

CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Western Cape Nature Conservation Board
Project Title:	Consolidation of the Knersvlakte Conservation Area
Date of Report:	12 March 2013
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CEPF Region: Succulent Karoo

Strategic Direction: 7. Consolidation

Grant Amount: US\$300,000

Project Dates: 1 Jan, 2010-31 Dec, 2012

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

The Knersvlakte, or Vanrhynsdorp Centre, is a bioregion within the Succulent Karoo, (Hilton Taylor 1994a). The area, comprising approximately 10 000 square kilometers, is home to some 133 Red Data Book plant species. It is renowned for its rich flora of minute succulents associated with quartz fields (Schmiedel and Jurgens 1999). Other hard rock substrata such as shale, quartzite and (especially) limestone also support a biologically interesting and distinct flora (PG Desmet et al. unpubl. data). The intervening matrix of heuweltjie veld on reddish, colluvial sands is biologically uniform and lacks range-restricted endemics. Details on biophysical and biological environment of the Knersvlakte are provided by Jurgens (1986), Hilton Taylor (1994a) and Schmiedel and Jurgens (1999). The Knersvlakte has long been recognized as a priority region for plant conservation (Hilton Taylor and Le Roux 1989, Cowling et al 1998, Lombard et al 1999).

Desmet 2003 in his report, Spatial Priorities for the Establishment of the Knersvlakte Nature Reserve identified a reserve layout that is designed to maximize the amount of biodiversity (i.e. unique species and habitats) represented within the reserve in the smallest area. The product is a large reserve (113 474 ha, 58 properties) that represents the regions unique biodiversity, and that includes important ecological processes such as habitat, upland-lowland, migratory and climatic gradients.

As part of the initial CEPF funding a small grant was secured for the development of a management plan for the Knersvlakte Conservation Area – 2004.

The first three year funding phase through CEPF helped CapeNature to secure 62,000 hectares to form the Knersvlakte Conservation Area and to implement identified management interventions from the management plan. This funding played a key role in the development of a suitable and effective governance structure in the Knersvlakte Conservation Area.

This project aims to consolidate the efforts that have gone into the first funded phase of the project by providing effective management plans (building on the previously developed plan) and

capacity to roll out identified management activities (on the secured 62,000 hectares of land). There is also an important opportunity, in terms of consolidation, to strengthen linkages with the adjacent landscape initiatives to further enhance conservation gains and to strengthen the existing governance structure.

If the project is not implemented the necessary effective management interventions would not be able to be implemented and conservation goals for the Knersvlakte Conservation Area as a SKEP priority area.

The "Knersvlakte Conservation Area" is not formally declared as a conservation area and therefore we refer to the area as the "Knersvlakte Conservation Area". The process of formal declaration is in the process. After the official proclamation in the government gazette it will be named as the "Knersvlakte Provincial Nature Reserve"

Reference is made to the Knersvlakte Priority Area and this refers to the SKEP Priority Area.

Conservation Impacts

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

The Knersvlakte consolidation grant aligned itself with the Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Profile by making meaningful contributions to the following Strategic Funding Directions, which will be expanded on in the different chapters to follow:

- 1) Expanding protected area corridors through public-private-communal partnerships
- 2) Engage key industrial sectors in meeting conservation objectives
- 3) Retain and restore critical biodiversity in areas under greatest land-use pressure
- 4) Increase awareness
- 5) Create capacity to catalyze the SKEP program.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.

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

The long term impact is to create connectivity in the larger landscape through linking of corridors and conservation areas (aquatic and terrestrial) and to ensure effective management of conserved areas.

Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:

The funding provided has created three positions, which now has been absorbed into CapeNature's permanent structure. The reserve is now also the recipient of a dedicated annual budget. This will ensure the effective management of this conservation initiative. The management team will assist with the negotiations to acquire earmarked properties with the financial backing of the Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust.

During the funding period the reserve has expanded its east-west corridor and it is envisaged that it will be able to link up to the Northern Cape conservation areas as well as the well-established Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor. Although buying up land will still occur where deemed necessary, more focus will be placed on stewardship agreements as a means to secure land parcels falling within the Knersvlakte Expansion Domain.

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

The short term impact is the: (i) Proclamation of the 62,000 hectares as a Provincial Nature Reserve, (ii) and the effective management of the Provincial Nature Reserve that also support socio economic development.

Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:

Proclamation

The proclamation process has been delayed since August 2010. It is currently being dealt with at an inter-ministerial level. The most recent development has been the formation of a task team (consisting of CapeNature, the Department of Minerals and Resources (DMR), the Council for Geoscience and WWF-SA) that has developed a report indicating the mineral potential of the Knersvlakte Region. It provides an overview of the mineral deposits found inside and outside the proposed Knersvlakte Expansion Domain (KED). The KED is an evolution of the initial core cadasters identified by Dr. Phil Desmet's report in 2003, which formed the foundation of land earmarked for acquisition in the area.

It is envisaged that the submitted report will result in DMR revoking its 2010 directive preventing the formal proclamation of the reserve as well as barring any future prospecting applications in the KED (effectively declaring it a "mining-free" area).

Socio economic development

The establishment of a reserve team has been beneficial ecologically as well as from a socio-economically. Baseline data collected have fed into an Annual Plan of Operation for the last three years, which has resulted in the employment of nearly 75 individuals from the surrounding communities. Funding for the 2013/14; 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years have been secured. Activities include fence removal/maintenance/construction; invasive alien plant clearing as well as building and road maintenance. Apart from the cash injection these projects have provided to the local economy, there have also been a number of social and operational training interventions undertaken. Subject matter covered included substance abuse, world aids day, personal health, personal finance, small business development, fence construction, herbicide applicator, first aid, health and safety and chainsaw operator. It is envisaged that these skills would make them more employable in the local job market.

Table 1. Funding to date

Financial year	Amount	Funding Source
2011/12	\$72,240	CapeNature (Expanded Public Works Programme)
2012/13	\$200,255	CapeNature (Expanded Public Works Programme)
2013 – 16 (three year cycle)	\$454,360	CapeNature (Expanded Public Works Programme)

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: 13,819

Species Conserved: Currently approximately 160 endemic species occur on the Knersvlakte properties. This number is still increasing

Corridors Created: The additional acquisitions has enabled the Knersvlakte corridor to expand its east-west extension

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

Funding to the value of \$419,495 for poverty alleviation projects would not have been secured if the staff component had not been put in place. As mentioned, these positions have now been absorbed within CapeNature's permanent structure.

In order realize the larger landscape initiatives, additional staff capacity would need to be considered to assist with the increase in stewardship agreements predicted.

Progress towards linkages at a landscape level is currently being made by the conclusion of a 12,500 ha property (Jakkalsdraai) deal, expected in the first quarter of 2013. This will aid in the establishment of a corridor linking the Knersvlakte with the Nieuwoudtville escarpment. In terms climate change, this is seen as a critical link to facilitate species movement along temperature and altitude gradients.

As been mentioned, the proclamation of the reserve is currently on hold but significant strides have been made through the work of the task team consisting of all the important role-players

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

None

Project Components

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

Component 1 Planned:

Develop institutional capacity and staff function to address the consolidation efforts within the Knersvlakte Conservation Area being implemented by CapeNature. Ensure long-term sustainability by retention of management capacity.

Component 1 Actual at Completion:

The three positions initially budgeted for were appointed in 2010. CapeNature's commitment to carry on the investment made by CEPF has subsequently resulted in the positions being absorbed within their permanent structures.

Component 2 Planned:

Develop a management plan and activities for the Knersvlakte Conservation Area and continue proclamation process for the reserve.

Component 2 Actual at Completion:

CapeNature has embarked on an internal Protected Area Management Plan (PAMP) development strategy. This is to ensure that all reserves PAMPs are aligned with the overall strategic objectives of the organization. The Knersvlakte is set to start its PAMP development in the 2013/2014 financial year.

The proclamation process has been delayed since August 2010. It is currently being dealt with at an inter-ministerial level. The most recent development has been the formation of a task team (consisting of CapeNature, the Department of Minerals and Resources (DMR), the Council for Geoscience and WWF-SA) that has developed a report indicating the mineral potential of the Knersvlakte Region. It provides an overview of the mineral deposits found inside and outside the proposed Knersvlakte Expansion Domain (KED). The KED is an evolution of the initial core cadasters identified by Dr. Phil Desmet's report in 2003, which formed the foundation of land acquisition for the area.

It is envisaged that the submitted report will result in DMR revoking its 2010 directive preventing the formal proclamation of the reserve as well as barring any future prospecting applications in the KED (effectively declaring it a "mining-free" area).

Component 3 Planned:

Strengthen Stakeholder engagement of the Knersvlakte Conservation Area, supporting tourism development, effective awareness raising and knowledge exchange.

Component 3 Actual at Completion:

Stakeholder Engagement

The Knersvlakte Protected Area Advisory Committee was established in 2006. Various government departments and organizations, including the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) the local and district municipalities (tourism and planning departments), the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEADP), local subsistence and commercial farmers, the Griqua National Conference and the Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG), are represented on the committee. It is a platform used by the reserve and its partners to engage with one another about matter not just concerning the reserve but the broader landscape. The committee has been instrumental in building relationships with local farmers and tackling issues such as damage causing animals.

Awareness Raising has been in the form of:

- Local radio interviews
- Regular articles for the online SKEP as well as CapeNature's This & That internal newsletters
- Winter and Spring schools with fieldtrips co-facilitated with one of our SKEP partners, Indigo based in Nieuwoudtville. The local municipality and succulent nursery usually assist with transport and providing plant specimens respectively
- Arbor day events in the local community and schools
- Assisting schools with environmental projects
- Presentations at the Arid Zone Ecological Forum and the SKEP conference
- The project is currently embarking on a pilot Landscape Education (LE) initiative. The development of this LE resource breaks new ground in terms of environmental education and learning. It will provide the platform to bridge the gap between cultural and natural heritage education. The Knersvlakte Conservation Manager has been invited to co-present the work currently undertaken in CapeNature's North West Area at the Bridging Ages Annual Conference in Las Cruces (New Mexico) in April 2013.

Knowledge Exchange

The reserve team has been on two successful knowledge exchange trips to the Northern Cape. The initial trip in 2011 was more focused on building partnerships with SKEP partners at a strategic level. The four-day excursion allowed the partners to not just share their challenges but it created an opportunity to celebrate their respective successes. Topics included funding options for small grant projects; climate change and the ostrich industry; damage causing animals; wildlife management; expansion of conservation areas as well as people and parks.

Members of CapeNature's North West management team attended the annual Landscape Initiative and Knowledge Exchange (LIKE) held in Baviaanskloof. In line with celebrating 10 years of the CAPE partnership, the 2012 LIKE was themed '10 years of engagement with municipalities at the landscape level'. It was an invaluable platform for Landscape Initiatives to reflect on best practices, share lessons, develop collaborative projects as well as facilitating network opportunities.

Topics of discussion included:

- Reflections on working with municipalities during the first phase of CAPE
- National trends in engaging with municipalities
- Reframing the biodiversity conservation engagement with municipalities
- Making the Case for Biodiversity Conservation

The North West Area was fortunate to have municipal representatives from Cederberg, Matzikama as well as the West Coast District present.

The third and final exchange was held in November 2012 at Namaqualand National Park and involved the Field Rangers and management staff of a number of CapeNature reserves and partners (Indigo, Conservation South Africa and SANBI) and focused on the operational activities at reserve level.

Component 4 Planned:

Strengthen stewardship within the Project to support consolidation of Conservation Area.

Component 4 Actual at Completion:

Two stewardship agreements are currently earmarked. The first of the two agreements is centered around the Griqua community's Ratelgat property. Negotiations are at an advanced stage. It should be noted though that due to the complexities of working with a number of Griqua clans, the process has been slow with a number of meetings required to clarify concerns as they arise. Due to capacity constraints the second agreement, with a mining company's land parcel that is landlocked by conservation area, will only commence once the Griqua negotiations have been concluded. In total, the land to be leveraged for conservation is approximately 5,200 ha.

Component 5 Planned:

Mainstream biodiversity conservation into local economic development through the incorporation of protected area related employment into the integrated development plan of the local and district authorities.

Component 5 Actual at Completion:

The Knersvlakte Reserve's poverty alleviation project is in its third year of funding. To date 75 individuals from the surrounding communities have benefited from the project. Funding for the project (including the 2013/14 financial year) stands at \$419,495. With an additional two years being committed to buy the funder. These projects have been submitted for inclusion in the local and district municipalities' integrated development plans.

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

The Protected Area Management Plan and the proclamation have been discussed. Both these are on course to be realized. This has not negatively impacted the progress of the project

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

- Revised report on the mineral potential of the Knersvlakte (pdf)

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.

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

The two year timeframe allowed for concluding the stewardship agreement may have been insufficient, especially in light of the complex community structure and geographical separation of the Griqua National Conference. "Rural time frames" should be taken into consideration in future.

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

The project team was allowed sufficient time and freedom to get to understand the underpinnings of the SKEP landscape. Making time to understand the various role players mandates meant that future interactions were concise and goal orientated.

Resource sharing has been instrumental in achieving certain deliverables, especially where internal capacity was lacking.

The SKEP Consolidation Meeting held every quarter and convened by SANBI, has been invaluable in terms of knowledge sharing between CEPF funded implementers. Although all implementers' funding has come to an end the aim is to continue with the meetings and to expand its representation to include additional SKEP partners.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Linking up with an established landscape initiatives, through engagement with the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor (GCBC), has stood the project in good stead. Engaging with the GCBCs Working Group, it was evident that a goal orientated subgroup can achieve effective and expedited results. When required the Knersvlakte Protected Area Advisory Committee will implement this strategy.

Although a stumbling block in the proclamation of the Knersvlakte Provincial Nature Reserve for more than two years, DMR can be commended for finally coming to the table and showing a willingness to negotiate terms that suited all parties. Compromising was relatively easy once the relatively parties clearly understood each other's objectives.

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.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
CapeNature	A	\$40,000	This original amount was a supplementary operational fund.
CapeNature	A	\$97,777	Annual Budget secured for 2013/14 financial year
CapeNature (Expanded Public Works Programme)	B	\$726,855	Poverty Alleviation Projects to assist with operational activities. Funding period 2011 - 2016
WWF-SA (Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust)	B	\$720,732	Land acquired during the project period
		\$744,444	Land acquisition currently in process

**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.)*

Sustainability/Replicability

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

The project has resulted in the appointment of three permanent staff members by CapeNature. A dedicated annual budget, since 2011, has acted as a top up fund for the CEPF funding. This has been revised to cover all costs as of January 2013.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

The socio-economic benefits of employing individuals from the poverty stricken surrounding communities has been one of the major highlights of the project. The project has already secured funding until the 2015/16 financial year. The invasive alien plant clearing and fence construction projects are replicable outside the reserve and it is anticipated that contracting teams would be able to exit the reserve's project and start their own business ventures.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

Not Applicable

Additional Comments/Recommendations

A number of activities undertaken during the funded period not captured under the listed components that deserve mentioning include:

- The project team has built up and maintained good relations with various research institutions, e.g SANBI and the universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Hamburg. Since 2010, annual plant and bird surveys have been conducted. This is set to continue since there is still a significant portion of the Knersvlakte that remains unexplored.
- A film company, STEPS, was commissioned by SANBI to produce a number of short films centered on the Succulent Karoo. These were developed as learning material for a variety of environmentally based groups. Some of the themes explored in the Knersvlakte film include the proclamation of the Provincial Nature Reserve; Damage Causing Animals (DCAs); partnerships in the landscape including the efforts of individuals and community groups as well as the conservation challenges arising from the mining industry.
- Significant strides have been made in improving relations with neighbouring farmers in light of the perceived increase in DCA activity with the expansion of the protected area. This has been achieved by the following means:
 - Obtaining guest speakers to engage with farmers around the subject matter
 - Requesting Farmers' Associations to supply maps indicating the location of their DCA hotspots
 - Subsequent ground truthing of DCA hotspots in conjunction with the farmers
 - Deploying camera traps to monitor numbers and movement of DCAs on and off the reserve
 - Schedule feedback sessions at the Knersvlakte Protected Area Advisory Committee meetings

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*****

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF Global Targets				
(Enter Grant Term)				
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 July, 2012 to 31 December, 2012 (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	No			
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	Yes	1.4,500 ha	1. 4,500 ha 2.13,819 ha 3.12,500 ha	1. Griekwa stewardship agreement is currently being negotiated. 2. Knersvlakte Nature Reserve 3. Jakkalsdraai land acquisition in process
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	1.12,500 ha	1.12,500 ha 2.13,819 ha	1. Jakkalsdraai land acquisition still in process 2. Knersvlakte Nature Reserve
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	No			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	No			

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

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