



SOS Fund number - # 6b.012

Proposal Title: *Mobilizing Capacity: Central Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Network*

Start date: **1/1/97**
 Duration: **12 months**
 Total Grant amount: **\$50,000**

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Abstract

Starting in early 1995, the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) started establishing Specialist Networks in Central, West and Southern Africa, the purpose of which is to provide a forum for professionals throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar to address issues related to the sustainability of uses of wild renewable resources. Supported and bolstered by these interactions and by support of the IUCN SUI, it is anticipated that African professionals will be better able to advise and assist governments, development assistance agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in developing policies, statutes and approaches to the sustainable use of wild renewable resources.

The process through which these networks will be launched and eventually adjoined consists of three phases:

1. Strategic Planning to achieve comparable capacities among IUCN regional SUI Specialist Networks in Africa and Madagascar.
2. Developing capacities of the Specialist Networks according to the priorities and procedures agreed in the Strategic Plan.
3. Implementing activities in the regions, such as field studies, analyses, and provision of policy guidance.

The Central Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Network (CA-SUSN) was started in September 1995. It has depended, thus far on the voluntary contributions and dedication of the interim Chair and a few key initiators. Despite membership of only four countries, there is broad agreement that the network can serve a valuable role in the region. There is need to strengthen the Network and its effectiveness in contributing to the resolution of Pan-African issues through the contribution of specialists from other countries in the region. Specific constraints to the capacity of the Network are: difficulties in communications, lack of resources, and isolation from other regional networks. The scope of this proposal is to:

- . further develop the capacity of CA-SUSN;
- . facilitate expansion of the membership of the CA-SUSN to include pertinent disciplines (e.g., social scientists, economists, land-use planners, ecologists, wild resource managers) and balanced representation of the membership in those countries included in CARPE;
- . prepare a *Central Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Network Plan of Action* that summarizes members' agreements on: a) priority issues, b) network activities, c) task assignments, and d) funding requirements; and
- . facilitate contributions from the CA-SUSN to a *Pan-African Strategic Plan*.