covered by a globally significant area of rain forest, but also because it is home to the bonobo, a member of the great ape family and other species endemic to the central basin of the DRC. Many other important wildlife species are extant as well, such as sitatunga, forest elephant, Congo peacock, monkeys and other primates, amphibians and reptiles. The landscape has an extremely diverse avifauna life. This landscape is home to the indigenous Mongo people, who consider both the forest and the bonobo as sacred.

The biodiversity value of this landscape continues to be high despite the negative impacts of forest conversion, slash and burn agriculture, commercial and illegal logging, and the bush meat trade. In turn these drivers of biodiversity loss have been fed by the ongoing political crisis, military occupation during the Congo war, and steadily increasing poverty. The landscape at the start of this phase had only one small protected area (the 628 km²Luo reserve).

The program was designed under the leadership of Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF) in partnership with Conservation International and CARE International DRC, and also with substantial collaboration with Congolese community-based organizations. The overall program aimed to reduce the degradation of forests and biodiversity across this landscape by developing the application of sustainable natural resource management practices, strengthening resource governance and institutionalizing resource monitoring in the Maringa/Lopori-Wamba landscape. Our approach has been to implement landscape scale conservation management, strengthen the management of forest reserves and other protected areas, encourage sustainable local economic development, improve the management of existing forest concessions, increase the capacity of civil society stakeholders to engage in decision-making, and to foster policy dialogue.

D. MLW Landscape Program Objectives

The coalition sought to help establish ecologically and economically viable protected areas, improve the management of concessions and plantations, foster profitable resource-based community enterprises and develop an appropriate monitoring framework to secure the biological integrity of this landscape. At the start of this phase the main objectives were to commence a process to deliver the following key intermediate results across this site:

- Develop land-use and conservation management plans for selected sites using the landscape conservation planning process;
- Establish a network of new protected areas including community forest reserves;
- Develop community enterprises as a strategy for diversifying forest-based livelihoods;
- Improve management practices: in logging concessions;
- Initiate policy dialogue at local, national and international levels in support of community-based forest management.
- Set up an integrated landscape information system for data collection analysis and synthesis and to inform monitoring.

In fact, throughout the course of this CARPE phase, the balance of emphasis among these main objectives has changed. Most notably, during the February 2006 CARPE Performance Monitoring Workshop the participants re-considered how best to respond to the Strategic Objectives and outlined a new Work Plan and Monitoring Matrix.

Since February 2006 the priority objectives have been participatory landscape level planning and zoning, and simultaneously convening, designing and implementing management plans for the sustainable use of natural resources in identified priority macro-zones. The objectives as initially designed (and as stated in the bullet point above) are therefore now the specific tools and approaches that are used to achieve the overall Strategic Objectives.

In February 2006 the main objectives for the MLW-landscape were transformed into:

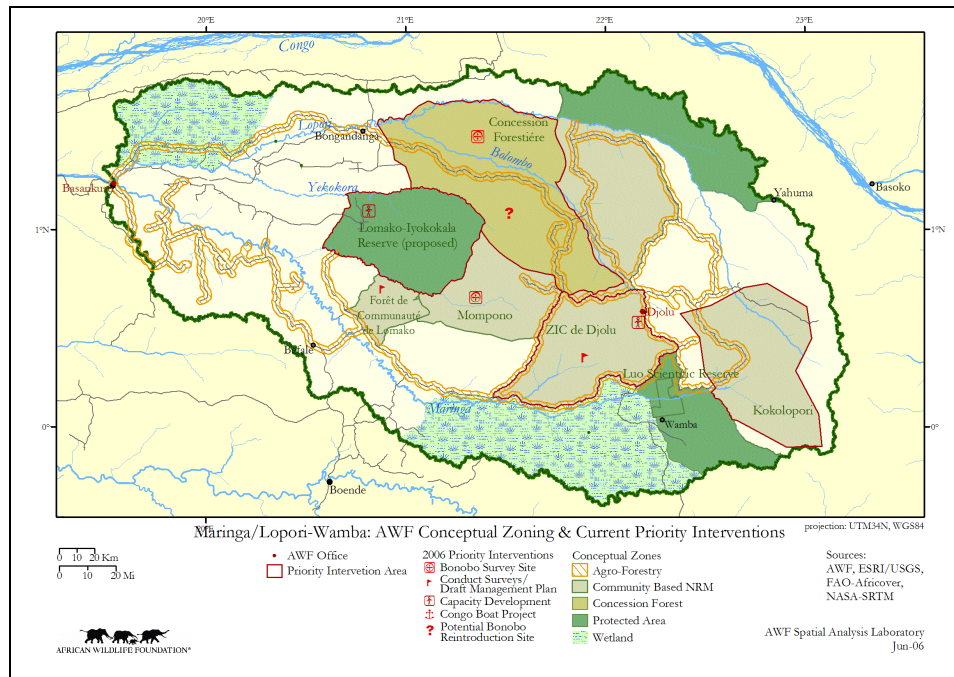
- MLW-Land Use Plan Design 30% completed
- Completion of a management plan design for 1 protected area and 3 CBNRMA's

The successful achievement of these objectives means that by the end of this CARPE phase about 1.3 million hectares (or about 15% of the landscape) is now well on the way to being covered by an agreed management plan for sustainable use of natural resources.

Summary of Achievements

The coalition has made major progress on the zoning process and development of a Landscape Land Use Design and Management plan for the MLW landscape. The MLW-project is now a model for large scale zoning and participatory land use management planning in DRC, and potentially more widely in the Congo Basin. The first indicative zoning of the landscape was done and the basic methodology presented during the International Forest Forum (Kinshasa, February 2006). Today, 70% of the landscape is covered by this indicative zoning. MLW was the first CARPE landscape to produce an agreed draft management plan, done in consultation with stakeholders and with support from University of Maryland. The MLW-approach, based on the AWF-Heartland Conservation Process, has been acknowledged by a number of local and international partners. This process will be further outlined in the next CARPE phase. AWF has

strengthened its relationship and collaboration with the Ministry of Environment (SPIAF), ICCN, local and provincial governments throughout the zoning and planning period.



Map: the first indicative zoning of the landscape was done and the basic methodology presented during the International Forest Forum

- The Lomako Yokokala Faunal Reserve (3,625km²) has been formally gazetted. This is the first legal approval for a macro-zone for conservation in the MLW-landscape. The Reserve covers about 5% of the landscape and protects some of the most important bonobo populations. It will be the first Protected Area in the DRC for which the local communities will be invited to participate in the development of the management plan. An Agreement for Collaboration on this has been signed between ICCN and AWF. As an innovative way to create revenue for the local population and ICCN, AWF will initiate the set up of community managed scientific tourism. Matching funding to USAID from the French government (FFEM), ARCUS-Foundation, the Abraham-Foundation and individual donors has been secured by AWF for this purpose.
- The surveys on participative mapping, large mammal populations and bushmeat use were carried out by in total 285 trained local assistants, supervised by 4 trained team leaders, supervised by AWF Specialist Community Forestry.
- Training for 285 local assistants and 4 team leaders in Djolu was done. AWF trained 2 leaders and 95 local assistants for participative mapping, 2 leaders and 171 local assistants for bio-monitoring and 19 local assistants for monitoring of bush meat use.



***Photo:** Boat Project - reopening of access to the urban markets for agricultural products that contributed to our conservation-linked strategy for poverty reduction.*

- AWF trained 30 local assistants for monitoring of populations of large mammals and of human activities in the proposed Lomako Yokokala Faunal Reserve during the first two weeks of March
- During the last fiscal year, AWF succeeded in increasing dramatically matched funding. AWF succeeded to secure 425K USD for FY06-FY07 and French Government (FFEM) approved AWF's proposal for FY07-FY10 for a total amount of 781K Euro

Major Accomplishments and Results

In addition to the progress on zoning and landscape management plans, and the successful gazattement of the Lomako Reserve, the coalition and our partners on the ground have achieved the following among our accomplishments and results for this phase of CARPE in MLW:

- Reopening of access to the urban markets for agricultural products that contributed to our conservation-linked strategy for poverty reduction. An MOU was signed with the boat owner to transport agricultural products to central market, and a contract has been signed with a second boat owner for a mission at the start of FY07.

- The USFWS-supported study for the potential creation of a Communal Hunting Zone aims identification of potential hotspots of biodiversity and the set up of controlled hunting in about 4,000km².
- The CARPE small grants program was implemented through support for 5 local NGO's, supervised by 4 AWF-focal points, based throughout the landscape.
- At the end of FY06, we signed agreements for further collaboration with >10 local NGO's, active in the MLW-landscape. These agreements lay ground for the next phase that will focus much more on implementation of social-economic programs identified by local people and local NGO's and associations.
- Surveys for participative mapping of large mammal populations and bushmeat use were carried out by 285 trained local assistants, supervised by 4 trained team leaders, supervised by AWF Specialist Community Forestry specialists.
- Support was provided to help with agricultural cooperatives. Preparatory activities included AWF-focal points, based throughout the landscape/heartland (Basankusu, Bonganganga, Befale, Djolu) facilitating local people and local NGO's in discussing best approaches for agriculture related development activities.
- Funding request Cocosi officially set up. With the gazettelement of the Reserve at the last days of FY06, the CoCoSi will be created in the first quarter of FY07. A pre-CoCoSi already existed.

As we indicated in our FY06 CARPE Annual Report, some intended tasks were not finished, and some not started, this year. In particular the political environment in 2006 catalysed the coalition into refocusing our efforts on selected priorities that would consolidate this phase of work in the MLW landscape and bridge into the new CARPE implementation phase, now about to start.

Conclusions:

There has been significant progress made in this reporting period on CARPE activities at the MLW landscape. The initial zoning of landscape units has been conducted with participation of key stakeholders and the program is on track towards meeting targets to create baselines and to convene the land use planning process.

Our experience in this landscape is that the CBFP and CARPE promoted landscape approach reinforces and complements the AWF Heartland Conservation Planning approach. The CARPE strategic objective "Reduction of loss of biodiversity and destruction of habitat through better governance of the management of the natural resources" is fully compatible with AWF's goal to set up management plans that will make landscapes economically and ecologically viable. As such, AWF continues to feel very comfortable with the vision of CARPE and the CBFP.

The year 2005 was very important for re-focusing of CBFP-landscapes regarding landscape level management plans, and in 2006 we started focusing on the approach in the MLW conservation processes. Same year the mission and discussions with the US Forest Service initiated a switch from "Threats-based" to "Desired Outcomes"-based zoning, and from "Priority area-focus" to "Landscape focus". While no much difference at the results level, this change helped us to start rethinking our program approach.

AWF supports the request by USAID/CARPE to focus on the areas outside the PA's, and to increase attention on needs of the local communities. We feel confident that a general success of our MLW-program is because of the fact that we focused on biodiversity conservation as well as economically viable landscape. This is best translated on our "success story" that shows the link between success in creating Lomoko Forest Reserve and the support for landscape wide livelihood activities (the boat project).

Landscape implementing partnership has not worked well as was envisioned with the Landscape partners CI and CARE to achieve landscape-wide objectives. This can be attributed to competitiveness between partners, and USAID's practice of segmenting landscape funding which did not help either to strengthen landscape leadership. Lack of physical presence at the landscape level, especially CI throughout the implementation period, and CARE at the early part of implementation.

Lack of consensus and communication between partners hindered planning and implementation of activities. To some extent, this is due to differences in partners' management or conservation approaches. CI thought best approach was to subcontract other NGO to implement its program and emphasize the short-term need to secure protected areas. CARE although came late on ground but still had program activities focused and investment in training and social economic surveys. AWF focused on conserving protected areas by investing more resources into long-term research, to better understand the ecosystems and how to manage them, as well as to analyze the threats to protected areas, in order to design interventions to counteract them, plus direct efforts towards strengthening partners' capacity, and extending our own capacity to tackle development and livelihoods issues.

Lessons Learned

Two major factors influenced and strengthen our work in MLW. a) AWF presence on the ground, and (b) the repetitive step by step approach that involved continuous awareness building process among communities and partners.

Presence on the ground secured two-way channeling of information and confidence building between AWF and stakeholders. Local communities and authorities were in daily contact with the MLW-program. This presence was secured in FY06 through establishment of 4 AWF MLW focal offices that were based in the 4 major towns in the landscape. Interaction between the MLW-program and the local communities ameliorated significantly and facilitated to a large extent success stories as the creation of the Lomako Ykokala Faunal Reserve, the boat project and the implementation of the USAID/CARPE Small Grants program.

Landscape partnerships should be based on respective capacity of the NGOs as a determining factor in assigning functions and in specifying the division of responsibility. The "teaming agreements," should have proper mix of skills which ideally would provide less competition among partners and also good mix of skill necessary to implement very complex programs. This we think has been addressed in the new CARPE phase.

The provision of cross cutting services to all CARPE landscapes proved very useful for re-enforcing inter landscape dialogue and strengthening the "Central African Regional Program" and

the “Congo Basin Partnership”. AWF considers this approach important and highly appreciated center for this program. MLW-landscape was able to strengthen the framework of its program thanks to these services. Both US Forest Service as well as NASA (through intense collaboration with the University of Maryland) had great impact on our further outlining of the MLW-program, while interaction with both WRI and IUCN influenced more indirectly. In addition, the cross cutting services increased the dialogue between landscapes as different landscape Technical staff met at many occasions and automatically led to information exchange and discussions. This trend seems to be pursued in the next phase with an increased number of shared partners. We consider this as a proof of success for such an elaborated and coherent regional program.

Activities that seek to ensure the immediate and effective conservation of biodiversity, should first study local dynamic that is causing that loss of biodiversity. Conservation activities such as establishment of protected areas need to ensure that strategies are based on an understanding of the human, social and biological background to the trends that affect the resources or habitats. Understanding these trends, and overlaying them with biological criteria, can help inform choices about where conservation and economic activities can be undertaken in the most cost-effective and sustainable manner.

The private sector can and should take a more active role in the development of management practices and business models that seek to integrate sustainability into their activities especially in regard to economic alternatives to unsustainable resource use.

International NGOs need to recognize the role of national government, which bears the major responsibility for addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss. Workings with government to ensure development policies made are adequately consider environmental impacts.

Importance of having permanent field presence at the landscape level. The four focal points of AWF, based in the landscape, had a great impact on our credibility with local people on the ground and on easiness to set up collaborations with them, as directed/guided from Kinshasa.

International Organizations need further thoughts on the best strategic approach to secure our efforts against the sometimes corrupt and destructive actions of other international NGO’s and national governments. This has been the most disillusioning observation of FY06, but we take this as a lesson to learn better strategic thinking, focusing on our conservation and development objectives.

Continuous awareness building is obligatory for the buy in of the local communities and authorities in the landscape conservation approach and process. Continuous engagement of stakeholders helped to avoid the usual characteristics of spatially limited interventions that are very narrowly focused but do not foresee any outreach to a broader public for a better understanding of the overall framework. And lead to fragmentation of implementation activities and decreased effectiveness to support to further development of a Landscape Land Use Management Plan.

At the expense of progress on program activities, AWF preferred to increase time spent on explaining landscape/heartland approach. During FY04, this increased impatience of local communities, and tensions between certain stakeholders or actors, from end FY05 on, this approach proofed very useful for the construction of a basis on which to build together with local communities, local and national government an integrated Landscape Land Use Plan lay out of a

Recommendations:

We recommend further development of the cross cutting services with specific consideration of how these services can strengthen inter landscape dialogue. We suggest if possible further expansion of cross cutting services into the domain of “tropical agriculture and livelihood”. While USAID/CARPE insists on the need to put more focus on the habitat and people living outside the PA’s, services are mainly limited to national parks, biological monitoring, environmental education and monitoring.

We recommend continuation of the flexible approach that allows reconsideration of previously relatively rigidly outlined Work Planning and Monitoring tools. Combination of well defined and articulated tools with openness for re-discussion and re-identification is a major strength to the CARPE.

Increase emphasis on country-level and basin-wide coordination (country teams, prioritization of non-landscape activities), while at the same time reducing the isolation of landscape programs and improving opportunities for intra-landscape learning from successful models.

We welcome the increased participation and role of USAID Kinshasa team leader and the CARPE office. During this reporting period, USAID’s responsibilities have been carried out very actively and effectively however, we would like to see increasing role of the team in responsibilities regarding liaison with host governments and supporting implementing agencies participation and relationship with COMIFAC.

We welcome the gradual refocus or less attention on protected areas (PAs) in landscapes but enhancing attention on addressing threats and opportunities in forest concessions and with community landuse. Placing priority attention on PAs is an appropriate strategy for the initial intervention but should not be the main focus on landscape.

Reinvigorate the USG financial commitment to social and economic activities of the program even before the end of the 2nd phase. Landuse planning and zoning could be the main focus but should be done concurrently with short-term gains and evidence on social and economic aspiration of stakeholders.

Annexes

Annex III: All files have been send to Jacky Doremus by our Lanscape Information System Officier Didier Bokelo.

Annexe I and II: Recommendation

We recommend to keep the same disposition as these equipments are important to achieve CARPE objectives.

In fact we need to add other generators and vehicle : AWF has grown fast the last year and will be having more than 2 fields offices as expressed in the RFA submitted. Those offices are located where there is no elctricity, hence the use of generator for power. The estimated useful life of the vehicle has been established to 3 years due to the bad conditions of routes in DRC.

To add to that, the accident has damaged the vehicle, weakening its frame.



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QT	DATE OF PURCHASE	DESCRIPTION	Serial NO	Book value	Supplier	Person responsible	Estimate useful life	Rate	Amount	Accumulated	NET-VAL	Comment
1	23/06/2004	Generator EF 13000 8-10KVA	EF 13000	5000	Yamaha/Prodimpex	Basankusu Office	5yrs	20	1000	2000	3000	Generator located in Basankusu and out of order (problem with oil filter)
1	25/08/2004	Suzuki grand Vitara		21384	AFRIMA FAO	General Office	3yrs	33	7057	14113	7271	Vehicle out of order, but we have started working on it. Attached, the police report of the accident.

Property disposal Plan

QT	DATE OF PURCHASE	DESCRIPTION	Serial NO	Book value	Supplier	Person responsible
1	23/06/2004	Generator EF 13000 8-10KVA	EF 13000	5000	Yamaha/Prodimpex	Basankusu Office
1	25/08/2004	Suzuki grand Vitara		21384	AFRIMA FAO	General Office