CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	The Endangered Wildlife Trust
Project Title:	Development and dissemination of Amathole Endangered Species Conservation Plans
Date of Report:	12 August 2015
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CEPF Region: Maputaland-Pondoland_Albany

Strategic Direction: 4: Create an enabling environment to improve conservation and management of MPAH priority sites.

Grant Amount: $ 4384

Project Dates: 1 June 2014 – 31 July 2015

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) is the primary implementing agent for this project. The EWT has been responsible for the overall management of the project and implementation, including the submitting of financial and narrative reports to the CEPF.

Within the Amathole and Hogsback region, the Amathole Freshwater Species Conservation Project (AFSCP) of the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) has engaged with the following partners:

1. Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) – collaborating on the local community level and with awareness programs such as the Eco-schools program which is run by WESSA as a partner in a joint project and coalition, the Healthy Catchment Alliance. WESSA has assisted in disseminating awareness materials developed as part of this project.
2. Conservation South Africa (CSA) – collaborating with the EWT through learning exchanges on similar work being conducted in a different catchment. After assisting with the establishment of the umZimvubu Catchment Partnership Programme (UCPP), CSA has experience in setting up consultative catchment forum bodies, which the AFSCP is also doing. The EWT is setting up the Amathole Catchment Forum (hereafter referred to as the ACF) as part of the process of assisting in starting the conservation on catchment-scale issues such as management that threatens sustainability and the wellbeing of communities and biodiversity as it relates to catchments.

3. The South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB) – have provided support for research aspects of the project, including the development of conservation plans for both species (the Border barb *Barbus trevelyani* and the Amathole toad *Vandijkophrynus amatolicus*).
4. Wild Bird Trust (WBT) - iziKhwenene Project within the same Key Biodiversity Area. The EWT has collaborated on local community initiatives such catchment rehabilitation work in priority areas. This involves the removal of alien vegetation at this stage but will also involve subsequent rehabilitation work at the appropriate time. The project priority habitats overlap with WBTs focus areas.
5. Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) – through the provision of permits for the EWT to conduct monitoring of endangered species populations. DEA are also the major funders and partners in the NRM alien tree clearing/catchment rehabilitation program, which is a key conservation intervention mentioned in the conservation plans of both species.
6. Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) in King William's Town – were present at meetings of the Amathole Catchment Forum and have assisted in the development of the forum. This forum will function as a consultative body where rehabilitation, conservation and stewardship ideas can be shared and developed with the community.
7. Communal land owners/users – are directly involved in implementing the conservation interventions as set out in the conservation plans – 60 or more community members are employed through an Extended Public Works project funded by DEA (mentioned above) to remove alien vegetation from a priority site for the Border barb *Barbus trevelyani*. Community associations have been formed to consult the community at large about these activities.
8. Amathole District Municipality (ADM) environmental department – collaborate on awareness programs and community work. ADM is also responsible for implementing the Amathole Biosphere Reserve which will help to achieve many of the issues raised in both conservation plans that were developed for this project.
9. Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) – have collaborated on proposals for stewardship agreements to secure priority sites. It has been established that the priority sites as identified in the conservation plans, align with the provincial Protected Area Expansion Strategy of the ECPTA.
10. Amathole Forestry Company (AFC)/Rance Timber – collaborate on management of priority sites within forestry land and general management of plantations near water source areas. The ACF has already agreed to improve the management of a priority site within their leased state forest land – *Pinus* plantation trees have been removed from a priority site for the Amathole toad *Vandijkophrynus amatolicus*.

1 Conservation Impacts

1.1 Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

This project has contributed to the CEPF Strategic Directions 2 and 4: expand conservation areas and improve land use in 19 key biodiversity areas through innovative approaches; and

create an enabling environment to improve conservation and management of Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany priority sites.

The Amathole Mountains are one of the few “water factories” of South Africa, which exist within a landscape of general water scarcity (Nel et al. 2013). This area also falls within a number of biodiversity hotspots: the internationally recognized Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany Biodiversity Hotspot of floristic diversity; the Great-Winterberg-Amatholes centre of floristic diversity and probable endemism (Clark et al. 2014); and the proposed Greater Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany centre of vertebrate endemism which includes an additional 135% endemics with only a 73% increase in surface area to the MPA hotspot (Perera et al. 2011). These hotspots are home to a number of threatened endemics, including freshwater dependant species such as the Border barb *Barbus trevelyani* (EN) and the Amathole toad *Vandijkophrynus amatolicus* (CR).

The Border barb occurs only in the headwaters of the Keiskamma River which is fed solely from the Amathole strategic water source area, and the Amathole toad occurs within the montane grassland and seepage habitats of the Amathole Mountains, above 1400 m altitude and is extremely rare. Both grassland and stream habitats are threatened by a number of factors including: afforestation of grassland by *Pinus* plantations by the forestry industry; degradation caused by poor management and over-utilization of rangelands; transformation of pristine habitats by the construction of informal impoundments, roads, dams etc.; draining of wetlands; and the infestation of alien invasive plants.

The project has developed conservation plans for the two freshwater-dependant threatened endemics, which will ensure well-coordinated and consistent conservation interventions that will benefit both the communities and the threatened species of interest. The two objectives of the overall project objectives that pertain to the deliverables of this CEPF project were:

1) To improve management and stakeholder awareness of the plight of selected red-listed species through the development of species-specific management or conservation plans
2) To develop educational materials that create awareness of freshwater ecosystems and species amongst stakeholders and communities in key sites

The small grant from the CEPF has been used to develop a conservation plan for two of the focal species of the overall project, the Border barb (EN) and the Amathole toad (CR), as well as to develop educational materials that will aid in creating awareness about the plight of these species and how it is relevant in terms of the state of catchments and freshwater source areas in general. The fact that these indicator species are declining is a sign that not all is well in the habitats they depend on, and ultimately, on which numerous communities also depend. Catchments are not only essential as sources of vital freshwater, but they also offer numerous other ecosystem services, including rangelands for livestock, fertile lands for agriculture and food production, and also landscapes within which industries can flourish (for example, the forestry industry in the Amatholes). The developed conservation plans take into account all of the stressors at play in the catchments of the Amatholes and have developed interventions that will serve to protect the life-giving ecosystem services that are essential for the survival of threatened species, ecosystems and rural communities.

Awareness programmes (which will make use of the developed awareness materials) are very much part of these conservation interventions, which will also help to empower people to safeguard the natural heritage under their custodianship.

1.2 Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.

1.2.1 Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal):

Long-term impact goals and objectives:

Goal 1: The implementation of conservation plans for selected threatened and endemic species which results in the improved management of priority habitats and areas for the benefit of biodiversity and people.

Objective 1: A long-term monitoring programme that will monitor the threats affecting species, habitats and livelihoods and also assess the effectiveness of conservation interventions that are implemented.

Objective 2: The "bringing together" of stakeholders into groups of role-players that are responsible for implementing the conservation plans, which helps to ensure the long-term impact of the project.

Goal 2: In the very long term/at the appropriate time, the gazette of the developed conservation plans into formal Biodiversity Management Plans for the species in question.

Goal 3: The initiation of an awareness programme, specifically raising awareness about endangered species and habitats and how this is relevant at the community/people level.

This project was completed with a small grant and was only one year in duration. In that time, two highly comprehensive conservation plans have been developed and a number of awareness materials have been developed and disseminated. The long-term impacts of the materials that were the specific objectives of the project will be far-reaching and will help to improve the management of natural resources within important catchment areas, which will benefit biodiversity and communities. One of the major conservation interventions identified as a priority in the conservation plans (alien invasive plant removal), has already been initiated with funds from the Department of Environmental Affairs. This is directly benefiting 60 or more households with jobs as clearers and as business owners of alien clearing companies which are contracted by the Endangered Wildlife Trust to implement this conservation intervention. See section 1.3 for more details.

1.2.2 Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal):

Short-term impact goals and objectives:

Goal 1: Development of conservation plans for two selected species (Border barb *Barbus trevelyani* and the Amathole toad *Vandijkophrynus amatolicus*) in consultation with key role players.

Goal 2: Development of awareness materials that will feed into an awareness programme about endangered species and habitats and how this is relevant at the community/people level.

Both the short term impacts as stated above have been completed within the year that the project has been running for. These short-term goals feed into the long-term goals, as shown above in Section 1.2.1. The short-term goals are the immediate outputs of the project. The long-term goals and objectives are influenced by the short-term goals and indirectly benefit from them, but are not necessarily made possible directly through the CEPF funding provided by this grant.

1.3 Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives

The short and long-term goals are repeated here for ease of reference.

1.3.1 Short-term goals:

Goal 1: Development of conservation plans for two selected species (Border barb *Barbus trevelyani* and the Amathole toad *Vandijkophrynus amatolicus*) in consultation with key role players.

Successes: These conservation plans have been developed in conjunction with key role players and are in the beginning stages of implementation. It is also likely that these plans will be published as peer reviewed scientific articles by 2016. The plans are comprehensive and will form the basis for the development of formally gazetted Biodiversity Management Plans for both species in the long term.

Challenges: Because of the number of role-players involved in each case, the finalisation of the plans took longer than expected. This is probably for the best since it will avoid delays later on during the implementation of the conservation plans.

Goal 2: Development of awareness materials that will feed into an awareness programme about endangered species and habitats and how this is relevant at the community/people level.

Successes: Awareness materials have been created in the form of a species and habitat fact sheet for a number of threatened and endemic freshwater-dependant species of the Amatholes. This has been used to raise awareness about endangered species and habitats and has also helped to reach stakeholders that are interested in being involved in the project.
Challenges: N/A

1.3.2 Long-term goals:

Goal 1: The implementation of conservation plans for selected threatened and endemic species which results in the improved management of priority habitats and areas for the benefit of biodiversity and people.

Successes: Some implementation of targeted conservation interventions has already started: the removal of alien invasive black wattle *Acacia mearnsii* has been initiated on the Tyume River which is a priority site for the Border barb. This intervention is an Extended Public Works Programme that has been funded by the Department of Environmental Affairs

(DEA) and co-funded by the European Union. Despite numerous delays, this project has made good headway and has also helped to facilitate the communication with communities in the area through community associations that were established as part of the process. These communication channels are likely to benefit all of the conservation activities in the area and will empower land users and owners to influence activities taking place on the ground.

Another success is that three private landowners within the distribution of the Amathole toad have indicated their interest in participating in Biodiversity Stewardship which would help to secure 5743 ha of priority grassland under improved management. Grassland habitats themselves are also threatened and under-represented in existing protected areas, therefore these areas would help the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency reach its targets for Protected Area Expansion in areas with priority habitats.

Challenges: The main challenge has been the delays in DEA funding for the implementation of alien invasive plant clearing work but these have eventually been overcome. Community relations are good at present and will hopefully remain so, as communities will benefit as much as biodiversity through the implementation of both conservation plans.

Objective 1: A long-term monitoring programme that will monitor the threats affecting species, habitats and livelihoods and also assess the effectiveness of conservation interventions that are implemented.

Successes: Long term monitoring has been initiated for both the Border barb and the Amathole toad and the habitats on which they and rural communities depend. This data will be published in peer reviewed scientific articles by 2016. This monitoring has already started monitoring the effectiveness of the alien plant removal project and initial baseline data has been collected for an in depth Before After Control Impact Experiment that will be done over the implementation period of the alien plant clearing. This is one of very few such studies that will actually monitor the successfulness of alien plant removal. This data will also serve to monitor the improvement in livelihoods as a result of improved rangeland condition and other ecosystem services. An Ecosystem Goods and Services (EGS) tool has also been developed as part of the larger EU-funded project, which is a universal tool that laymen as well as conservationists can use to monitor their ecosystem goods and services. This tool will be used in the implementation of the conservation plans and will allow land users and owners to take part in monitoring themselves so that they can be part of the process and understand the impact of certain activities on the environment. This will be more likely to inspire action to conserve the natural heritage under their custodianship.
Challenges: Ecological systems are inherently difficult to monitor as there are numerous confounding factors to take into consideration. The presence of multiple threats also makes it difficult to determine exact cause and effect processes. The presence of not only alien trees but also alien fish, for example, makes it difficult to isolate which threats are having which effect which in turn makes it difficult to mitigate these threats and determine the success of conservation actions effectively. These confounding factors have to be controlled for in whatever way possible

Objective 2: The "bringing together" of stakeholders into groups of role-players that are responsible for implementing the conservation plans, which helps to ensure the long-term impact of the project.

Successes: Role players have been brought together for the development of both conservation plans and have effectively collaborated on producing accurate and well thought out plans. The contact details and involvement of these stakeholders have been stated within each conservation plan, ensuring long-term commitment to the plan and the activities that were allocated to each role player. An agreement will be signed by the role players in the near future to ensure their long-term commitment to the plan.
Challenges: Having numerous role players can make it difficult to make decisions and move forward with activities. To avoid this, a chair and vice chair have been appointed for each role player group who will also be one of the major implementers of the activities set out in each plan.

Goal 2: In the very long term/at the appropriate time, the gazette of the developed conservation plans into formal Biodiversity Management Plans (BMP) for the species in question.

Successes: The conservation plans have been structured in the BMP format and so would just need to now go through the gazetting stage to be declared as formal BMPs.
Challenges: The Amathole toad is so data-deficient that more data will need to be collected to justify the gazetting a formal BMP for the species. The monitoring plan set out in the conservation plan for the species will assist in achieving this.

Goal 3: The initiation of an awareness programme, specifically raising awareness about endangered species and habitats and how this is relevant at the community/people level.

Successes: An awareness programme has already been initiated in the area through the EU-funded Healthy Catchment Alliance Eco-schools programme, run by EWTs implementing partner, WESSA (the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa). The awareness materials developed as part of this project will be incorporated in this awareness programme and into other targeted awareness drives run by the EWT itself such as Leap Day for Frogs on the 28th February, World Fish Migration Day biannually in May, and SA Water Week in March.
Challenges: N/A

1.4 Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

Although not directly part of the goals or objectives of this project, the development of the Amathole Catchment Forum (hereafter referred to as the Forum) has meant that stakeholder engagement has been able to happen on a much more holistic level than was previously possible. The Forum arose out of a need to communicate more effectively with implementers carrying out alien plant removal work in the area in order to coordinate efforts more effectively. The need for a broader platform of communication was then realised, resulting in the EWT assisting in the development of the Forum which now represents a number of communities, organisations and land users involved at various levels in the Amathole. This Forum is still in the early stages of development but will eventually

align with the umZimvubu to Tsitsikamma Catchment Management Agency which is also in the early stages of development.

2 Project Components

Please report on results by project component. Reporting should reference specific products/deliverables from the approved project design and other relevant information.

2.1 Project Deliverable 1: Conservation plans for the Border barb Barbus trevelyani and the Amathole toad Vandijkophrynus amatolicus

These deliverables have been met and are available with this narrative report. Although the conservation plans are finals drafts, it is inevitable that they will be adapted on an ongoing basis as the projects develop and as monitoring and conservation actions are implemented.

2.2 Project Deliverable 2: Awareness materials developed for endangered species and habitats

Awareness materials were developed for endangered species and habitats, which have helped to increase awareness in communities and have also helped to reach new stakeholders that would like to be involved in project activities.

Were any components unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

All components of the project have been realized.

Please describe and submit (electronically if possible) any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.

Please see the awareness materials and conservation plans accompanying this report.

3 Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

3.1 Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

The involvement of multiple stakeholders in the development of the conservation plans slowed down the process of finalising the plans considerably but this will be offset by avoiding these delays during the implementation phase. The involvement of many role players will probably also contribute to the long term impact of the conservation plans.

3.2 Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

Although it delayed proceedings, involving numerous stakeholders and role players assisted in increasing the impact of the project and also ensured that no errors were missed. Conservation actions that were deemed impractical or not beneficial will thus not be attempted and so valuable time and resources have been saved in the long run.

3.3 Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Community involvement from the outset of the project has assisted in ensuring that no conflict arises in the implementation phase. All issues are dealt with quickly and efficiently with the community associations that have been developed.

4 Additional Funding

Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of the CEPF investment in this project.

****Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:***

A. *Project co-financing (Other donors or your organization contribute to the direct costs of this project)*
B. *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF funded project.)*
C. *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Donor	Type of Funding	Amount (2014-2015)	Notes
EU	A	R 1 658 500	EU funding has been secured for 3 years of overall project implementation. This overall project involves the implementation of the conservation plans.
DEA NRM	A	R 1 726 276	DEA funding has been secured for alien plant removal work for 3 years of implementation. This project is one of the conservation actions specified in the conservation plans.
RMB	A/B	R 400 000	RMB funding has been secured for the last two years and the funds for 2014/2015 were granted with the help of grantee leveraging.
Total		R 3 784 776	

5 Sustainability/Replicability

Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results. Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Raising awareness about endangered species and habitats and how this impacts people living in the shared environment will help to ensure that the management of the affected catchments improves in the long term. The involvement of numerous stakeholders in the development of the conservation plans has also helped to ensure long term sustainability of the plans, as it will ensure that the implementation of the plan is not dangerously reliant on a few individuals who may move away or cease their involvement for whatever reason.

6 Safeguard Policy Assessment

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

Professional assistance and expert support has been sourced during the development of the conservation plans and the awareness materials. Conservation plans have been proofread by experts in the relevant field and their comments and suggestions have been incorporated.

7 Additional Comments/Recommendations

After the successful development of conservation plans for the Border barb and the Amathole toad, it is likely that a further plan will be developed following similar methods for the Eastern Cape rocky *Sandelia bainsii*, also a threatened fish species that co-occurs with the Border barb.

8 Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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*****If your grant has an end date other than JUNE 30, please complete the tables on the following pages*****

9 Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF Global Targets				
Grant Term: **1 June 2014 to 30 August 2015** **Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant. Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.**				
Project Results	**Is this question relevant?**	**If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved during the annual period.**	**Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.**	**Describe the principal results achieved from 1 June 2014 to 11 August 2015. (Attach annexes where necessary)**
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	yes	5743 ha have been provisionally secured under the Biodiversity Stewardship Programme	same	*Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.* Woodhouselea farm (1462 ha) Rockford Park (1290 ha) Glenara farm (644 ha) Grasslands (2347 ha)
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	Yes	The proposed stewardship sites on private farm land have not been legally declared yet. Improved management has been achieved for 94 ha of the Tyume River headwaters.	same	*Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.*
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	Yes	0 ha	0 ha	Implementation of improved management as part of the Extended Public Works programme (EPWP) initiated in the Tyume Valley will begin implementation this month. Contractors and their staff are currently undergoing extensive training.
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in	Yes	94 ha	94 ha	Improved management has been achieved for 94 ha of the Tyume River headwaters,

management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.				where implementation of the EPWP will begin in the next month.
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	Yes	About 60 households	Same	Although actual alien plant removal has not begun, extensive training of contractors and their staff has been achieved, capacitating them to become business owners of businesses that directly improve the management of natural resources.

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table:

Table 1. Socioeconomic Benefits to Target Communities

Please complete this table if your project provided concrete socioeconomic benefits to local communities. List the name of each community in column one. In the subsequent columns under Community Characteristics and Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit, place an X in all relevant boxes. In the bottom row, provide the totals of the Xs for each column.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics								Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit													
									Increased income due to:													
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic people	Pastoralists/nomadic people	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Communities falling below the poverty rate	Other	Adoption of sustainable natural resources management practices	Ecotourism revenues	Park management activities	Payment for environmental services	Increased food security due to the adoption of sustainable fishing, hunting, or agricultural practices.	More secure access to water resources	Improved tenure in land or other natural resource due to titling, reduction of colonization etc.	Reduced risk of natural disasters (fires, landslides, flooding etc.)	More secure sources of energy	Increased access to public services, such as education, health, or credit	Improved use of traditional knowledge for environmental management	More participatory decision-making due to strengthened civil society and governance	Other
Hala		X	X				X		X					X						X	
Sompondu		X	X				X		X					X						X	
Nothenga		X	X				X		X					X						X	
Total		3	3				3		3					3						3	

If you marked "Other", please provide detail on the nature of the Community Characteristics and Socioeconomic Benefit:

10 References

Clark, V., A. Dold, C. McMaster, G. McGregor, C. Bredenkamp, and N. Barker. 2014. Rich sister, poor cousin: plant diversity and endemism in the Great Winterberg – Amatholes (Great Escarpment, Eastern Cape, South Africa). South African Journal of Botany **92**:159–174.

Nel, J., C. Colvin, D. Le Maitre, J. Smith, and I. Haines. 2013. South Africa's strategic water source areas.

Perera, S. J., D. Ratnayake-Perera, and Ş. Procheş. 2011. Vertebrate distributions indicate a greater Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany region of endemism. South African Journal of Science **107**:1–15.