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CARPE Final Report: October 1, 2003 – September 30, 2006

Project / Sub-Project No.	CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP
Agreement	Cooperative Agreement 623-A-00-03-00064-00 under leader with Associate Award LAG-A-00-99-00048-00
Sub-Project Title	Tri National Sangha (TNS) Landscape; WWF sectors
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1. INTRODUCTION

WWF and WCS were responsible for implementation of USAID/CARPE program in Tri-national de la Sangha landscape. WWF managed both Lobeke and Dzanga Sangha landscape segments while WCS was responsible for the Nouabale Ndoki segment of Congo-Brazzaville. This report is the final CBFP Phase I technical narrative report for the WWF managed sectors of the TNS Landscape

Landscape/Segment Leaders: Leonard Usongo has acted as the TNS WWF Landscape Leader and as the TNS - Cameroon, Lobeke segment leader for the entire Phase I period FY04-FY06. Gregor Schwarzer acted as the TNS - CAR, Dzanga-Sangha segment leader for FY04 and FY05, and Erica Cochrane has acted as the TNS - CAR, Dzanga-Sangha sector leader for the final year of Phase I FY06.

Total Cost of Agreement

TNS Landscape Segment/Partner	USAID/CARPE funds	Cost Share	Total
Dzanga Sangha - WWF	\$793,557.21	\$2,432,808.00	\$3,226,365.21
Lobeke - WWF	\$831,499.75	\$2,172,650.72	\$3,004,150.47

Collaborators:

The main international collaborating agencies within the landscape were **GTZ**, German Technical Cooperation; **GFA**, a German consultancy group subcontracted by GTZ in Dzanga-Sangha; **CIRAD**, French research center; **SNV**, Dutch volunteer organization; **PACT**, International NGO; **SI**, Smithsonian Institute; and, **FPP**, Forest Peoples Project. These organizations, based on their respective expertise worked closely with WCS and WWF to address some of the planned objectives during the first phase of the CARPE program.

Other technical partners included national NGOs, national media, local NGOs and community-based organizations, and missionaries. Their contributions specifically focused on awareness raising, community organization and local institutional development of management institutions such as community based natural resource management groups, CBNRMs.

Objectives and Summary of Achievements:

The three-year Benchmark (objective) for the TNS Landscape:

Land Use Plan convened and design phase 60% complete, including a demarcation and management for 50%, and 20% implemented.

Achievement exceeded the benchmark with the TNS LUP convened and LUP 80% complete, including demarcation. A third draft of the landuse plan has been developed and reviewed, with a core protected area of 78,050ha and surrounding use zones consisting of logging concessions, community hunting areas and professional hunting zones covering 3,713,800ha. A fourth and final draft is being produced. The draft TNS LUP is already 25% under implementation with high effort in bi and tri-national anti poaching, policy development, joint management, wildlife and use monitoring, and tourism development.

Significant progress was made in all aspects of landuse planning, especially definition of various landuse types within respective segments. The main achievements are summarized below:

- a. Development of LUP for tri-national de la Sangha 80% complete. This was the only landscape in the Congo Basin that successfully developed a landuse plan comprising 3 national parks and surrounding multiple zones.
- b. LUPs including business plans have been developed for Lobeke and Nouabale Ndoki Parks. All logging concessions in Congo and Cameroon have approved LUPs. Good progress has been made in developing LUPs for other landuse types such as community hunting areas in Cameroon
- c. An accord on free circulation of TNS staff was signed by the 3 countries. This agreement will facilitate coordination of field activities and exchange visits among the three segments.
- d. Scientific methodologies for bai monitoring, wildlife inventories, monitoring cross border movements of elephants, and socio economic surveys of human activities along the Sangha River were discussed and are being applied within the three landscape segments. Scientists working in the respective segments regularly exchange data sets on various research studies. This information sharing approach has facilitated site comparisons of research findings and better understanding of dynamics within the landscape. Some of the methodologies are being standardized and harmonized to enhance site comparisons of data sets and conservation impacts.
- e. Joint monthly bi- and tri-national patrols are organized with game guards from the projects. The joint patrols have significantly contributed to curb cross border hunting and bush meat trade
- f. Bi-annual tri-national meetings were organized on a rotational basis among sites, involving project teams and key conservation partners to discuss technical coordination and implementation of field activities.
- g. About \$10million has been mobilized through various donors, notably German Brewery Company (\$4 million) and the German Development Bank KfW (\$6million), as seed funding to establish the TNS trust fund. An estimated \$25million is need for the trust fund to become operational.
- h. There have been significant improvements in project infrastructure and logistics within the project segments, enhancing field operational capacities.
- i. Technical skills and knowledge of core project teams in Lobeke, Dzanga Sangha, and Nouabale Ndoki, were improved in specialized domains such as GIS, monitoring, landuse planning, sustainable forest management and wood certification processes

2. MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS

USAID Performance Indicators	Zone	3-year Benchmark	Accomplishments
<p>INDICATOR 1: Number of landscapes and other focal areas covered by integrated land use plans</p> <p>USAID TARGET: FY05: convening of land use planning process expected in at least 2 out of 12 LS/FA</p>	<p>Tri-national de la Sangha LS</p>	<p>LUP convened and design phase 60% complete including a demarcation & management for 50%, 20 % implemented (3-year target revised after FY05 SAR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TNS LUP 80% complete including demarcation. Draft landuse plan has been developed for trinational de la Sangha with core protected area of 78,050ha and surrounding use zones consisting of logging concessions, community hunting areas and professional hunting zones covering 3,713,800ha. Third draft produced and reviewed; final draft being produced. • TNS LUP 25% under implementation. High effort in bi and tri-national anti poaching, policy development, joint management, wildlife and use monitoring, and tourism development.
<p>INDICATOR 2: Number of different use-zones (e.g., parks & PAs; CBNRM areas; forestry concessions; plantations) within landscapes with sustainable management plans</p> <p>USAID TARGET: FY04: Initial data quality assessment of any plans that exist; 2 management planning process convened in at least 2 currently designated use zones per landscape of focal area; (i.e. minimum of 4 LUPs convened per LS in 2 different LUZs) FY05: 2 additional management planning processes initiated in designated or probable use zones in each landscape or focal area; (i.e. minimum of 6 LUPs convened per LS in 2 different LUZs)</p>	<p>Landscape segment (NP) and multiple use zones (logging concessions, CBNRM zones, professional hunting zones)</p>	<p>80% LUP design phase complete and 25% implemented, including Boundaries of all multiple use zones defined and 80% management strategies developed to coordinate natural resource management (3-year target revised after FY05 SAR)</p>	<p>1. <u>Cameroon:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LUP for Lobeke National Park covering 217,000ha developed and approved by government. • LUPs for 3 pilot community hunting zones covering approximately 237,000ha developed and pending official endorsement. • LUP planning process engaged for two community forests covering 10,000ha. • 14 concession units covering 911,454ha designated. • LUP developed and officially approved for all concessions. • FSC pre-audit successfully completed for logging concessions of SEFAC covering 400,000ha. <p>2. <u>CAR:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LU planning process 50% complete for entire Dzanga Sangha Protected Area Complex (DS LUP) including all zones within the complex. First draft produced and under review. Need to develop mechanism to identify and support customary use rights and reduce impact of immigration. • DS LUP 30% under implementation. High effort in anti poaching, monitoring, tourism development, and commercial partnerships. • NP LUP 90% complete and 75% implemented. Need to address customary use rights of indigenous people throughout complex before can finalize NP LUP. • Agricultural Zone LUP 80% complete and under implementation. Need to

			<p>address farmland tenure rights, farmland security, and farmland access inequity issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal Hunting Zone LUP 50% complete and 50% under implementation. Need to address types of allowed hunting, access and management rights and responsibilities. • All planning processes with commercial partners, except AOUC SAFARIA, have been suspended as both logging concessions and two of the three safari hunting concessions have not been attributed. Threats associated with commercial industries have been reduced, but the reduction in jobs, revenue, and social services causes other problems that need to be treated.
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3. SUCCESS STORY(IES)

The Vision for Tourism in Dzanga Sangha

During the past 3 years, the Dzanga Sangha Project has invested a lot in its tourism program, why? Number one, because this place has awesome potential to attract tourists, film crews, researchers, and the like. Dzanga Sangha offers a combination of activities that allows visitors to see some of the best and most fragile aspects of the Congo basin rainforest. With guaranteed viewing of lowland gorillas and forest elephants undisturbed in their natural habitat and the opportunity to experience a little of (and contribute a little to) the life a forest hunter and gatherer community that still essentially lives off of the riches of the Congo rainforest, the tourism potential here is unparalleled. Number two, because the revenue and international recognition brought by tourism can give the local community tangible reasons to feel that conservation is to their immediate and future benefit.

A vision, goal, and set of objectives for the Ecotourism Program have been developed. In essence, the main purpose of the tourism program is to contribute to the reduction of human pressure on the protected area complex by providing tangible alternatives to unsustainable extraction of wildlife.

We have had a lot of professional feedback on our tourism program from tour operators and others in the business. What we heard was that Dzanga Sangha is an incredible place, that it is very marketable, that their clients are always blown away from their experience here, and that there are many people who can and would pay a lot of money to visit. However, they also had some very important pieces of advice. First, improve the quality of service so that tourists have a seamless experience (there is much to do here). Secondly, get more gorilla tracking slots available each day so that the tour operators can market this activity as an option. Two to three slots a day is not enough to market. And finally, keep this an exclusive destination and go for high input low volume tourism.

Lobeke segment: Conservation and the People

It was paradoxical few years ago to talk about benefits of conservation to local people. This was primarily due to national governments' negative perceptions by of what conservation was all about. Conservation was always linked to protection and prohibited local people and government to use natural resources. This perception was the result of the colonial approach where national parks were established to protect the rich fauna of Africa for foreign tourists. Wildlife was seen as an exotic delicacy for either direct or indirect consumption by foreigners. The local communities were left in absolute poverty in the midst of rich natural resources in their environment. This picture depicts the situation in southeast Cameroon a decade ago.

Over the years the situation rapidly changed and gave way to increased participation of local people in natural resource management processes. The present conservation organizations such as WWF working on the ground significantly contributed to bringing people to the centre of all conservation initiatives. For example, in Lobeke, where local villagers instigated by logging and safari hunting operations, once demanded immediate departure of WWF, now perceive the organization as a true partner to guarantee their future and well being.

It took 3years of studies by WWF and conservation partners to determine the magnitude of existing and potential conflicts between local population and safari and logging companies. The conflicts ranged from land ownership to access rights in most lucrative sites of the forest. The local population was forbidden from hunting in their back yards because the land was now owned by safari hunting companies. Baka pygmies could not freely wander around the forest during the dry season in search of wild yams, honey and other booties for fear of being arrested by logging companies. Social tensions were rife all over Lobeke, Boumba Bek and Nki. It was a time bomb and explosive situation that required immediate actions from conservation organizations. The local people in one voice deplored the situation especially as they were pushed to the walls by influential stakeholders sadly with complicity of selfish local elites.

Conservation Benefiting Local People

Success in any conservation project is conditioned by support from the surrounding local population. A local population will only support conservation projects if their needs are addressed - in wildlife, employment, and other indirect or direct benefits. The WWF project understood this philosophy and quickly moved with adoption of participatory management approaches to win support from local people. Achievements of collaborative management systems significantly contributed to the support conservation organizations enjoy today in southeast Cameroon. Some of the achievements are summarized below:

1. The three national parks were gazetted with participation of all local stakeholders. Community use zones have been identified in the parks especially areas utilized by Baka pygmies for fishing, honey harvesting and other non-destructive activities. Park authorities are currently negotiating park access rights with surrounding local communities.
2. Fourteen community hunting zones have been established in forest areas surrounding the national parks. Annual incomes estimated at about \$100,000 are generated each year by local communities from trophy hunting in village hunting territories. The revenues are used to carry out micro projects thereby contributing to development in the area. The project has assisted in development of management plans for some of the community hunting zones.

3. Local management institutions such as wildlife management committees have been established to oversee management of community hunting areas and revenues. The committees are being trained in various management aspects that include finances, conflict management and micro project development.
4. Establishment of consultative platforms among local communities, safari hunting outfits and logging companies. The consultative structures have helped to build relations between local communities and these influential stakeholders. There are signed agreements between villages and logging companies to facilitate dialogue and communications. The agreements have enhanced greater investments by logging companies in community projects. As a result of signed agreements, some communities now benefit from employment in logging companies and safari hunting outfits. The agreements have also facilitated access by local people to game meat from trophy hunting.
5. Recognition of rights and empowerment of indigenous forest people who make up 40% of the local population. WWF has been working with specialized institutions and local NGOs on access rights and representation of Baka pygmies in local management institutions. There has been participatory mapping of forest areas utilized by Baka pygmies in Lobeke and Boumba Bek national parks. Management strategies to regulate access and activities are currently being discussed with Baka communities.
6. Co-management systems to promote transparent management of community forest revenues have been proposed to local administrations. An estimated \$1million is allocated each year by government as community quota for forest revenues generated from logging operations around Lobeke, Boumba Bek and Nki national parks. This money is managed by local Mayors with a little involvement of village representatives.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The CBFP landscape concept promoted by CARPE was an innovative approach in design and implementation of landscape conservation programs. The program provides an excellent opportunity to address a wide range of conservation issues involving many stakeholders and partners. This holistic approach in landscape management is unique in the world especially in comparison to similar areas such as the Amazon in Brazil. In CARPE there was huge investment in building partnerships and management institutions at all levels; local, national and regional. The CARPE landscape approach also strengthened private sector investments in conservation especially with regards to hunting and bush meat control as well as promoting good forest management practices. For example FSC certification was obtained by CIB, one of the largest logging operating in the Congo basin. Two other logging companies in Cameroon have successfully completed FSC pre-audits.

Strong partnerships were developed with local NGOs and CBO groups in the field. They benefited from financial and technical assistance through the CARPE small grants program. The operational capacity of the groups and NGOs has tremendously improved over the years. There was also capacity building of local management institutions such as CBNRM groups involved in management of wildlife or community forests. Capacity building of these local players is critical for sustainability and future management of resources within the landscapes.

We have identified strategies to improve the inclusion of indigenous people and address gender issues in our conservation approaches that will in the end improve our conservation impact. We

have identified partners that can assist us in the implementation of these strategies. However, there is much to do to adequately mainstreaming gender and participation of minority groups in natural resource management processes. National policies have to be fundamentally reviewed to promote gender and participation of minority groups. Local communities have benefited from participatory LUP planning processes with establishment of several community use zones such as village hunting territories and, in the case of Lobeke, access to national parks to harvest some non-timber forest products. Local communities are benefiting from trophy hunting in all sectors of TNS.

A robust monitoring program to track impacts of conservation work on wildlife and forest dynamics has been developed. There has been good progress within TNS sites to standardize and harmonize research methodologies. This has facilitated site comparisons of data collected such as for the MIKE program and bai monitoring of large mammals. Scientists from project sites regularly exchanged data and shared results of research findings. The whole information exchange process and regular technical coordination meetings facilitated common approach on conservation issues.

CARPE planning and working tools integrate all critical elements required for program implementation on as wide scale as landscapes. Objectives and annual bench marks were well defined and made tracking of progress in project implementation easy to monitor.

However, in sectors where matching support is high and the conservation programs are supported by multiple donors, the CBFP reporting requirements were particularly burdensome because they did not conform to other existing donor reporting requirements and monitoring frameworks. The constant changes in format of matrixes and reporting methodologies was often confusing and took time away from implementation. In both the Lobeke and Dzanga Sangha sectors of the TNS, a great deal of time is spent on satisfying reporting requirements from the multitude of donors, and this takes time away from our ability to implement our programs. In the second phase of CBFP funding, we hope that reporting requirements will be consistent from the start, simplified and less frequent.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

Several lessons can be drawn during implementation of first phase of the CARPE/USAID program. Key lessons are:

- A broad spectrum of partners with diverse background and expertise must be brought together to address the wide range of conservation issues on a large geographical scale.
- Building teams and not individuals or ‘islanders’ is essential to implement an ambitious conservation program such as the Congo basin partnership program.
- Development of a step by step wise methodic approach is critical for success of landuse plan development and participation of all stakeholders.
- CARPE funding played a catalytic role in the negotiating process to leverage additional funds from other donors for landscape activities.

- The CARPE CBFP Program, considering its political status as a United States Government ‘Presidential Initiative’ inarguably contributed positively towards influencing national government policies and COMIFAC agenda for the Congo basin.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The work planning and monitoring system is too detailed.
- Monitoring should track major changes at annual benchmark levels rather than current activity level progress monitoring.
- Monitoring and narrative reports should be on 6-monthly rather than quarterly basis to properly document achievements and project implementation.
- Constant change in reporting format and other reporting requirements during project implementation should be discouraged or strictly reduced. This is to permit Landscape Leaders to spend more time in the field than on their laptops.
- USAID offices in host countries should be more actively engaged in educating and sensitizing national governments at the highest State level about the CARPE program and the expectations of the international conservation and donor community for conservation delivery ‘big-wins’ in the Congo Basin.