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Biodiversity Analysis and Technical Support for USAID/Africa (BATS)

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ACRONYMS

ABCG	Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group
BATS	Biodiversity Analysis and Technical Support for USAID/Africa
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
FS/IP	USDA Forest Service/International Programs
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
LOE	level of effort
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
STTA	short-term technical assistance
TA	technical assistance
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The objective of the Biodiversity Analysis and Technical Support for USAID/Africa (BATS) task order (under the EPIQ II IQC) is to build capacity within the Africa Bureau and its field missions to improve conformance with the Foreign Assistance Framework within Economic Growth Environment Program Area (EG8.1) through timely biodiversity assessments, targeted analyses, and other program development support. By incorporating best practices into operational plans, Mission Strategic Plans and Country Assistance Strategies, this project will serve as a platform for raising awareness of USAID's biodiversity conservation agenda.

For USAID to better integrate natural resource and biodiversity conservation into development activities in Africa, BATS activities need to be timely, relevant, compatible with the evolving priorities within USAID and State, and easily accessible by stakeholders. BATS provides services to meet mission and partner needs in the following task areas:

Task A – Assessing USAID biodiversity conservation experience and determining ways forward

Task B – Reviewing and improving the environmental impacts of extractive industries alliances

Task C – Supporting conservation in states vulnerable to crisis, in crisis, or emerging from crisis

Task D – Conducting assessments and analyses of biodiversity threats and opportunities within Operational Plans in compliance with Sections 118 and 119 of the Foreign Assistance Act

The BATS project described in this report is one part of a larger collaboration organized by USAID to address the tasks listed above. In addition to Chemonics, which manages a BATS activity under the EPIQ IQC, two other groups manage BATS activities: USDA Forest Service – International Programs (FS/IP), and the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG). While both groups have separate funding and work plans, the three groups meet regularly to coordinate their activities.

To aid in this coordination a core group was formed with representatives from all of the partners with Tim Resch from USAID, Nancy Gelman from ABCG, Mike Chavez (formally Oliver Pierson) from FS/IP, and Dave Gibson from Chemonics.

FY 2007 was the first year of the two-year BATS program and saw the launching of initiatives under all of the task areas. Activities initiated and/or completed under these tasks included those initially envisioned in the contract as well as those responding to the evolving needs of USAID and project partners.

Key accomplishments under BATS in FY07 include the following:

- Formed working group for Tasks A, B, C, and a core coordination group for project partners

- Created BATS Partner pages on the FRAME Web site for each task area and populated them with project materials
- Represented BATS and developed presentations for the *Community-Based Natural Resources Management forum* in Gaborone, Botswana, and the *Using Sustainability to Build Stability* at the U.S. Army College in Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
- Completed drafts for Task A Lessons Learned Paper, Task B Industry Toolkit, Task C Folder Packet, and BATS communications strategy
- Completed 118/119 biodiversity and tropical forest assessments for four countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Sierra Leone)
- Assisted USDA Forest Service in the production of two 118/119 assessments (Lesotho and Swaziland)
- Provided support to USAID for the implementation of two 118/119 assessments (Nigeria and Senegal)
- Designed and delivered a three-day 118/119 training in Kalispell Montana for 15 USDA Forest Service personnel, three of which are currently undertaking 118/119 assessments (Botswana, Chad, and Niger)

Further details on the key accomplishments listed above, as well as other activities, are described in the following sections by organized by Task Area.

TASK A. TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF BIODIVERSITY IN AFRICA

USAID has been working on biodiversity and conservations issues for more than 25 years, and research into what has been done, what were the results, and why it was or was not successful can provide valuable findings for building on previous successes and learning from past mistakes. With this in mind, the primary objective of Task A is to document lessons learned from 25 years of USAID/Africa biodiversity conservation initiatives and catalyze discussion on priorities for future actions.

After the initial FY 2007 BATS work planning, a Task A Working Group was formed with team leader Joy Hecht and Julia Watkins from Chemonics, Marc Bosch from the U.S. Forest Service, Mary Rowen and Tim Resch from USAID, and Judy Oglethorpe and Nancy Gelman from the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group. Early in the year this group met to design a communications plan and further refine the scope of the principal final product, a lessons learned report, to include an historical review of USAID biodiversity conservation activities in Africa, an assessment of USAID biodiversity conservation activities in Africa, and recommendations for future USAID biodiversity conservation activities in Africa.

With these goals in mind, Joy Hecht drafted an outline based on interviews with key people from USAID, the conservation community, the private sector, and key resources from the Natural Resource Information Clearinghouse (NRIC) library. From this outline, Ms. Hecht developed a PowerPoint presentation that was presented to the Task A working group in early February 2007. This presentation documented the past 25 years of conservation and development work, including the passing of key regulations, trends in conservation work, and lessons learned.

Based on the feedback obtained from the February presentation, Ms. Hecht completed and submitted a draft of the Task A report on April 11, 2007, which was distributed to the working group for feedback. During the review process, several important issues were identified that needed to be included in a further draft of the report, and the working group decided that Dave Gibson (BATS project director for Chemonics) should take over as lead writer to provide an alternate perspective on the paper.

To help inform the next iteration of the report, Mr. Gibson attended the Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) forum in Gaborone, Botswana in July 2007. In addition to gathering information for the lessons learned paper, Mr. Gibson gave a presentation on “Community-Based Natural Resource Management and Climate Change Adaptation,” which has emerged as a potential area of further investigation for the BATS project.

Moving forward, the Task A Lessons Learned paper will be drafted by December 2007, and primary responsibility for it will be passed to ABCG. In collaboration with other BATS partners, ABCG will use its expertise to validate and finalize the report (through workshops) and its worldwide reach to disseminate it throughout Africa.

TASK B. MANAGING EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

Primarily through its economic growth activities and the Global Development Alliance program, USAID has a history of working with extractive industries in Africa. These programs have positive development impacts as well as the potential for negative environmental consequences. While many of these relationships are predicated on certain levels of environmental consideration, they are closely followed by some conservation groups who are skeptical about corporations that pose as friends to the environment. With this in mind, the primary objective of Task B is to promote best practices for integrating biodiversity conservation into extractive industry activities.

After the initial FY 2007 BATS work planning, a Task B Working Group was formed with team leader Renée Morin from Chemonics, Mike Chavez from FS/IP, John Waugh from IUCN, Erik Steed from USAID, and Nancy Gelman from ABCG. This group worked to determine a path forward for implementing this task consisting of three parts: 1) creating a toolkit for distribution to key missions and private industry representatives; 2) providing direct technical assistance to missions responding to specific requests, and 3) implementing a Web site for the BATS project and interested biodiversity community.

Meeting in late January 2007, the working group next further defined the scope of the toolkit as focusing on the intersection of public-private partnerships and extractive industries with biodiversity concerns, and chose four extractive industry sectors to focus on: mining, timber, oil and gas, and fisheries. These topics, as well as support roles, were divided among the working group partners, with US/IP taking the lead on timber and fisheries, and Chemonics taking the lead on mining and oil and gas, as well as overall coordination of the activity.

A draft for the toolkit was completed in July 2007 and distributed for review to the working group. Due to the extent of the remaining issues to be explored and the departure of Ms. Morin in September, Chemonics decided to hire a consultant to take over the lead of the Task and toolkit for FY 2008. This consultant will be responsible for the following: 1) actively engaging key USAID, industry, and NGO stakeholders in advising how biodiversity impacts can be better managed; 2) conducting a stakeholder workshop to obtain feedback on the manual; 3) incorporating feedback to complete a final draft for electronic and hard copy distribution; and 4) if requested, conducting a workshop on the manual, develop training tools, and identify training opportunities within USAID. *As of the writing of this report, Joao De Queiroz has been hired to join the team and fill this role.*

In addition to the toolkit, Renee Morin, assisted by Joe Krueger of USFS, led a biodiversity and tropical forest assessment in Sierra Leone in late February 2007. Although this task was primarily part of Task D, it was originally conceived as a Task B technical assistance activity and had a focus on extractive industries in Sierra Leone. Additionally, a Task B Web site¹ was created to host the toolkit materials once they are finalized.

¹ http://www.frameweb.org/ev.php?ID=63105_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

TASK C. BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION FOR STATES VULNERABLE TO/ RECOVERING FROM CRISIS

Using the lens of the revised U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework, BATS Task C activities are focused on the “rebuilding” (in or emerging from conflict) country category. Given the sensitive and rapid-reaction nature of countries in this category, Task C needs to be aware and take advantage of opportunities before and as they come up in order to meet the objective of supporting USG capacity to program biodiversity considerations into conflict-vulnerable country programming.

After the initial FY 2007 BATS work planning, a Task C Working Group was formed with Jon Unruh and Brian App from Chemonics; Stephen Kelliher from IUCN; Cynthia Brady, Doreen Robinson, and Diane Russell from USAID; Oliver Pierson from USFS; and Judy Oglethorpe from WWF.

Meeting at the end of January 2007, the working group further defined the objectives and approach of this task, and agreed to create a folder packet consisting of: 1) an introductory piece/context piece; 2) five to seven topical pieces; and 3) a reference piece containing links, references, and brief descriptions of important documents. The folder packet approach was chosen as the removable/exchangeable contents would allow the flexibility required by the sensitive and rapid-reaction nature of the targeted countries while providing an overview of key issues related to conservation-conflict. A secondary goal of the folder packet will be to act as a marketing piece for country-specific conservation-conflict assessments and technical assistance.

By March 2007, a proposed topic list and folder outline was submitted to the working group, which yielded the following issues (in April) as the topics for the initial topical pieces (all within a conflict context): protected area management, conservation capacity, food security, community-based natural resource management, and postwar land policy implementation. These topical and resource pieces were drafted and circulated for feedback to the working group in July 2007, and by August work began on incorporating the feedback and reexamining the focus of the pieces to attain maximum impact.

During FY 2007, there were two changes in the composition of the Task C working group, with Mike Chavez replacing Oliver Pierson from FS/IP and the addition of Elisabeth Feleke from the National Defense University. In addition to the work on the folder packet, many of the countries that were targeted as priority conflict areas were the focus of 118/119 assignments. As previously mentioned, an assessment was conducted for Sierra Leone in February 2007, the preparatory for an assessment in Guinea began (in the volatile Mano River region of West Africa — *complete as of this writing* — and a host of refugees from multiple countries), and initial plans for an Angola assessment were laid out.

TASK D. SUPPORT FOR BIODIVERSITY AND TROPICAL FORESTRY ASSESSMENTS

The new Foreign Assistance Framework and applicable operational guidance require compliance with Sections 118 and 119 of the Foreign Assistance Act, including timely biodiversity and tropical forestry assessments. During the initial drafting of the RFP, and constantly updated as new priorities and opportunities arose, several countries were targeted for 118/119 assistance at varying levels of investment (ranging from desktop studies to full team in-country assessments).

During FY 2007, Chemonics completed four 118/119 assessments, assisted in the production of two assessments, provided support for two assessments, and began the Washington, D.C.-based research for one assessment as follows:

- **Burkina Faso** — D.C.-based assessment conducted by Brian App of Chemonics
- **Mauritania** — D.C.-based assessment conducted by Sarah Guroff and Sarah Cooper of Chemonics
- **Sierra Leone** — Field-based assessment conducted by Renee Morin of Chemonics, Joe Krueger and John McKay of USFS, and Chris Squire of the Executive Commissioner of the National Commission for Environment and Forestry in Sierra Leone
- **Benin** — Field-based assessment conducted by Dr. Joao S. de Queiroz of Chemonics and Professor Kolawolé Sikirou from Sierra Leone
- **Guinea** — D.C.-based preparatory work began for this field assessment conducted by Brian App and Julia Watkins of Chemonics, Mamadou Saliou Diallo of *Guinée Ecologie*, and Dantily Diakite of *Direction Nationale des Eaux et Forêts* of Guinea
- **Swaziland and Lesotho** — Production support was provided for these D.C.-based assessments by Kame Westerman of FS/IP
- **Nigeria and Senegal** — Support was provided for the assessments in Nigeria to be conducted through the USAID/Nigeria MARKETS program, and in Senegal to be conducted by ECODIT

Additionally, from June 13-15 Chemonics helped design, organize, and deliver a 118/119 biodiversity and tropical forest assessment training workshop in Kalispell Montana for the USDA Forest Service. This workshop consisted of 11 modules, three case study-based exercises, and one field trip to Glacier National Park, and was delivered in cooperation with USDA Forest Service International Programs (IP) and the Task Order CTO Tim Resch. As implementing partners to the BATS program, IP's objective was to build a cadre of trained personnel that would be made available for future 118/119 assignments. There were 15 participants in this event from the forest service, not including IP staff. Workshop objectives were as follows: 1) build participants' capacity to conduct 118/119 biodiversity and tropical forestry assessments, and 2) strengthen the working relationship between USAID and USFS to improve biodiversity programming. *As of the writing of this report, three trainees from this workshop are scheduled to conduct 118/119 assessments.*

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

To increase impact from products, information, and related resource materials on natural resource and biodiversity conservation generated by BATS, products and services need to be presented in an accessible form and made widely available to USAID staff and project partners and beneficiaries. As such, and to help coordinate efforts with BATS partners, communications plays a critical role in the project.

After the initial FY 2007 BATS work planning, Chemonics developed a general project communications strategy and created a presence on the FRAME “Knowledge Sharing for the Natural Resource Community” Web site (www.frameweb.org/bats).

In April 2007 the BATS PMU and communications specialist, Tamara Babiuk, held a communications strategy meeting at WWF with project partners from USAID, ABCG, and FS/IP. From this strategy meeting, Chemonics produced a communications plan that defined the objectives, context, target audiences, and outreach tools for each of the tasks as well as the BATS program in general.

Based on this strategy, BATS created more robust and useful Web pages for each of the task areas on the FRAME site. Principal among the changes was the addition of the training materials from the 118/119 workshop held in Montana. Additionally, work began in August to take the Montana workshop materials and turn them into a “teacher’s manual” that can help to deliver the 118/119 information to USAID missions (and other partners), with an eye to adding the materials to the already existing regulation 216 trainings.

BATS PROJECT PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Because BATS is highly dependent on mission technical assistance requests and is heavily based on developing toolkits and other biodiversity resources, measuring project progress and results in terms of milestones met or achieved is more appropriate than a more typical indicator-driven project monitoring plan.

Each task's updated results and milestones are presented in the below table.

Results	Milestones	Timeframe	Status
Task A			
USAID Africa biodiversity policy improved through guidance, incorporation, and dissemination	Historical assessment of past 20 years of USAID biodiversity conservation in Africa	December 2007	First draft complete, and revised draft due end November 2007
	Africa review workshops	TBD	ABCG will take the lead on this activity
	Compile future trends and recommendations	TBD	ABCG will take the lead on this activity
Task B			
USAID policy for alliances with extractive industries improved for forest management and biodiversity conservation	Toolkit launched	March 2008	First draft toolkit complete, and revision/rewrite underway (Nov-Feb 2008)
	Provide mission TA	Ongoing/ as needed	
	Web site protocol approved/ launched	March 2007	Complete with updates, ongoing as needed
Task C			
USAID activities in biodiversity conservation within rebuilding and developing countries improved	Initial communications tools developed	April 2007	Design and consensus for initial tool complete
	Cluster-based best practice guidelines produced	March 2008	First draft complete, and revision additions underway (Nov-Jan 2008)
	Provide TA to missions	Ongoing/ as needed	
Task D			
USAID Country Operational Plans improved by incorporating results of tropical forestry and biodiversity assessments	Finalize prioritization of country support	November 2006	Complete, included in FY07 Work Plan
	118/119 tracker established	March 2007	Complete, with updates ongoing as needed
	FS/IP 118/119 assessment training conducted	June 2007	Complete
	118/119 assessments conducted	Ongoing/ as needed	4 complete; 2 scheduled, and ongoing
	118/119 trainers manual developed	March 2008	Ongoing