EVALUATION OF THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ENVIRONMENT – PHASE II

PROSPERITY, LIVELIHOODS AND CONSERVING ECOSYSTEMS (PLACE) IQC
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ACRONYMS

Although an effort was made to reduce the number of acronyms used in this text, in some cases this was necessary. Whenever the acronym or abbreviation appears the first time it is defined in the text. If the acronym only appears with its definition (for ease of understanding), it is not included here. The following list is provided for ease of reference by the readers of this document.

ADB	African Development Bank
ANPN	*Agence Nationale pour les Parcs Nationaux* National Agency for National Parks
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
BSP	Biodiversity Support Program
CAFER	*Centre d'Appui aux Femmes et aux Ruraux* Center for Support to Rural Women
CAR	Central African Republic
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc.
CARPE	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
CBFP	Congo Basin Forest Partnership
CBG	*Compagnie de Bois du Gabon* Timber Company of Gabon
CBNFM	Community-Based Natural Forest Management
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community-Based Organizations
CBWM	Community-Based Wildlife Management
CEFDHAC	*Conférence sur les Ecosystèmes de Forêts Denses et Humides d'Afrique Centrale* Conference on the Ecosystems of Dense Rainforests of Central Africa
CI	Conservation International
CIB	*Congolaise Industrielle du Bois* Congolese Industrial Timber
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CMP	Conservation Measures Partnership
CODELT	*Conseil pour la Défense Environnementale par la Légalité et la Traçabilité* Environmental Defense Council for Legality and Traceability
COMIFAC	*Commission des Forets d'Afrique Centrale* Forestry Commission of Central Africa
COTR	Contracting Officer's Technical Representative

CSO	Civil Society Organization
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ERZ	Extractive Use Zones
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan of the European Union
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FY	Fiscal Year
GCC	Global Climate Change
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
ICCN	*Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature* Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature
ICRAF	International Centre for Research in Agroforestry, now known as the World Agroforestry Centre
INADES	*Institut Africain pour le Développement Economique et Social* African Institute for Economic and Social Development
IR	Intermediate Result
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LUP	Land Use Planning
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MLW	Maringa-Lopori-Wamba landscape
MOV	Means of Verification
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resources Management
OSFAC	*Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale* Satellite Observatory of the Central African Forests
PA	Protected Areas
PASA	Participating Agency Service Agreements
PMP	Performance Management Plan
RAPAC	*Réseau des Aires Protégées d'Afrique Centrale* Network of Protected Areas for Central Africa

REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REFADD	*Réseau de Femmes Africaines pour le Développement Durable* Network of African Women for Sustainable Development
REPALAC	*Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales d'Afrique Centrale* Network of Indigenous Populations of Central Africa
REPAR	*Réseau des Parlementaires d'Afrique Centrale* Network of Parliamentarians of Central Africa
ROC	Republic of the Congo
ROSE	*Le Réseau des* ONGs *locales du Sud-est Cameroun* Network of local NGOs of South-East Cameroon
SDSU	South Dakota State University
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
SO	Strategic Objective
TNS	Tri National Sangha
TRIDOM	Dja-Minkébé-Odzala Tri National Landscape
UGADEC	*Union des Associations de Conservation des gorilles pour le Développement Communautaire à l'Est du Congo* Union of Associations of Gorilla Conservation for Community Development in Eastern Congo
UMD	University of Maryland
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USG	United States Government
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wildlife Fund/Worldwide Fund for Nature
ZICGC	*Zones d'Intérêt Cynégétique de Gestion Communautaire* Community-Managed Sport Hunting Zones

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The complex of forest ecosystems in Central Africa is recognized as being one of the most important in the world for its unique biodiversity, and substantial threats to the flora and fauna of this region led to the creation of the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) in 1995. The difficult social, political, and economic context at that time – not to mention the huge geographical area – presented such immense challenges that the program can only be thought of as "audacious". Large parts of the region suffered from wars and conflicts, and the countries were characterized by exceptionally low levels of institutional and human resource development, severe shortages of basic infrastructure, and pervasive problems of corruption. Together, the twelve CBFP/CARPE landscapes are dispersed across seven of nine CARPE countries encompassing an area larger than Texas and including some of the most remote areas of difficult access remaining on the planet. Furthermore, USAID was present in only two of these countries during CARE II. CARPE has persevered against all odds over the last 15 years and has had some remarkable successes, along with other areas where progress has been much slower. The return to peace in most parts of the area, and the greatly improved security in much of the region, has now led to conditions that are uneven but generally much more propitious for capitalizing on the investments by United States government (USG) over the last 15 years.

CARPE's Strategic Objective is to "Reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity…" and this objective is to be achieved through three Intermediate Results: (1) Natural resources managed sustainably; (2) Natural resource governance strengthened, and (3) Natural resources monitoring institutionalized. A consortium headed by an environmental NGO based in the United States (US) implements each of the landscape components (and also mobilizes its own matching funds). Governance, monitoring and other crosscutting support functions are implemented by a mix of USG agencies and international and local NGO partners. The second sub-phase of CARPE II (from 2005 to 2010), is the subject of this evaluation.

FINDINGS

SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The landscape approach and landscape-level land use planning have proven to be two of the greatest strengths of the CARPE design. One of the key lessons learned from CARPE I was that a narrow focus on protected areas (PA) was not sufficient for effective conservation of forests and biodiversity, so CARPE II initiated participatory development and partial implementation of conservation and sustainable use strategies for the broader landscapes with their PA, extractive resource zones (ERZs) and village or community lands (community-based natural resource management – CBNRM – areas). CARPE has catalyzed a process in which these diverse stakeholders are brought together – very often for the first time – to develop a common vision for each landscape and its lands and a set of strategies and plans for their realization. The NGOs have successfully developed new working partnerships with government services, local communities, logging, mining and oil companies, local authorities, traditional leaders and other local authorities in each of the landscapes. These diverse stakeholders are engaged in a participatory landscape-level land use planning process that divides each landscape into PA, ERZ, and CBNRM land use categories or macro-zones and creates an overall framework plan for their conservation and sustainable use. This is then followed by the development of specific natural resource management plans for individual PA, ERZ and CBNRM macro-zones. The early successes of the landscape approach has rapidly attracted the attention of other donors, and CARPE has had such remarkable success in catalyzing very substantial additional financing that USAID "quit counting" the amounts. The most exceptional example is $65 million in new funding for six of the landscapes from the African Development Bank.

Protected areas are still fundamental to conservation strategies in the region, and CARPE has supported the development of conventional as well as new types of protected areas including a number of

community-managed reserves. CARPE has supported a range of initiatives to improve PA financing, yet sustainable financing remains the greatest outstanding challenge to PA sustainability. The program has had exceptional successes in the establishment of international agreements spelling out mechanisms for the collaborative management of trans-boundary landscapes and protected areas.

Illegal logging has been reduced in the landscapes, and CARPE has contributed strongly to the 4.5 million hectares of natural humid forest in three countries of the Congo Basin that are now under certified forest management plans – compared to zero hectares at the beginning of CARPE II. While progress has been very substantial in a short period of time, the biodiversity conservation aspects of forest management still need to be strengthened and pilot initiatives for the control of poaching in forest concessions need to be monitored closely and reinforced through adaptive management approaches.

In CBNRM macro-zones, communities have been broadly engaged, but actual on-the-ground advances in sustainable management of community lands remains limited. CARPE's development of community-based natural resource management systems has been constrained by the lack of tested proven models, lack of adequate legal frameworks for the empowerment of community managers, and insufficient levels of expertise in this area. Only Cameroon has a clear legal framework for the empowerment of community managers to control access and to harvest and market products from the lands they manage. Locally, CARPE partners have employed a variety of legal instruments for community empowerment, but many areas have no suitable legal instruments. The US Forest Service's (USFS) planning guidelines for CBNRM provide some general, useful guiding principles but are not adequate for initiating pilot CBNRM systems (these guides were just revised as this report was being finalized). The CBNRM macro-zone should be renamed to reflect the fact that it includes both common lands suitable for community-based management and other areas such as agricultural lands that are generally managed privately.

IMPROVED GOVERNANCE

Through the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Focal Points and the Country Teams, a wide range of policy, legal and regulatory reforms and advocacy initiatives have been supported, many of them have been enacted, and a broad range of stakeholders have been engaged in initiatives for improved governance. IUCN has successfully supported civil society advocacy and capacity development through a small grants program.

The governance component of CARPE II has not been as strategically focused as it could have been on the specific governance constraints to the CARPE Strategic Objective and Intermediate Results. This is especially true for the development of legal frameworks for the empowerment of communities that are needed for the enabling of CBNRM in each country. CARPE has also had relatively little impact on high-level corruption and trafficking in natural resource products. CARPE has displayed a relatively good level of awareness of gender issues, but this has rarely translated into improved equity between men and women. CARPE has only made modest efforts to integrate indigenous forest people into its programs.

MONITORING

Through the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA), the University of Maryland (UMD), and South Dakota State University (SDSU), CARPE has developed an accurate, remote-sensing-based monitoring system for deforestation and sets of useful cloud-free imagery of each landscape. The information base is now sufficient to use the system for measuring the deforestation rates in the CARPE landscapes since the beginning of CARPE II. This database, and the ability to use it, is being institutionalized through a regional organization, *Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Central* (OSFAC – Satellite Observatory of the Central African Forests). In comparison, CARPE has not been successful in developing monitoring systems for forest degradation or for the bushmeat trade. The World Resources Institute (WRI) has been very successful in supporting the development of forest information systems in the forest service of several countries and in the development of a system for monitoring the expansion of forest roads as an indicator of potential sites of illegal, industrial, mechanized logging. No

adequate systems for the monitoring of artisanal forms of illegal logging have been developed. Best practices for monitoring of populations of key animal species in the landscapes are now widely used and indicate, in general, a positive impact of CARPE's interventions in many of the landscapes.

OTHER KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Support for capacity building has been truly exceptional in its scale: CARPE has had the largest training program of any regional project in Central Africa and over 30,000 people have received training on conservation related-subjects. CARPE does not have meaningful indicators to measure the impact of this training, although subjective impressions indicate the impacts are quite positive.

Logging companies working on certification and supported by CARPE have made significant investments to minimize commercial hunting on their concessions. CARPE has supported community-based – as well as private sector – sport hunting in southern Cameroon, but the program has had relatively little impact on the bushmeat sector in general in Central Africa.

Although CARPE has not had an explicit mandate for climate change mitigation, the forest cover mapping and deforestation monitoring tools developed through the program could readily be adapted to measuring and monitoring carbon storage and sequestration. Community management structures could also serve as a future framework for getting carbon credits to the most important groups – those whose agriculture and unsustainable resource use are the main causes of increased carbon emissions from Central Africa's forests.

CARPE has been managed by a small but efficient staff that has brought an exceptional level of rigor to this large and complex environmental program. Staff has exercised, with positive results, control over the cooperative agreements with the landscape leads through mechanisms such as the Performance Management Plan (PMP), Annual Work Plans, and Means of Verification (MOV). The USAID team has developed a powerful tool for tracking program implementation and progress towards goals set out in the PMP; however, this tool could be made even more effective if the indicators were modified to focus less on the development of land use and management plans and more on management effectiveness and on the adoption of proven principles of successful resource management. Overall, USAID management has done a remarkable job of structuring their programming approach to build in adaptive management principles.

The environmental NGOs are very dedicated and most have had a long-term presence in Central Africa that predates CARPE. They have specialized skills in disciplines such as the monitoring of wildlife populations, and they have shown very strong capacities for mobilizing additional sources of funding. Unfortunately, these NGOs have had a great deal of difficulty finding well-qualified development NGOs/partners to handle CBNRM, agriculture and livelihood development. The cooperative agreement is an optimal vehicle for USAID funding of the NGOs because USAID simply could not manage a program of this scale without such partners who bring their established and respected institutional presence in most countries, an autonomous voice, and their specialized skills to the program.

NASA, UMD and SDSU have performed well in the development of forest cover base maps and in the monitoring of forest cover loss. WRI has provided good direct assistance to national forest services in the development of forest information management systems and in the development of a system for monitoring industrial-scale illegal logging. The USFS has provided strong advisory support to the Forestry Commission of Central Africa (COMIFAC) and to the landscape consortia for land use planning, but the guides they developed for preparing natural resource management need substantial revision. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which operates independently from – but parallel to – CARPE, has shown effective interventions in the areas of species conservation and investigations, and the agency has good working relationships with NGOs and collaboration with USFS (but not USAID). IUCN has done a good job managing their small grants programs for NGOs/civil society organizations, and their overall performance has been adequate but lacking in strategic focus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Evaluation Team feels strongly that there should, indeed, be a third phase to CARPE. The Congo Basin is of strategic importance to the United States and critically important for biodiversity conservation and climate mitigation. Countries and institutions have become much more stable and now have significantly improved capacity, and these conditions are now much better for capitalizing on investments and lessons learned in order to achieve substantial impacts in the third phase. CARPE has built on its success and continues to identify and correct its failures. The increased stability is leading to high levels of investment, especially in the mining sector, and a rapidly evolving context that is generating new threats and pressures to the forests and biodiversity of the region.

In the landscapes, the major impacts are to be achieved as the program moves from the land use planning and management planning phase into operational land/natural resource management. The third phase will be critical for the institutionalization of the landscape approach and of the management of the macro-zones. The development of profitable, market-oriented CBNRM systems is critical to meeting the raised expectations of local populations in the landscapes and for transforming local communities into partners for conservation. Finally, most of what has been done in Phase II is already supportive of climate change mitigation. Phase III should integrate the growing focus on climate change mitigation while building on the strengths of Phase II.

CARPE III should be extended at least through 2017. Extending through 2020 would be preferable when considering: (1) the amount of time needed to develop viable CBNRM systems before one can begin to adapt and replicate them on a large scale; (2) the need to more fully involve host country governments; (3) the need to develop and implement a strategic approach to policy modification and development; and (4) the need to incorporate a climate change strategy into the program.

OVERALL FRAMEWORK FOR CARPE III

CARPE III should continue to strengthen and complete its focus on field-level strategies for forest and biodiversity conservation in the landscapes. USAID should analyze the opportunity for the development of a parallel Feed the Future regional program for Central Africa that would complement the CARPE program and would make investments in productive sustainable agriculture. Resources permitting, field programs could incorporate additional landscapes harboring important and threatened biodiversity.

CARPE III should add a carbon objective and take on a major new focus on climate mitigation concentrating on (1) the testing of field-level systems for avoided deforestation working in the existing landscapes, and (2) complementing other donor efforts to build national and regional REDD+ readiness and capacity that is consistent with social equity and biodiversity conservation objectives.

Congress is encouraged to increase funding to CARPE. Absorptive capacity of the landscape consortia has increased dramatically over the course of CARPE Phases I and II. They could now handle greatly increased levels of funding if the USG and match-funding sources decide to increase their investments.

Forest and biodiversity conservation CARPE III should continue to target the 12 CBFP/CARPE landscapes as the core of CARPE III with the new emphasis on effective, sustainable resource management systems in the priority macro-zones. A strong effort should be placed on achieving necessary legal reforms and the development of widely replicable pilot management systems covering as many NRM sectors and countries as possible. CARPE III should make a major push to generalize successes in the development of forest management and forest certification in logging concessions while strengthening their biodiversity conservation aspects.

Climate mitigation and avoided deforestation The USG's major comparative advantage in climate mitigation in Central Africa is in the area of field-level land management systems for avoided deforestation, and CARPE III should build on this comparative advantage. Field projects should be located in existing landscapes, building on the previous investments in infrastructure, nature

conservation, governance and creation of economic opportunities. Ample areas within landscapes offer the potential to monetize carbon assets. The CARPE team and landscape partners should identify and pursue on-the-ground Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) demonstration projects to develop and establish approved methodologies to validate, measure, monitor and report on forest emissions, leakage, and maintenance of carbon sinks and carbon sequestration over time.

Regional and national policy/legal support CARPE partners should provide policy support to COMIFAC and national governments to articulate and integrate the Congo Basin perspectives into the global framework for climate mitigation, including the recognition of the value of avoided deforestation in the REDD+ process. CARPE III should also support forest monitoring and modeling related to climate change in the basin, building on existing remote-sensing-based mapping and monitoring efforts. A key challenge will be to integrate biodiversity and social criteria into policies and standards for sustainable landscape-funded field activities. Reasonable allocation of forest carbon revenues should respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities while providing strong incentives for both the maintenance of carbon sinks and for forest and biodiversity conservation.

New Seascapes/Landscapes Options The pressures on – and rate of degradation of – Central African marine and coastal ecosystems is so acute that the addition of a seascapes component is recommended, financial resources permitting. Some key terrestrial areas (such as TL2, the Campo M'an, and the Cameroon Western Highlands) do not have CARPE coverage and both the program and these landscapes would be strengthened by their inclusion, resources permitting.

Regional and national Program Support Component CARPE III should maintain a core governance support grant through IUCN or other similar implementing mechanism. Continue the grants program for capacity building and advocacy, and reinforce the country teams by shifting them to a national agenda-setting exercise and with much greater support of professional staffs of USG agencies and conservation NGOs. The program should strengthen civil society (including gender and indigenous peoples) participation in conservation governance through capacity building, information sharing and communications programs. Also, identify appropriate contracting mechanisms to provide high-level CBNRM expertise and social science expertise with resource tenure specialization. The social scientist should become the point person for the integration of gender and indigenous people into the program. Develop regional institutional support for those institutions that can be effective in advancing CARPE objectives and programs.

Strengthen USAID Management of CARPE The USAID team should develop a new strategy document for the 2011 – 2017/20 period. Establish a USG steering/coordination committee to ensure the development of a strategically integrated program for CARPE III with effective collaborative working relationships amongst State, USAID, USFS, USFWS and NASA and management coordination with USDA/FAS. Maintain the powerful project tracking system developed under CARPE II, but focus on improving MOV and identifying more powerful indicators of resource management effectiveness.

Strategies for Institutionalization and Sustainability The USG should engage USAID, USFS and USFWS together with COMIFAC and host country government services in program development. A series of design phase and inception workshops should lead to well-defined commitments by governments and other stakeholders and partners. There needs to be much stronger institutional engagement with government and administrative structures in addition to strengthened civil society organizations, which should be involved in strategy development, work planning and reviews, and reporting.

RÉSUMÉ ÉXÉCUTIF

Le complexe d'écosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique Centrale est reconnu comme étant un des plus importants dans le monde du fait de sa biodiversité unique, et les menaces substantielles à la flore et à la faune de cette région ont conduit à la création du Programme Régional pour l'Environnement en Afrique Centrale (CARPE, sigle anglais) en 1995. Le difficile contexte social, politique et économique de ce moment précis – sans parler de la taille énorme de la région – présentait de tels grands défis que le programme ne pouvait être que vu comme "audacieux". De vastes parties de la région souffraient de guerres et de conflits, et les pays se caractérisaient par de bas niveaux de développement institutionnel et de développement des ressources humaines, de sévères pénuries des infrastructures de base et d'envahissants problèmes de corruption. Les douze paysages de PFBC/CARPE dans sept des neuf pays du programme, pris ensemble, couvrent une superficie plus grande que l'état américaine de Texas et abritent quelques unes des zones les plus reculées et difficiles d'accès qui existent encore sur la planète. L'Agence des Etats-Unis pour le Développement International (USAID, sigle anglais) n'était alors présente que dans deux des neuf pays couverts par le programme pendant le CARPE II. Avec de très minces chances et contre toutes les probabilités, le CARPE a persévéré lors des 15 dernières années et a eu quelques remarquables succès (avec d'autres parties où les progrès ont été plus lents). Le retour à la paix dans la grande partie de la région, et la sécurité amplement améliorée partout, a dès lors conduit à des conditions certes inégales (de pays en pays) mais généralement plus propices pour capitaliser sur les investissements du gouvernement des Etats-Unis lors des 15 dernières années.

L'Objectif Stratégique de CARPE est de "Réduire le taux de dégradation des forêts et la perte de la biodiversité ..." Et cet objectif doit être accompli à travers trois Résultats Intermédiaires: (1) Les ressources naturelles (sont) gérées de façon durable; (2) La gouvernance des ressources naturelles (est) renforcée ; et (3) Le suivi des ressources naturelles (est) institutionnalisé. Un consortium chapeauté par une ONG environnementale d'extraction américaine met en œuvre le programme dans chacun des paysages (et mobilise aussi ses propres fonds). La gouvernance, le suivi et les autres fonctions transversales de support sont aussi mis en œuvre par un mélange d'agences du gouvernement des États-Unis et d'ONG internationales et locales partenaires. La seconde sous-phase de CARPE II (de 2005 à 2010) est l'objet de cette évaluation.

RÉSULTATS

LA GESTION DURABLE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES

L'approche-paysage et la planification de l'utilisation des terres au niveau du paysage se sont avérées être deux des plus grandes forces de la conception de CARPE. Une des leçons clefs apprises de CARPE I a été qu'une concentration étroite sur les aires protégées (AP) ne pouvait être suffisante pour la conservation effective des forêts et de la biodiversité, alors CARPE II a initié le développement participatif et la mise en œuvre partielle de stratégies de conservation et d'utilisation durable pour de plus larges paysages avec leurs AP, leurs zones d'extraction des ressources (ZERs) et leurs terres villageoises ou communautaires (zones de gestion communautaires des ressources naturelles [GCRNs]). CARPE a été le catalyseur d'un processus dans lequel diverses parties prenantes sont mises ensemble – le plus souvent pour la première fois – afin de développer une vision commune de chaque paysage et macro-zone et une série de stratégies et de plans pour réaliser leur vision. Les ONGs ont développé avec succès de nouveaux partenariats de travail avec les services gouvernementaux, les communautés locales, les compagnies forestières, minières et pétrolières, les autorités du niveau sub-national et les leaders/autorités traditionnels dans chacun des paysages. Les diverses parties prenantes se sont engagées dans un processus participatif de planification de l'utilisation des terres au niveau du paysage, qui divise chaque paysage en catégories d'utilisation des terres ou macro-zones (AP, ZER et GCRN) et crée un plan-cadre général pour leur conservation et utilisation durable. Suit alors le développement de plans spécifiques de gestion des ressources naturelles pour chaque macro-zone (AP, ZER et GCRN), prise individuellement. Les premiers succès de l'approche-paysage ont rapidement

attiré l'attention d'autres bailleurs de fonds, et CARPE catalysait de très substantiels financements additionnels au point que l'USAID ne s'en est plus occupé des montants. L'exemple le plus exceptionnel est le nouveau financement de 65 millions de dollars de la Banque Africaine de Développement en faveur de six paysages.

Les aires protégées sont toujours fondamentales pour les stratégies de conservation dans la région, et CARPE a soutenu le développement aussi bien d'aires protégées conventionnelles que de nouveaux types d'aires protégées, y compris un certain nombre de réserves à gestion communautaire. CARPE a soutenu une série d'initiatives visant à améliorer le financement des AP. Mais le financement soutenu demeure le plus grand défi pour la durabilité des AP. Le programme a eu un succès exceptionnel dans l'établissement d'accords internationaux expliquant clairement les mécanismes de gestion collaborative des paysages frontaliers et des aires protégées transfrontalières.

L'exploitation illégale a été réduite dans les paysages et CARPE a fortement contribué à la mise sous certification d'actuellement 4,5 millions d'hectares de forêts humides naturelles dans trois pays du Bassin du Congo – comparées à zéro hectare au début de CARPE II. Pendant que les progrès ont été très substantiels sur une courte durée, les aspects de conservation de la biodiversité dans la gestion des forêts demandent encore à être consolidés et les initiatives pilotes de contrôle du braconnage dans les concessions forestières demandent à faire l'objet d'un suivi rapproché et à être renforcées à travers des approches de gestion adaptatives.

Dans les macro-zones de GCRN, les communautés ont été largement engagées, mais des avancées réelles dans la gestion durable des terres communautaires sur le terrain restent limitées. L'absence de modèles éprouvés et testés, le manque d'adéquats cadres légaux d'allocation des pouvoirs aux gestionnaires du niveau communautaire et des niveaux d'expertise insuffisants dans ce domaine ont été des contraintes pour le développement des systèmes de gestion communautaire des ressources naturelles par CARPE. Seul le Cameroun dispose d'un cadre légal clair allouant des pouvoirs aux gestionnaires du niveau communautaire, afin que ceux-ci puissent contrôler l'accès (aux terres et aux ressources), exploiter et marchander les produits issus des terres qu'ils gèrent. Localement, des partenaires de CARPE ont utilisé une gamme d'instruments légaux pour l'augmentation des pouvoirs des communautés locales, mais de nombreuses zones ne disposent pas d'instruments légaux appropriés. Les directives des Services des Forêts des États-Unis (USFS, sigle anglais) pour la planification de la GCRN procurent des principes-directeurs utiles, mais ne sont pas adéquates pour initier des systèmes de GCRN. La macro-zone de GCRN doit être re-estampillée, pour mieux refléter le fait qu'elle comprend à la fois des terres favorables à la gestion communautaire et d'autres comme des terres agricoles qui sont généralement gérées par le privé.

LA GOUVERNANCE AMÉLIORÉE

A travers les Points Focaux de l'Union Internationale pour la Conservation de la Nature (UICN) et les Equipes-Pays, un large éventail de réformes politiques, légales et réglementaires et des initiatives de plaidoyer ont été appuyées. Plusieurs de ces réformes ont été promulguées, et un large éventail de parties prenantes a été engagée dans des initiatives pour une meilleure gouvernance. L'UICN a appuyé le plaidoyer et le renforcement des capacités de la société civile à travers son programme de petits financements.

La composante gouvernance de CARPE II n'a pas été stratégiquement concentrée, comme cela devait se faire, sur les contraintes de gouvernance spécifiques à l'Objectif Stratégique et aux Résultats Intermédiaires de CARPE. Ceci est spécialement vrai pour le développement dans chaque pays d'un cadre juridique d'allocation des pouvoirs aux communautés, qui est nécessaire pour habiliter la GCRN. CARPE a également eu relativement peu d'impact sur le haut niveau de corruption et le trafic des ressources naturelles. CARPE a affiché un niveau relativement bon de prise de conscience des questions de genre, mais cela a rarement été traduit en une meilleure équité entre les hommes et les femmes.

CARPE a seulement fait des efforts modestes pour intégrer les peuples autochtones des forêts dans ses programmes.

LE SUIVI

A travers à l'Agence Nationale Aéronautique et Spatiale (NASA, sigle anglais), l'Université du Maryland (UMD, sigle anglais), et l'Université du Dakota du Sud (SDSU, sigle anglais), CARPE a développé un système de suivi de la déforestation précis basé sur la télédétection et un mosaïque d'images sans nuages pour chaque paysage et pour le basin entier. La base d'information est maintenant suffisante pour utiliser le système en vue de mesurer l'impact de CARPE II sur les taux de déforestation. Cette base de données, et la capacité de l'utiliser, sont entrain d'être institutionnalisées à travers une organisation régionale, l'Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (OSFAC) et, par extension, à travers le programme conjoint de formation OSFAC et Université de Kinshasa. CARPE n'a pas eu de succès dans le développement de systèmes de suivi de la dégradation des forêts ou dans la lutte contre le commerce de la viande de brousse. WRI a appuyé, avec succès, le développement de systèmes d'information dans les services forestiers de beaucoup de pays et le développement d'un système de suivi de l'expansion des pistes forestières comme un indicateur des pistes potentielles de l'exploitation forestière mécanisée illégale. Aucun système pour le suivi des formes artisanales de l'exploitation forestière illégale n'a été développé. Les meilleures pratiques de suivi des populations d'espèces animales clés dans les paysages sont aujourd'hui largement utilisées et indiquent, en général, un impact très positif des interventions de CARPE dans les paysages.

AUTRES RÉSULTATS CLEFS ET CONCLUSIONS

L'appui au renforcement des capacités a été vraiment exceptionnel dans son ampleur : CARPE a mis en œuvre le plus grand processus régional de formation jamais vu en Afrique Centrale et plus de 30.000 personnes ont reçu une formation sur des sujets liés à la conservation. CARPE n'a pas d'indicateurs significatifs pour mesurer l'impact de cette formation, bien que des impressions subjectives indiquent que les impacts sont positifs.

Les compagnies forestières travaillant sur la certification et soutenues par CARPE ont fait d'importants investissements afin de minimiser la chasse commerciale dans leurs concessions. CARPE a appuyé la chasse sportive à gestion communautaire ainsi que la chasse sportive gérée par le secteur privé dans le Sud-est Cameroun, mais le programme a eu relativement peu d'impact sur le secteur de la viande de brousse en général en Afrique Centrale.

CARPE n'a pas eu un mandat explicite pour l'atténuation des changements climatiques, mais la cartographie du couvert forestier et le suivi de la déforestation sont des outils qui peuvent être adaptés pour la mesure et le suivi du stockage et de la séquestration du carbone. Des structures de gestion communautaire pourraient également servir de cadre futur pour l'obtention et le drainage des crédits de carbone vers les groupes les plus importants - ceux dont l'agriculture et l'utilisation non durable des ressources sont les principales causes de l'augmentation des émissions de carbone issues des forêts d'Afrique Centrale.

CARPE a été géré par un personnel restreint mais efficace qui a cherché à apporter un niveau exceptionnel de rigueur à cet important et complexe programme de l'environnement. Ce personnel a exercé, avec des résultats positifs, son contrôle sur les accords coopératifs avec les ONG «leaders» des paysages à travers des mécanismes comme le Plan de Gestion de la Performance, les Plans de Travail Annuels et les Moyens de Vérification (MOV, sigle anglais). L'Equipe SO de l'USAID a développé un puissant outil pour poursuivre la mise en œuvre et les progrès du programme vers les buts définis dans le Plan de Gestion de la Performance. Cet outil pourrait devenir plus efficace si les indicateurs étaient modifiés pour moins de concentration sur le développement des plans d'utilisation et de gestion des terres et plus de concentration sur l'efficacité de la gestion et sur l'adoption de principes de gestion des ressources naturelles éprouvés et couronnés de succès. En général, la gestion du programme par

l'USAID a fait un travail remarquable de structuration de leur approche de programmation autour de principes de gestion adaptative.

Les ONG ont un haut niveau de dévouement et la plupart d'entre elles ont une longue présence en Afrique Centrale - antérieure même à CARPE. Elles ont des compétences spécialisées dans des disciplines telles que le suivi des populations d'animaux sauvages et elles ont montré de très bonnes capacités de mobilisation des sources de financement complémentaires. Les ONG environnementales ont eu beaucoup de difficultés à trouver des ONG de développement/ partenaires bien qualifiées pour prendre en charge la GCRN, l'agriculture et le développement des moyens de subsistance. L'accord de coopération est un véhicule optimal pour le financement des ONG par l'USAID, parce que l'USAID ne pouvait tout simplement pas gérer un programme de cette envergure sans de tels partenaires - qui y apportent leur présence institutionnelle établie et respectée, une voix autonome et leur compétences spécialisées.

La NASA, l'UMD et la SDSU ont obtenu de bons résultats dans le développement des cartes du couvert forestier et dans le suivi de la perte de couvert forestier. L'USFS a apporté un fort soutien en conseils à la Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC) et aux consortiums de paysage pour la planification de l'utilisation des terres, mais les guides pour la préparation des plans de gestion des ressources naturelles développées par l'USFS ont besoin d'une révision substantielle. Les Services des Pêches et de la Faune des Etats-Unis (USFWS, sigle anglais), qui travaillent indépendamment de - mais parallèlement à – CARPE, ont fait montre d'interventions efficaces dans les domaines de la conservation des espèces et la recherche, et cette agence a de bonnes relations de travail avec les ONG et collabore bien avec l'USFS (mais pas avec l'USAID). L'USFWS reconnaît ouvertement, toutefois, que le noyau des financements de l'USAID pour les paysages est une condition préalable essentielle pour elle d'opérer efficacement dans les mêmes paysages.

RECOMMANDATIONS

L'Equipe d'Evaluation estime fortement qu'il devrait y avoir une troisième phase de CARPE. Le Bassin du Congo est d'une importance stratégique pour les États-Unis et est d'une importance cruciale pour la conservation de la biodiversité et l'atténuation des changements climatiques. Les gouvernements et les institutions sont devenus beaucoup plus stables et possèdent maintenant des capacités améliorées, et ces conditions sont meilleures pour capitaliser sur les investissements et les enseignements en vue d'aboutir à des impacts substantiels dans la troisième phase. CARPE s'est appuyé sur ces succès et continue d'identifier et corriger ses échecs. La stabilité accrue mène à des niveaux élevés d'investissement, en particulier dans le secteur minier et à un contexte en évolution rapide, qui génère de nouvelles menaces et pressions pour les forêts et à la biodiversité de la région.

Dans les paysages, les impacts majeurs sont attendus du moment où le programme se déplace de la planification de l'utilisation des terres et de la phase de planification de la gestion pour la gestion opérationnelle des terres/ressources naturelles. La troisième phase sera déterminante pour l'institutionnalisation de l'approche-paysage et de la gestion des macro-zones. Le développement des systèmes de GCRN rentables, orientés vers le marché, est essentiel pour répondre aux attentes suscitées au sein des populations locales dans les paysages et pour transformer les communautés locales en partenaires pour la conservation. Enfin, la plupart de ce qui a été fait dans la phase II est déjà en faveur de l'atténuation des changements climatiques. La Phase III devrait intégrer l'importance croissante accordée à l'atténuation des changements climatiques tout en s'appuyant sur les forces de la Phase II.

CARPE III devrait être prolongé au moins jusqu'en 2017. L'extension jusqu'en 2020 serait préférable, si l'on considère: (1) le temps nécessaire pour développer des systèmes viables de GCRN avant de pouvoir commencer à les adapter et à les reproduire à grande échelle; (2) la nécessité d'impliquer davantage et totalement les gouvernements des pays hôtes; (3) la nécessité d'élaborer et de mettre en

œuvre une approche stratégique de modification et de développement des politiques ; et (4) la nécessité d'intégrer une stratégie d'atténuation des changements climatiques dans le programme.

CADRE GÉNÉRAL POUR CARPE III

CARPE III doit continuer à renforcer, et à compléter, l'accent mis sur les stratégies au niveau du terrain, pour la conservation de la forêt et de la biodiversité dans les paysages. L'USAID doit analyser l'opportunité du développement d'un programme régional parallèle 'Nourrir le Futur', qui pourrait complémenter le Programme CARPE et pourrait faire des investissements dans l'agriculture productive durable. Si les ressources le permettent, les programmes de terrain devraient incorporer des paysages additionnels abritant une biodiversité importante et menacée.

CARPE III doit ajouter un objectif sur le carbone et entreprendre un travail sur l'atténuation des changements climatiques en se concentrant sur (I) le test sur le terrain de systèmes de déforestation évitée en travaillant dans les paysages existants; et (II) complémenter les efforts d'autres bailleurs de fonds pour construire, apprêter et rendre apte le processus REDD+ dans le sens de l'équité sociale et de la poursuite des objectifs de la conservation de la biodiversité.

Le Congrès est encouragé à augmenter le financement de CARPE. Les capacités d'absorption des consortiums de paysage se sont dramatiquement accrues durant les Phases I et II de CARPE. Ils pourraient maintenant manier des niveaux de financement grandement élevés si le gouvernement des Etats-Unis et des sources de financement correspondantes décidaient d'augmenter leurs investissements.

Conservation des Forêts et de la Biodiversité CARPE III doit continuer à cibler les 12 paysages CARPE/PFBC comme noyau du programme, avec un nouvel accent sur des systèmes de gestion des ressources naturelles efficaces et durables dans les macro-zones prioritaires. Un effort particulier devrait être placé sur l'impulsion des réformes légales nécessaires et le développement de systèmes de gestion pilotes largement reproductibles, couvrant autant de secteurs de gestion des ressources naturelles et de pays que possible. CARPE III devrait faire un pas important pour généraliser les succès dans le développement de l'aménagement des forêts et la certification forestière dans les concessions forestières tout en consolidant les aspects de conservation de la biodiversité.

Atténuation des Changements Climatiques et Déforestation Evitée L'avantage comparatif majeur du gouvernement des États-Unis dans l'atténuation des changements climatiques en Afrique Centrale se situe dans le domaine des systèmes de gestion des terres/ressources œuvrant pour la déforestation évitée au niveau du terrain. Ainsi, CARPE III devrait se fonder sur cet avantage comparatif. Les projets de terrain doivent être situés dans des paysages existants, en s'appuyant sur les investissements antérieurs en infrastructures, conservation de la nature, gouvernance et création des opportunités économiques. Dans les paysages, de grands espaces ont le potentiel pour monétiser les actifs de carbone. L'Equipe travaillant sur l'Objectif Stratégique de CARPE et les partenaires dans les paysages devraient identifier et poursuivre des projets de démonstration (de terrain) pour la Réduction des Emissions issues de la Déforestation et de la Dégradation des Forêts (REDD+), principalement dans les paysages existants, en vue de développer et d'établir des méthodologies approuvées pour valider, mesurer, suivre et documenter les émissions issues des forêts, le maintien des puits de carbone et la séquestration du carbone dans le temps.

Appui Politique/Légal Régional et National Les partenaires de CARPE devraient fournir un soutien politique à la COMIFAC et aux gouvernements nationaux en vue d'articuler et intégrer les perspectives du Bassin du Congo dans le cadre mondial d'atténuation des changements climatiques, y compris la reconnaissance de la valeur de la déforestation évitée dans le processus REDD+. CARPE III devrait également soutenir le suivi des forêts et la modélisation liés aux changements climatiques dans le bassin, en s'appuyant sur la cartographie basée sur la télédétection et sur les efforts de suivi. Un défi majeur sera d'intégrer les critères de la biodiversité et les critères sociaux dans les politiques et les

normes pour les activités de terrain à financement durable au niveau des paysages. L'allocation raisonnable des revenus issus du carbone forestier doit respecter les droits des peuples autochtones et des communautés locales, tout en offrant de fortes incitations pour, à la fois, le maintien des puits de carbone et la conservation de la forêt et de la biodiversité.

Nouvelles Options de Paysages Marins/Terrestres Les pressions exercées sur les écosystèmes marins et côtiers d'Afrique Centrale, et leur taux de dégradation, sont si aiguës que l'ajout d'une composante paysages marins est recommandé, si les ressources financières le permettent. Quelques zones terrestres clefs (comme TL2, le Parc National de Campo-Ma'an et les Hautes Terres de l'Ouest Cameroun) ne sont pas couvertes par CARPE et aussi bien le programme que ces paysages seraient renforcés par leur inclusion, si les ressources le permettent.

Composante Appui au Programme et à la Région Maintenir un noyau de fonds en support à la gouvernance à travers IUCN - ou des mécanismes de financement similaires. Continuer avec le programme de petits financements pour le plaidoyer et l'augmentation des capacités et renforcer les équipes de pays en les logeant dans un exercice de mise en place d'agendas nationaux. Renforcer la société civile (y compris le genre et les peuples autochtones). Participer à la gouvernance de la conservation à travers le renforcement des capacités, le partage de l'information et les programmes de communication. Identifier des mécanismes contractuels pour apporter au programme une expertise de haut niveau en GCRN et une expertise de haut niveau en sciences sociales, avec une spécialisation en questions de tenure. L'expert en sciences sociales doit devenir le point focal de l'intégration du genre et des peuples autochtones dans le programme. Développer un support institutionnel pour celles des institutions qui peuvent être efficaces pour faire avancer les objectives et activités de CARPE.

Consolidation de la Gestion USAID de CARPE Développer un nouveau document de stratégie pour la période 2011–2017/20. Mettre en place un comité de coordination pour assurer le développement d'un programme stratégiquement intégré pour CARPE III, avec des relations collaborative de travail effectives entre l'Etat, USAID, USFS, USFWS et NASA et de coordination de la gestion avec USDA/FAS. Maintenir le puissant system de suivi programme mis sur pied sous CARPE II, mais avec une concentration sur l'amélioration des MOV et l'identification d'indicateurs pour l'efficacité de la gestion des ressources.

Stratégies pour l'Institutionnalisation et la Durabilité Le gouvernement américain doit engager l'USAID, l'USFS et l'USFWS avec la COMIFAC et les services des gouvernements des pays hôtes dans le développement des programmes. Une série de phases de conception et d'ateliers de démarrage devraient aboutir à des engagements bien définis de la part des gouvernements et d'autres parties prenantes et partenaires. Il faut qu'il y ait un engagement institutionnel plus fort avec les structures gouvernementales et administratives, en plus de bien fortes organisations de la société civile, qui doivent être impliquées dans l'élaboration des stratégies, la planification du travail, les mises au point et le rapportage.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In September 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell spearheaded the launch of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) in Johannesburg, South Africa. Nearly a decade later, the CBFP promotes the conservation and sustainable use of the region's forests: it seeks to combat poaching, illegal logging, and other unsustainable practices, and to provide local populations an economic stake in the preservation of the forests. When Congress selected the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as the prime implementing agency for United States' CBFP support, it catalyzed a network of conservation practitioners, many of whom shared a common agenda under Phase I of the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) but who often worked independently of one another during this so-called learning phase. The team acknowledges these pioneering efforts and the continuous adaptation that has followed from them. Our team benefited through intense discussion that allowed us, at least partially, to understand what it had taken the lion's share of many professional lives to discover or uncover or create. That such a dedicated group was formed and is being supported by such a measured and sustained support from US foreign assistance is no small miracle. Every year, somewhere in CARPE land, breakthroughs are being made, and occasionally the bar moves substantially.

When the team arrived for this final evaluation of the program's second phase, we were welcomed by this network that has truly become a community of committed managers, partners and stakeholders – and we would like to acknowledge this warm reception. That so many whose experience with Central African conservation runs so deep have remained committed and gone out of their way to share the wisdom and perspectives of this long involvement with the evaluation authors in so fleeting an exercise as this evaluation is humbling. Evaluations tend to focus on the critical and, in this way, they can make a difference. We hope the analysis herein helps to move the bar up yet another notch or two. Inevitably, the review of such a complex program over such a short period will result in some imbalance and inaccuracy. We have tried to minimize this, but we all take responsibility for these shortcomings.

Much of what CARPE has accomplished is due to seven long dedicated years of Carpe Director, John Flynn, who will be turning over the reins of CARPE's management during what is envisioned as CARPE's third phase of institutionalization. Without Dr. Flynn's leadership, CARPE might well be gone or struggling. Instead, we found a coherent, vibrant program actively moving forward in a context of transparency and frequent exchange of information.

In preparation for this assessment and prior to traveling to Africa, the assessment team received a great deal of background material, excellent timely guidance, and assistance in setting up valuable meetings with CARPE partners in the US and in the field. For the Washington core, we thank all who made themselves available on short notice during a week of nearly back-to-back interviews. The team would like to thank in particular, Ellen Shaw at the State Department, Tim Reiser of the Senate Appropriations staff, and Richard Ruggiero of United States Fish and Wildlife Service for finding time on short notice to meet and facilitate contacts. The team appreciates Tim Resch's effort to bring together USAID and Washington-based CARPE partners into a tightly scheduled series of stakeholder meetings.

During our travels in Central Africa, John Flynn and his CARPE team helped immeasurably with travel preparations (and several travel revisions), and also provided us with excellent oral briefings and other additional program materials and documentation.

Our Administrative Assistant, Hugette Ngilambi, provided invaluable help keeping up with the team's scheduling and logistics. In Gabon, Anne-Marie Ndong-Obiang proved invaluable support in getting the team quickly into the most important meetings with Gabonese government officials and in balancing the team's meetings with CARPE's two major implementing partners in the country, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the World Wildlife Fund/Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF). Anne-Marie was to have joined the team for the Gabon fieldwork but was called to service by senior

management of the country's protected areas system where her talents were channeled into an all-important system review. Fieldwork in Gabon was facilitated in advance by Bas Huijbregts, WWF's Libreville-based Regional Landscape Program Advisor. In the field, Bas Verhage, Landscape Leader for Gamba-Conkouati prepared our schedule and organized briefings for our visits to Gamba, Mayumba and Moukalaba-Doudou protected areas and environs. Ricardo of WCS guided the team through an intense and thorough review of key marine park issues.

In Cameroon, the team divided to cover a wide range of key CARPE partners and stakeholders both within government and COMIFAC as well as among the NGO community. IUCN CARPE's Regional Program manager, Kenneth Angu, provided invaluable logistical support. The team would also like to thank Natasha Quist and the entire staff of WWF-CARPO, who agreed to sacrifice their holiday plans to meet with and provide invaluable information and perspective to the team.

In Republic of Congo, the team thanks Paul Telfer, WCS Country Director, and Dr. Tomo Nishihara, who wears several hats for WCS, for making arrangements and making sure they took place in the remote border area surrounding Nouabale N'Doki National Park.

Providing transport service to extensive remote regions of DRC has been a challenge over the past tumultuous quarter century. In memory of Daniel Philemotte, who delivered the team safely to Basankusu in the remote Maringa Lapori Wamba landscape, we acknowledge his service. Daniel, whose airline Filair, had persevered for 26 years without serious loss, perished in an air accident a few days after the team's flight to Basankusu. The visit to MLW required elaborate coordination which was provided by Jef Dupain and his African Wildlife Foundation staff in Kinshasa and Basankusu. The team's vigorous hiking pace in the region's forests impelled Jef to try to set a walking record from forest camp to river dock. The team regrets the ensuing injury and wishes Jef a full recovery.

The team also wishes to acknowledge the full support received from each of the CARPE partners not specifically mentioned, whose program leaders made themselves and their program staff available to meet our scheduling requirements throughout this assessment

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE CARPE II EVALUATION

The Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) was developed in 1995 as a 20-year program to be implemented in three phases. The second phase of CARPE will be completed in September 2011. The timing of this final evaluation of CARPE Phase II has been planned to provide critical inputs to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the preparation of CARPE Phase III.

The objectives of this external evaluation are the following:

(1) Provide a comprehensive analysis of CARPE Phase II – the achievements, shortcomings, weaknesses and strengths, and lessons learned in the management, administration and execution of this large-scale tropical forest and biodiversity conservation program;

(2) Document the achievements in the context of the stated objectives and desired results of the Strategic Plan;

(3) Assess the effectiveness of the USAID structure and execution of the management and administrative systems employed to manage the program;

(4) Evaluate the adequacy of the suite of implementing partners selected by USAID to execute the program relative to the objectives and expected results as established in the CARPE Strategic Framework;

(5) Assess the leadership role that CARPE has played within the United States Government (USG) for the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP);

(6) Determinate the progress and contribution that CARPE has made to increasing regional, national and local capacity to implement conservation programs, with a special analysis of the role and effectiveness of gender integration into the program;

(7) Analyze the current contribution that CARPE makes toward the USG policy of Global Climate Change (GCC) mitigation, and recommend changes in program design and modifications in the monitoring system that would increase climate change impact; and

(8) Provide general technical, administrative and management recommendations for a third CARPE phase.

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report has the following five sections:

Chapter 1 (this section) introduces the report's objectives, structure, and methodology;

Chapter 2 gives the history and background of CARPE and CARPE II's program design;

Chapter 3 details the outcomes of the program vis-à-vis the Intermediate Results and Strategic Objective, as well as addresses specific issues related to the program such as climate mitigation and integration of gender and indigenous peoples;

Chapter 4 discusses how the program is managed and implemented; and

Chapter 5 outlines lessons learned in CARPE II and recommendations for CARPE III.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The CARPE Evaluation Team has reviewed documentation and literature related to CARPE, and the Team carried out a participatory evaluation, which included semi-structured interviews with major

actors and key informants in Washington DC and Central Africa. The two American members of the Evaluation Team completed five days of intensive interviews in Washington DC during the second week of August, 2010. They then traveled to Kinshasa, DRC, where they joined the two other fulltime team members and met with USAID, implementing partners, government officials, and other stakeholders (See Figure 1 below). This field visit included trips to four countries – the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Republic of the Congo (ROC), Cameroon, and Gabon – and three CBFP landscapes, Maringa-Lopori-Wamba (MLW), Tri National Sangha (TNS), and Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati. After submitting the CARPE Evaluation Draft Report to – and receiving feedback from – USAID, the Team revised the report and sent it to a Participatory Review Panel for comments. Relevant feedback from these reviewers was then incorporated into the Final CARPE Evaluation Report, and the United States-based members of the Evaluation Team presented the report's findings to USAID and other relevant parties.

Figure 1. The CARPE Evaluation Team plans the Maringa-Lopori-Wamba site visit with Landscape Lead, Jef Dupain (front left), of the African Wildlife Foundation.

Please see Annex B for a list of individuals and organizations with whom the Evaluation Team met, Annex C for a detailed Schedule of Tasks, and Annex D for biographical sketches of the Evaluation Team.

1.4 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The Evaluation Team analyzed programmatic elements and crosscutting thematic issues of CARPE implementation under a flexible framework of four over-arching **evaluation focal themes**:

(1) Are CARPE partners carrying out the activities described in the strategic plan and detailed work plans?
(2) Is the CARPE Strategic Objective (SO) being accomplished?
(3) To the extent that the SO may be achieved only partially (or not at all), the team has sought to identify the constraints and problems that may explain this situation.
(4) Based on the experiences of CARPE II, the team has made recommendations for follow-on work under a CARPE III program.

The team has analyzed how the CARPE structure and design intersects with crosscutting issues and conservation themes at the varying scales of the program starting at (1) the landscape site level, continuing to (2) the country level, and finally, encompassing (3) the Congo Basin as a whole. The Evaluation Team has analyzed the program from the ground up to determine how management mechanisms function at the different scales of intervention. Most importantly, the extent to which capacity to practice and finance sustainable land management at the local, national and regional levels indicates whether program activities or the outcomes of these activities can be maintained beyond the life of the program. The CARPE II mid-term assessment conducted by the Weidmann Consortium in 2005 served as a point of departure, especially in identifying pertinent implementation stumbling blocks and past program performance in light of the current situation, and this prior assessment offers perspective on the evolution of the program over time. The Evaluation Team has examined how well CARPE management has responded to the recommendations of the mid-term assessment and has sought to determine the impact of the response on the effectiveness and sustainability of the program.

Within the overall evaluation framework, the team explored effectiveness, efficiency and suitability of the following program elements:

- Program design,
- Program size and regional reach,
- Management structure,
- Administrative capacity,
- Suite of partners,
- Inclusion of both the public and private sectors,
- Budget allocations,
- Reporting burdens, and
- Program performance.

The Team has paid particular interest to the following crosscutting issues:

- **Financial and technical sustainability of program activities** Is the program designed and local capacity being built so that program activities can be continued beyond the life of the program? Are technical approaches effective long-term strategies?
- **Adaptive management** Is adaptive management present at a programmatic level to allow variance in 1) implementation and management structures between different landscape sites, and 2) the adoption of best practices for sustainable land management and conservation that respond to site-specific issues? Are conservation practices, implementing partners, and management staff responding to evolving circumstances in the field in appropriate ways?
- **Involvement of African national governments** Does CARPE adequately involve African national governments to ensure buy-in to the program, achieve international cooperation for better management of trans-boundary landscapes, and facilitate sound management practices in protected areas and forest concessions?

- **Resource protection vs. sustainable use** Resource protection is frequently advocated over sustainable use of natural resources as a biodiversity conservation strategy. Does CARPE give sufficient consideration to promoting sustainable use of resources in program implementation and allow for properly managed, legal mechanisms for individuals to engage in sustainable resource use? Does CARPE work to develop the economic potential of protected areas and other important components of the 12 CARPE/CBFP landscapes? Likewise, does the program work at the national level to promote economic growth in the countries of the Congo Basin through – or despite – conservation activities?
- **Considerations of gender and indigenous people** Have issues related to gender and indigenous people been adequately addressed and an effort made to include gender-related resource use, incentives, constraints, and opportunities in program implementation? Has there been sufficient and appropriate participation by women and indigenous people in alternative livelihood and income-generation activities?

The Evaluation Team has given special consideration to **global climate change** as an issue of growing importance regionally and globally. Because Central Africa contains the world's second largest contiguous moist tropical forest and the livelihoods of a large percentage of the population are dependent on forest resources and agriculture, there is great opportunity to increase climate change mitigation efforts and sequestration of carbon but also great vulnerability to the impending changes in local climate. The Evaluation Team has:

- Examined to what extent past CARPE initiatives and land management practices contributed to climate change mitigation; and
- Analyzed how the tools and initiatives used in CARPE II have succeeded and can be built upon to advance the USG's GCC and USAID's Sustainable Landscape Program goals under a potential CARPE III scenario.

2.0 PROGRAM DESIGN

2.1 CARPE HISTORY AND BACKGROUND[1]

THE CONGO BASIN AND CARPE

Central Africa contains the second largest contiguous moist tropical forest in the world, totaling 1.14 million square kilometers and representing nearly 20% of the world's remaining biome of this type (only the Amazon Basin is larger). This area of the world is called the Guineo-Congolian Regional Center of Endemism because much of Africa's existing biological diversity originated here. An estimated 8,000 species of plants are found in this region, and about 80 percent of these are endemic – i.e., found nowhere else on earth. There is also an incredible diversity of fauna in the Congo Basin: 655 species of birds and 58 species of mammals, of which 36 and 45 percent are endemic (respectively), make their homes here. Of these, many – 16 bird species and 23 species of mammals – are considered endangered or threatened. Additionally, the world's largest populations of charismatic mega fauna like lowland gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos (pygmy chimpanzees), and forest elephants are found in this important region. The Congo forests form the catchment of the Congo River, a basin of local, regional and global significance, and these forests are contiguous with those of surrounding river basins such as the Ogooué River in Gabon. The region's forests provide valuable ecological services by controlling and buffering climate at a regional scale, sequestering carbon, and providing watershed, soil, and biodiversity protection.

More than 60 million people currently live in and depend on these rich forests and other biotic resources for their livelihoods and economic development; furthermore, at present rates of population growth, the region is expected to contain 150 million people by the year 2025. Population density is quite low, with a regional average of 14 persons per square km, although this density varies considerably between less-densely populated countries like Gabon to more-densely populated countries like Cameroon. Throughout the area, rapid urbanization has created pressure on forests and natural resources, a trend that continues today.

The Congo Basin has experienced internal and international conflict, as well as upheaval and poor governance over the past decades. For instance, there have been bloody conflicts in Rwanda, Burundi, and ROC. On the positive side, DRC seems to be more stable under the first elected president under the 2006 constitution, Joseph Kabila, and Gabon has stood out in the region as remaining fairly politically stable since the 1960s. The sources of the conflict are complex and historic but are often fueled by rivalry over natural resources including minerals and forest products. This conflict throughout the region has had a devastating effect on both human and wildlife populations over sizeable areas, as large displacements of their populations have occurred in many parts of the basin and surrounding areas. Additionally, forest resources were increasingly coming under threat from unsustainable logging, agricultural expansion, extractive industries, uncontrolled bushmeat and wildlife trade, and other forces.

Over time, global recognition of the important of the forests in the Congo Basin and the plant and animal species present within them grew, and this was the impetus for CARPE, as well as the need for a more coordinated approach to the study and management of this important resource. Thus, following years of discussion, debate and planning, USAID established CARPE in September of 1995. USAID did not have any resident missions in Congo Basin countries when the program began, and the genesis of the program in a region with enormous physical and logistical difficulties is testament to both USAID's

[1] Most of the information in this section, CARPE History and Background, is drawn from the Scope of Work in the USAID Request for Task Order Proposals, which can be found in its entirety in Annex E, as well as the CARPE II Strategic Plan Final Approved.

determination and the NGO partners' commitment and dedication to conserving the Congo Basin's important flora and fauna.

CARPE PHASE I

In its initial phase, CARPE focused on two main issues:

(1) Building an information base regarding the region's natural resources; and
(2) Increasing the capacities of local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based organizations through a small grants program.

CARPE I divided its effort into themes that included forestry, protected areas, and environmental governance, and its geographic scope expanded from an initial focus in the four countries of Central African Republic (CAR), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and ROC to include Burundi, Cameroon, DRC, Rwanda, and Sao Tome & Principe. The program had a small, $3 million/year budget with a small field office in Libreville, Gabon and CARPE "focal points" hired for Yaoundé, Cameroon and Kinshasa, DRC.

CARPE was created around a series of Cooperative Agreements between USAID and NGOs such as the World Wildlife Fund/Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), World Resources Institute (WRI), and World Learning, which had already been working in core areas of the Congo Basin. In addition, USAID established inter-departmental agreements with a number of Federal agencies, including the United States Department of Agriculture/United States Forest Service (USDA/USFS), United States Peace Corps, and the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA) in collaboration with the University of Virginia and the University of Maryland (UMD). In the fifth year of the program, additional parties joined: the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Conservation International (CI) and African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) as NGOs, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as a Federal agency. Together, these institutions comprised the entirety of the CARPE partners at the close of the first phase.

CARPE partners produced an important lessons learned volume[2] concluding that parks alone have less conservation impact than hoped and that a strategy focused on large remote protected areas is risky and insufficient, noting that "forest conservation in the Congo Basin will require more diversified approaches in order to manage a wider range of land use systems more effectively, at lower cost and with significantly more local and national participation." The Evaluation of CARPE I reiterated this suggestion that CARPE II focus more on how land and resource uses could be zoned and regulated to support the conservation needs for forests and biodiversity. The evaluation praised the small grants program because of its ability to involve local people and build local capacity and gave high marks to forest monitoring activities. Given the small budget anticipated for a follow-on CARPE II, the evaluation recommended that the program limit itself to a few landscapes where an integrated approach would be supported.

TRANSITION TO CARPE PHASE II

At the same time that CARPE Phase I partners were drawing lessons from this learning phase of the program, the heads of state of the Congo Basin countries came together in 1999 to sign the so-called Yaoundé Declaration. This established a framework to protect forests through the harmonization of forest policies, protected areas, regulations against poaching and the adoption of practices for sustainable forest use across the region, and it recognized the ecological significance of key mixed landscapes which are critical to longer term forest conservation and sustainable management. This framework is embodied in the *Plan de Convergence*, which serves as a foundation for CARPE II and contains ten strategic axes:

[2] Biodiversity Support Program, 2001. *Taking Action to Manage and Conserve Forest Resources in the Congo Basin: Results and Lessons Learned from the First Phase* (1996-2000). Congo Basin Information Series Publication No. 1-25, Washington, DC: USAID/CARPE.

(1) Harmonizing forest policy and taxation;
(2) Resource knowledge and inventory;
(3) Ecosystem management;
(4) Biodiversity conservation;
(5) Sustainable use of forest resources;
(6) Alternative income generation;
(7) Capacity development and training;
(8) Research;
(9) Innovative financing mechanisms; and
(10) Regional cooperation and partnerships.

This formal recognition of the need for regional cooperation in tackling forest sector challenges led to the creation of a formal interstate commission, *Commission des Forets d'Afrique Centrale* (COMIFAC - Forestry Commission of Central Africa)[3], to monitor and coordinate actions of the member states.

In 2000, a WWF-sponsored priority-setting workshop in Libreville involving more than 150 national and international specialists agreed upon conservation principles for the Congo Basin that led to the definition of eleven landscapes as the priority targets for conservation in the Congo Basin. These eleven landscapes stretch across five Central African countries (DRC, Gabon, Cameroon, CAR, Equatorial Guinea) and encompassed 36% of the Congo Basin territory (prior to recent expansion of landscape boundaries). As a next step, WWF, WCS, AWF and CI proposed to the USG that it initiate a major new program, named the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), to stimulate international cooperation in the Congo Basin. They proposed that the USG also provide financial and political support for a major conservation program in these landscapes as the USG contribution to the CBFP. The USG agreed with this proposal and, in concert with the government of South Africa, Secretary of State Colin Powell announced the creation of CBFP at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002[4]. According to the State Department[5] priorities of the CBFP are to:

- Provide people sustainable means of livelihood through well-managed forestry concessions, sustainable agriculture, and integrated ecotourism programs;
- Help countries develop a network of effectively managed national parks, protected areas, and corridors; and
- Improve forest and natural resource governance through community-based management, combating illegal logging, and enforcing anti-poaching laws.

CARPE PHASE II

In response to the developments outlined above, CARPE shifted its strategic focus to reducing the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national and regional natural resource management. The program received additional financial support for its activities in the nine countries aforementioned, and the program's management functions shifted from Washington DC to Kinshasa, DRC. CARPE II began in January, 2003, and will continue until September, 2011. The program

[3] COMIFAC was originally an inter-ministerial body, the *Conférence des Ministres en Charge des Forets d'Afrique Centrale* (the Conference of Ministers of Forests of Central Africa), but has since been elevated to the head of state level encompassing multiple ministries: *Commission des Forets d'Afrique Centrale.*

[4] Subsequently, Secretary Powell, accompanied by the current President of the International Conservation Caucus Foundation, traveled to Libreville, Gabon where the head of state, Omar Bongo, announced a commitment to establish thirteen new national parks and a national park service in support of the CBFP.

[5] Office of Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES), in the State Department. August 23, 2002. Official Final CBFP Fact Sheet.

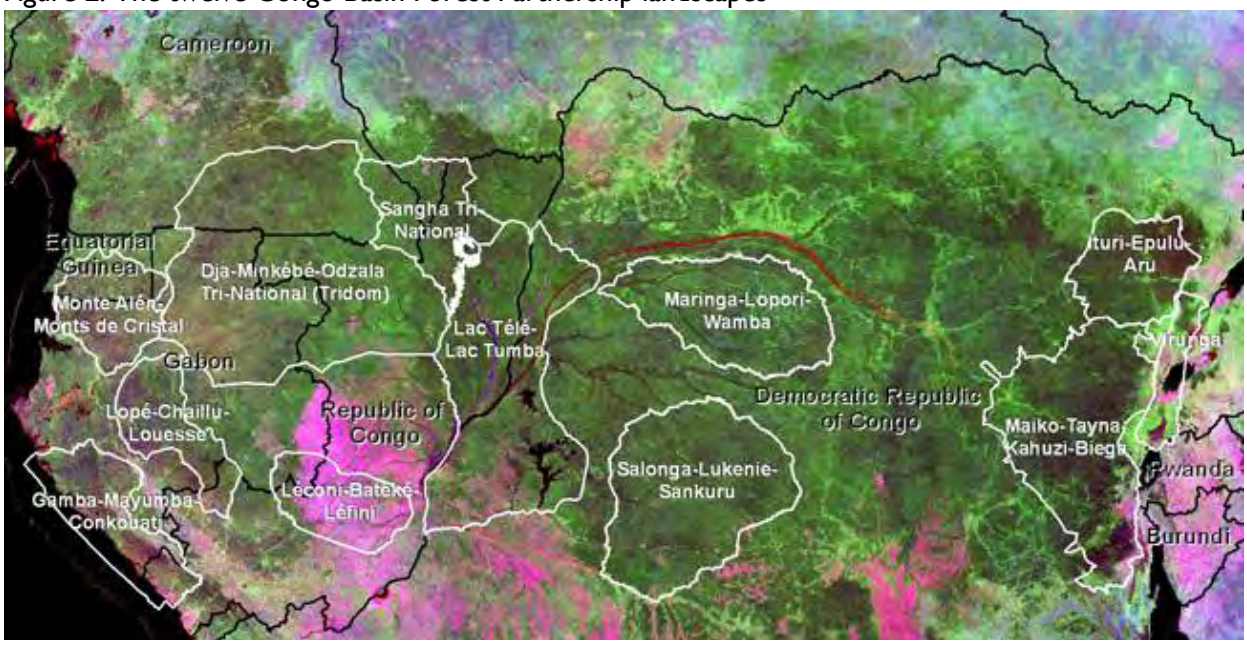
was divided into two sub-phases based on some mid-term adjustments made after an external evaluation was done in 2005.

Phase II (a) (2003-2006)

As noted, the design of CARPE II corresponded with the initiation of the CBFP, which focused on forest conservation in eleven large forested landscapes in the region. The USG chose to use CARPE II as the program umbrella for most of the activities it would finance as part of the CBFP and this led to a $53 million, three-year commitment extending from Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 to FY 2005. According to the results framework of CARPE II, its partners are to apply and implement sustainable natural resources management practices in the field, improve environmental governance in the region, and strengthen natural resources monitoring capacity. Initially, some 80% of CARPE funds were designated for landscape activity[6], but this percentage has declined just over 62% in line with the mid-term evaluation to increase funding for crosscutting components of monitoring and governance. Also, matching funds and other donor support for landscape-level activities has increased and, in aggregate, amount to more than 50% of the USAID contribution.

In addition to the 11 priority landscapes identified by the CBFP, CARPE also works in the Virunga landscape that includes territory in Rwanda and Uganda[7] which were not original CBFP members (See Figure 2 for a map of all twelve landscapes). In order to move quickly into an implementation phase, USAID issued Requests for Application for work across the landscapes. These Requests for Application were issued to each of the four NGOs that had initiated the concept of the CBFP, had major programs in the region, and had pre-competed cooperative agreements with USAID. The implementing NGOs divided up the CBFP landscapes and agreed on partnering arrangements within the landscapes, and USAID accepted this division of responsibilities. USAID also negotiated Participating Agency Service Agreements (PASAs) with six USG federal agencies and with two other organizations to provide various

Figure 2. The twelve Congo Basin Forest Partnership landscapes



[6] For the first three years, $12 million per year was dedicated to the landscape program. Only activities in support of conservation of the CBFP landscapes were designated for the "additional" USG contribution of $12 million per year. USAID management costs, crosscutting non-CBFP activities and Virunga landscape funding all were funded from the original $3 million "base" funding, and USAID management costs were capped at $1 million per year.

[7] Rwanda was not originally a COMIFAC member but has joined subsequently. CARPE was never authorized to work in Uganda but transboundary work is ongoing between states and with support from WCS, the International Gorilla Conservation Program, and others.

complementary "crosscutting" services to the CARPE program, on demand. CARPE agreements with the implementing NGOs required "substantial" matching funds from the landscape leaders amounting in aggregate to more than 50% of the USAID contribution.

CARPE II was operational for almost three years when the first external assessment was conducted in late 2005. The CARPE team felt it was necessary to verify the validity of the strategic approach, based on expected and actual results, and to use the answers to these questions to guide mid-term decisions concerning program content, funding and management in accordance with the obligation of FY 2006 funds and beyond.

Phase II (b) (2006-2011) Following the Phase II mid-term evaluation, USAID CARPE management incorporated a number of measures to address recommendations and concerns raised in the assessment report. The validity and impact of these program modifications are explored in some detail in Section 4.4 of this evaluation and are briefly summarized here:

An open competition was held to solicit proposals for 12 separate landscape management consortia, one for each of the 12 CARPE/CBFP Landscape Programs. These programs were adjusted to give greater emphasis to Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and livelihood activities outside formal protected areas. Landscape funding was reduced from $12 to $10 million per annum with landscape consortia expected to compensate with additional matching funds from other sources. Activities supporting governance were completely reorganized under one implementing partner – IUCN – with the mandate to establish individual CARPE country offices, employ country focal points for CARPE, manage the CARPE small grant program, focus on national policy reform, create a system for dissemination of conservation lessons learned, and ensure the general coordination of CARPE activities and partners. The governance budget was doubled from about $750,000 to approximately $1.5 million per year.

Monitoring of natural resources was consolidated under two related but separate implementing partners. WRI was awarded a grant to monitor logging activities[8] including full-fledged long-term forest concessions and any logging titles (including sales of standing timber, small short-term per limits, communal and community forests) as well as protected areas across all of the forested Central African countries – Cameroon, Gabon, CAR, Equatorial Guinea, Congo and DRC – and the NASA consortium was charged with developing and deploying a "wall-to-wall" deforestation monitoring system across Central Africa. The landscape consortia were charged with monitoring keystone species in their individual landscape programs, and they were also mandated to provide monitoring information on biodiversity for the State of the Forest Report, as well as provide ground-truth information for remote sensing deforestation monitoring.

The USDA PASA-funded CARPE Management Unit was increased to three full-time expatriate staff and the administrative assistant position was upgraded to a program assistant with a corresponding increase in financial management and program administration responsibilities. Other federal agencies continue to contribute to the program, but the "crosscutting" service provider concept was dropped. USG partners were reduced to three; NASA, USFS, and the USDA (which continues to provide the core management team personnel). The terms of reference for the NASA consortium were narrowed with a new PASA to build monitoring technology and capacity for deforestation monitoring, and the budget was increased to produce specific outputs for regional monitoring capacity building through the *Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale* (OSFAC - Satellite Observatory of the Central African Forests), a regional NGO based in Kinshasa. USAID expanded the scope of the USFS from targeted technical assistance to landscape implementing partners to a more comprehensive "government-to-government" assistance to

[8] These monitoring activities included: long-term forest concessions, logging titles (including sales of standing timber, small short-term permits, communal and community forests), protected areas, and the extension of forest roads as an indicator of possible illegal logging throughout the forest areas. The resulting interactive atlases, maps and geodatabases constituted in many cases the most recent and sometime only available detailed forest sector reviews of those countries.

the COMIFAC member states' forest ministries as well as to COMIFAC more directly. The agreement with the USFWS was dropped as that agency was funded directly and separately from CARPE, and the Smithsonian Institution and National Parks Service agreements were not renewed.

The focus of Phase II (b) has primarily been on the land use planning process, followed by the landscape consortia. Land use planning methods and guidance have been reinforced through USFS interventions. Improved conservation planning covers over 52 million hectares with more than 22 million hectares covered by detailed designs. Regional and national institutional support for the landscape and land use planning approaches is growing, as reflected in recent ministerial decrees validating this approach, such as that for Equateur Province in Eastern DRC. Additionally, COMIFAC states are increasingly adopting community co-management of conservation areas such as in the Lac Tele area of Congo, the Tayna and Kokolopori areas of DRC, southeastern Cameroon and elsewhere. CBFP support is also broadening: after initial contributions only from France and the United States (US), other donors are supporting the CBFP and specifically the CBFP/COMIFAC landscapes as evidenced by a recent commitment by the African Development Bank of $65 million to support 6 of the 12 CBFP landscapes. COMIFAC adopted the State of the Forest Report as its official publication for reporting on monitoring results against the 10 point *Plan de Convergence*. While commitments, institutions and accomplishments remain tentative, the program has shown signs of substantial advance in the five years since the Phase II assessment, and it is the substance and significance of these advances that are the core of the current evaluation.

2.2 EVALUATION OF THE CARPE RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The Results Framework and its key indicators as presented in the CARPE Strategic Plan and in the Performance Management Plan (PMP) are composed of a mix of very strong, well conceived elements with a few confusing or less well-conceived elements. A single Strategic Objective (SO) is supported by three Intermediate Results (IR 1, 2 & 3). Key indicators have been identified for the SO and each of the IRs (see below for a visual representation of the SO, IRs, and indicators as found in the CARPE II Revised Performance Management Plan). The Results Framework was first presented in the CARPE Strategic Plan of December 2002 and was subsequently modified in the PMP first prepared in 2004 and revised in 2005 and 2008. The Intermediate Results have been modified slightly and the indicators have been modified substantially.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

"Reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local national and regional natural resource management capacity."

Analysis

The first half of the wording of the SO provides a relatively clear statement of the program's objective; and it would have been stronger if it had been modified to "Reduce the rates of *deforestation and* forest degradation". First, degradation does not include deforestation, which is a real threat to environmental/biodiversity conservation in the basin and was included explicitly in the CARPE Phase III Strategic Plan. Second, forest degradation has remained difficult to define and to monitor, whereas deforestation is much more accurately measured (and thus the success of efforts to reduce it can be more accurately measured as well). Third, while the clause "through increased local, national, and regional natural resources management capacity" clarifies the scope of the CARPE undertaking, it does not completely align with the supporting Intermediate Results, although it is through achieving the IRs that the Strategic Objective is accomplished. And a fourth, more minor point is that strategic objective statements are generally presented as results statements rather than as action statements, i.e., "reduced rates" rather than "reduce the rate."

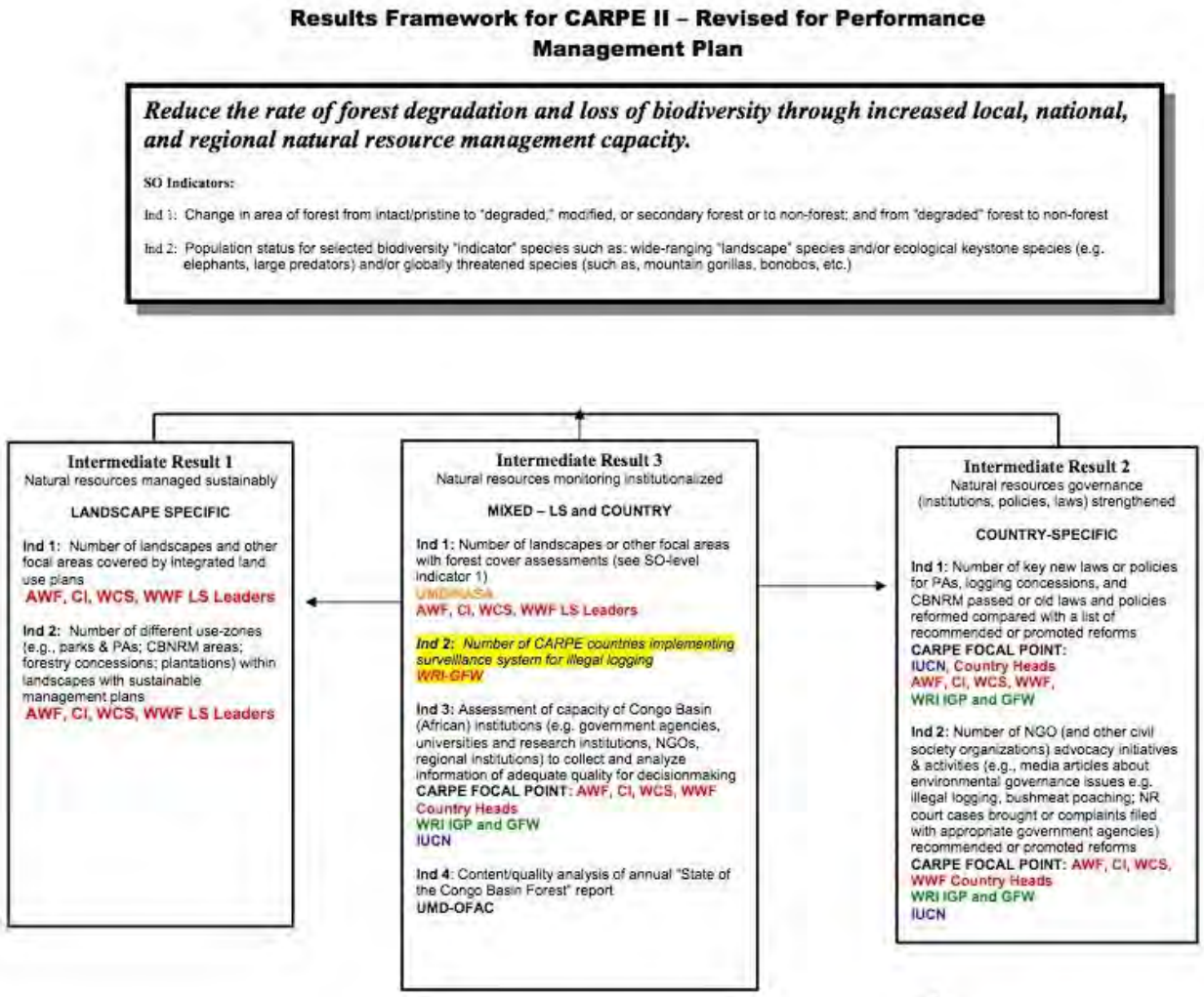
SO INDICATORS

The remaining SO indicators in the 2008 PMP are:

Indicator 1: Change in area of forest from intact/pristine to "degraded," modified, or secondary forest or to non-forest; and from "degraded" forest to non-forest.

Indicator 2: Population status for selected biodiversity "indicator" species such as: wide-ranging "landscape" species and/or ecological keystone species (e.g., elephants, large predators) and/or globally threatened species (such as mountain gorillas, bonobos, etc.).

The original four SO indicators in the Strategic Plan included "total amount of bushmeat harvested". The "empty forest syndrome" resulting from the uncontrolled commercial market in bushmeat is one of the greatest threats to the biodiversity and the ecological integrity of the Central African forests. The bushmeat indicator was subsequently dropped because it could not be accurately measured at reasonable cost. While the Evaluation Team fully understands this difficulty, they also find it highly regrettable because doing so reduces the focus on this critical threat to the Congo Basin forests.



Analysis

Indicator 1 is problematic for the reason described above, and USAID acknowledges this potential difficulty in measuring progress against this indicator in its Performance Management Plan: "Coverage and reliability of CARPE Phase I methodologies for measuring forest degradation by remote sensing need to be verified for various landscape types to be included in CARPE II. Ground-truthing to validate assessments is also required". The Evaluation Team learned from NASA/UMD/South Dakota State University (SDSU) that deforestation can be accurately measured through remote sensing while forest

degradation cannot. Thus, changing the terminology to include deforestation would be an important and measurable improvement to the SO.

Forest cover loss is a "lagging" indicator; it gives an *ex post facto* reading on forest loss but does not warn of the emerging mega-trends that the Evaluation Team sees developing in the Congo Basin – such as massive new mines with new railroads being opened, along with new hydroelectric dams and transmission lines, expanding road networks and some indications of large scale forest conversion for oil palm biofuel development – to name a few. Either degradation or forest cover thus can be expected to increase for some time; what can be expected of CARPE is to slow the rates that would occur absent the program and to halt degradation in selected critical habitats.

Indicator 2 is costly and cumbersome to monitor because it requires field inventories of the populations of the selected indicator species and such inventories can only be done infrequently due to time and resource constraints. CARPE has made reasonable progress in developing and standardizing measurement methodologies across field programs, particularly for large mammal surveys, but there is not yet general agreement on the conclusiveness of the data. Nevertheless, tracking population changes for various species is one of the only effective methods to measure whether species are being conserved or not. Thus, despite the difficulty and relatively high cost of this indicator, the Evaluation Team recommends it continue to be reported. Also, to make the results more meaningful, we recommend that efforts towards standardizing measurement methodologies across field programs be continued.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 1

IR1 was originally stated as "Sustainable natural resource management practices applied" in the CARPE Strategic Plan. This has been modified in the 2008 PMP to read, "natural resources managed sustainably".

Analysis

This IR is completely relevant and indeed a critical component of achieving the SO. Improved protected area management and reduced impact forestry practices can and are being documented. However, there seems to be an implicit assumption in the original formulation of the IR that such tried and tested practices and natural resources management (NRM) systems already exist and that one only has to apply them. This assumption is not true especially for CBNRM and such systems still don't exist in most of the CARPE countries. Furthermore, in all CARPE countries, lands and natural resources in rural areas remain almost exclusively the property of the State. In most CARPE countries, the legal framework allows for the management of protected areas (PA) by government agencies and/or parastatals that have been created to manage PA. The legal framework allows for natural forest management in logging concessions by logging companies. But CARPE countries other than Cameroon have not established comprehensive legal frameworks that allow for the empowerment of communities to be able to control the access to lands and resources, to manage the resources and to harvest and market products derived from this management (more specifics about legal structure in the various countries is expanded on in Chapter 3). This is a major constraint to CBNRM that still had not been adequately addressed at the time of this evaluation.

IR1 is somewhat confusing because it embodies both protecting biodiversity and improving forest management. Natural resource management may range from quite strict protection within PA to sustainable agriculture under CBNRM.[9] USAID is one of the few institutions that often includes

[9] The inclusion of the latter in IR1 is controversial for a couple of reasons. First, some would not consider sustainable agriculture as natural resource management at all. Fields and farming systems are inventions of man. When a farmer clears a forest to create an agricultural field, the first task is to destroy all the above-ground natural resources on the site. If CBNRM systems *include* lands managed sustainably for agriculture purposes (to provide sustenance for communities, for instance) and also provide mechanisms to conserve natural resources, it is more likely to be viewed as CBNRM. Agroforestry, on the other hand, is more often considered a form of NRM. Second, agriculture is not inherently a community-based activity. Like many income-generating activities, agriculture done at the community level is most often unsuccessful, as incentives are rarely well-aligned. Thus, agriculture is primarily a family- or company-based activity.

agriculture under the heading of NRM. For example, the departments of natural resources in the fifty states (in the United States) usually do not include agriculture (although these departments do deal with the impacts of agriculture on natural resources). IR1 also seems to assume that sustainable/productive agricultural systems exist in the 12 landscapes as alternatives to slash and burn, although this assumption does not appear to be true. And developing such systems may prove to be a greater challenge than the development of sustainable NRM systems. If such systems are to counted as contributing to the SO, then clear linkage to biodiversity threat reductions must be established, which has proven management-intensive during CARPE's second phase.

IR1 INDICATORS

The suggested IR1 indicators in the Strategic Plan have been substantially modified and reduced to the following two:

Indicator 1: Number of landscapes and other focal areas covered by integrated land use plans.

Indicator 2: Number of different use-zones (e.g., parks & PA; CBNRM areas; forestry concessions; plantations) within landscapes with sustainable management plans.

Analysis

Both the main strength – and weakness – of these indicators is that they focus on what are measureable – planning documents. This enables CARPE staff to straightforwardly determine whether the indicators have been achieved. However, measuring the planning documentation rather than the actual management of the resource does not tell us whether the IR is actually being achieved. First, a plan can exist without actually being implemented – Africa is full of plans that never make it off the shelf. Second, a plan can be implemented, but this does not necessarily mean that the management system will survive beyond the end of the project; for instance, management plans have been completed for CBNRM in the absence of a legal framework for empowering communities to manage "their" resources. Third, a plan – for CBNRM, for example – can be made and/or implemented without having developed and tested CBNRM systems. Fourth, putting the word sustainable in the title of a management plan does not guarantee that the management system will be fully sustainable. And it must be acknowledged that it is difficult to develop a consensus on the exact meaning of sustainable management; in general it is probably best to speak of systems that are "more sustainable". (The extent and ways in which CARPE has dealt with these issues are analyzed in Chapter 3.) The planning process of convening, designing and implementing plans implies the engagement of multiple stakeholders taking concrete steps toward improved management, so theoretically, these indicators subsume at least elements of direct improvement in management.

Given the afore-mentioned issues with the indicators in the revised 2008 PMP, the Evaluation Team suggests using – in a subsequent phase – the original two IR1 indicators in the Strategic Plan:

Indicator 1.1: Area under sustainable management.

Indicator 1.2: Livelihood benefits and/or incomes of communities generated by improved natural resources management.

Both of these indicators take us beyond the planning stage to the actual operational management of natural resources in conformity with the wording of the IR itself. In addition, the second indicator focuses on economic incentives of CBNRM, the category of sustainable NRM that was the least developed and presented the greatest challenge for implementation (other categories are PA and extractive uses). It is the revenues and incomes generated by CBNRM that provide the incentives and the sustainable financing for this form of NRM. Even with significant investments in the economic potential of PA, protection is almost never a self-financing strategy for biodiversity conservation, and this always makes PA vulnerable to cuts in government or donor funding.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 2

IR 2 is stated as, "Natural resource governance strengthened". This IR is highly pertinent, since a minimum level of good governance is absolutely essential to the sustainable management of PA, forest concessions and CBNRM zones. In addition, achieving this IR is critical in order for natural resource management to be sustained beyond the life of CARPE, since government buy-in and appropriate legal frameworks are necessary for sustainability of the goals of the program.

IR2 INDICATORS

IR2 indicators in the 2008 PMP are given as follows:

Indicator 1: Number of key new laws or policies for PA, logging concessions, and CBNRM passed or old laws and policies reformed compared with a list of recommended or promoted reforms.

Indicator 2: Number of NGO (and other civil society organization) advocacy initiatives & activities (e.g., media articles about environmental governance issues e.g. illegal logging, bushmeat poaching; natural resources court cases brought or complaints filed with appropriate government agencies) recommended or promoted reforms.

Analysis

Similar to IR1, the benefit of these indicators is that they are measurable. For Indicator 1, the drawback is that it is difficult to attribute these achievements to CARPE, since legal and policy reforms would take place with or without CARPE. Also, it says nothing about whether the reforms made are the right ones. Nevertheless, CARPE implementing partners promote legal and policy reform, and any changes to environmental laws – while often unable to be specifically attributed to this work – no doubt are furthered (and are certainly not hindered) by their efforts. For indicator 2, a recommended or promoted list is imprecise and subject to constant adjustment, so reporting the number of each may or may not provide a clear indication of the impact of CARPE; however, these initiatives and promoted reforms are presumably important for strengthening natural resource governance, so Indicator 2 is also acceptable.

Listing the specific advocacy initiatives that NGOs engage in to promote legal or policy reform based on studies/the literature that show which initiatives are most successful might strengthen indicator 2. For example, a review of the literature might show that articles in popular media appear to have more of an impact on legal reforms than complaints filed with government agencies. If this type of data were available, it would inform the examples listed in Indicator 2. Furthermore, an analysis of the key governance barriers to sustainable natural resource management would be helpful; for example, the lack of legal tools for empowering communities for CBNRM is not identified as a key barrier to CBNRM, even though this is a real and formidable constraint to implementing CBNRM. Once this is accomplished, means to address those barriers specifically can be included in the indicators. And finally, the indicators do not specifically address the intractable high level governance problem of the direct involvement of military and government authorities in the trafficking of ivory and bushmeat.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3

IR3 is stated as "Natural resources monitoring institutionalized".

IR3 INDICATORS

Indicator 1: Number of landscapes or other focal areas with forest cover assessments (see SO-level indicator 1).

Indicator 2: Number of CARPE countries implementing surveillance system for illegal logging.

Indicator 3: Assessment of capacity of Congo Basin (African) institutions (e.g. government agencies, universities and research institutions, NGOs, regional institutions) to collect and analyze information of adequate quality for decision making.

Indicator 4: Content/quality analysis of annual State of the Congo Basin Forest report.

Analysis

The first two indicators are reasonable, although number 1 is more an indicator of the SO and number 2 is more an indicator of governance. Indicators 3 and 4 are really objectives or results that CARPE hopes to achieve rather than indicators. Instead of Indicator 3, an example of an indicator of institutional capacities might be the following: "the number of new self-financing CBNRM structures established with the assistance of national institutions". In this case, the institutional capacity to be developed is the capacity to adapt and replicate pilot CBNRM systems, and the caveat that they are self-financing indicates that they are fully functional. Indicator 4 confuses objective with indicator. The goal is to have a State of the Forest Report that is of good content and quality, and what is necessary is an indicator of this – quite a challenge. To address it, CARPE program staff should be surveyed for specific ideas for verifiable indicators of content and quality.

2.3 OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The word "conservation" has become an ambiguous, confusing term over the last two decades or so. Different actors often use the same word in meetings and documents to mean different things. Conservation is often used by many CARPE environmental NGO partners to include and focus on protection. CARPE management and the Evaluation Team use conservation in the older, broader sense to include both sustainable use of natural resources and protection of natural resources (the conservation movement in the United States was born by pressure from hunters and fishermen who lobbied for sustainable use of natural resources). The Evaluation Team considers both forms of conservation to be valid strategies for biodiversity and forest conservation, each with its own strengths and weaknesses.

INNOVATIVE ASPECTS OF CARPE DESIGN

Landscape

CARPE's Phase II design grew out of the CARPE I lesson learned that conservation and reducing threats to biodiversity loss implied engaging a wider geographic area than just protected areas and their immediate surroundings as had been typical of integrated conservation and development projects in the 1990s. CARPE may very well be the largest attempt ever to develop the "landscape" strategy of conservation. As an innovative approach growing out of conservation experience of CARPE's implementing partners, this concept necessitated some initiation of Anglophones and even more to nearly all the francophones in Central Africa where the term does not translate easily into French (the Evaluation Team encountered numerous francophones that now speak of "*le landscape*"). In francophone West Africa, one speaks of the "*approche terroire*" that shares much with landscape. The literal translation "paysage" inevitably is accompanied by a need to qualify usage. The landscape approach is one of the principal strengths of CARPE and is analyzed in Chapter 3 under IR1.

Land Use Planning

Land use planning (LUP) is an element of the CARPE Strategic Plan and assumes much greater importance under the PMP. LUP has been used quite widely for water basin planning commissions/strategies in Africa, but most such land use plans were never implemented. The Evaluation Team is unaware of LUP being used as a key element of successful forest and biodiversity conservation projects/programs in Africa. Land use planning at the landscape-level has also been found to be one the greatest strengths of CARPE, and this tool is also analyzed in Chapter 3 under IR1.

Sustainable NRM

CARPE is funded under biodiversity monies. In that regard, it is somewhat unusual in its strong emphasis on sustainable natural resource use as opposed to resource protection in various forms of PA.

Sustainable use is referred to throughout the Strategic Plan and the PMP, but it is never fully made clear if sustainable forest, wildlife and fisheries management are seen as biodiversity and forest conservation strategies in their own right or if sustainable use zones are simply viewed as corridors and peripheral zones that complement protected areas where the "real" forest and biodiversity conservation should take place. The relative merits of sustainable use as a biodiversity conservation strategy in its own right remains an open question that needs to be monitored and evaluated.

3.0 PROGRAM OUTCOMES

3.1 IR1: SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES APPLIED

The sustainable natural resource management supported by CARPE takes places primarily in the 12 CBFP landscapes, and this subsection covers the CARPE field activities in the 12 landscapes. There are four main categories of activities in the landscapes and 3.1 is organized by these four categories. Work in each landscape begins with participatory landscape-level land use planning that completes the division of each landscape into three major macro-zones – PA, extractive resource zones (ERZ) and CBNRM zones. Typically, many of the PA and most of the ERZ will have already been created before the landscape planning exercise begins. The other three activities are focused on the development and implementation of sustainable natural resource management plans for each of the three land use categories. The success of IR 1 is a function of the extent to which a) natural resource management systems are made operational in the macro-zones of each landscape, and b) the management systems are sustainable. This section (3.1) starts with a subsection a) on landscapes and landscape-level land use planning followed by subsections on b) PA management, c) ERZ management, and d) management of CBNRM zones. The strengths and weaknesses of CARPE's approach are analyzed for each of these four categories. The overall biodiversity and forest conservation strategies that CARPE has applied in the landscapes are addressed in the first subsection on landscapes and landscape-level land use planning.

LANDSCAPES AND LANDSCAPE-LEVEL LAND USE PLANNING

The CARPE Strategic Plan presents the strategic results framework for CARPE but neither the Strategic Plan nor the PMP give an explicit presentation of the conservation strategies for IR1. The Evaluation Team best understands CARPE's strategy for forest and biodiversity conservation as follows:

1R1 focuses on forest and biodiversity conservation in 12 landscapes, which are representative of the different ecological zones that were defined in a major conference of biodiversity experts in 2000. These landscapes and thus ecological zones are relatively un-degraded and rich in the biodiversity of these eco-zones, and the combination of landscapes was judged to provide the best potential for biodiversity conservation. In addition, the landscape approach recognizes that much biodiversity cannot be successfully conserved if one relies on protected areas alone, as PA tend to become isolated islands over time. However, without adequate funding or effective management of the entire landscape, some of them may be destroyed over time.

In the landscape, forests and biodiversity are conserved through natural resource/biodiversity protection and through sustainable natural resource management systems. Conservation through protection focuses on the different forms of protected areas (national parks, wildlife reserves, community reserves, wilderness areas, etc.). Conservation through sustainable NRM is done through both private sector (and some community-managed) ERZs and CBNRM. The private sector ERZs include large areas of industrial-scale logging concessions, much smaller areas of safari hunting concessions, and mining, oil and gas concessions and some plantations. Under CARPE, the private logging concessions would be transformed into sustainably managed forests with management systems that minimize the negative impacts of logging and that ensure high levels of biodiversity conservation while generating benefits for the logging companies, local populations and governments from the local to the national levels. Safari hunting is developed in sport hunting concessions with a similar emphasis on biodiversity conservation. Both are self-financing. It is recognized that mining is not sustainable and the emphasis is on minimizing the negative impacts of mining and associated infrastructure – e.g., roads, dams, etc. – on forests and biodiversity while helping to improve livelihoods. Under CARPE, CBNRM zones will consist of community-managed lands and resources managed for hunting and wildlife products, for timber and non-timber forest products, for fisheries and for ecotourism development or for cultural values. Under CARPE, CBNRM would be developed primarily as self-financing, profitable community-based business

ventures that create employment and generate revenues while ensuring the sustainable use and conservation of forests and biodiversity. It is recognized that community aspirations will vary and that management systems should be adjusted accordingly. Under CARPE, management plans would designate agricultural micro-zones within the macro-zones for village lands and CBNRM. Productive, sustainable systems of agriculture would replace the unsustainable systems of slash-and-burn that mine the forest for the value of the nutrients in its ash and whose productivity declines with shortened fallow periods.

Under CARPE, an essential part of the landscape conservation strategies involves spatial planning processes to define which areas are best suited for PA, ERZ, CBNRM and agriculture, all within an overall objective of forest and biodiversity conservation. This is where participatory land use planning (LUP) comes in as an essential tool for conservation strategies in the landscapes. The planning process requires background surveys on the biodiversity of the landscape and on socio-economic conditions, the review of sectoral plans affecting the landscape, and also a structured planning process that engages all of the key stakeholders within or outside the landscape. The essential aspect of the LUP is the consensual zoning of the landscape into PA, ERZ, and village lands where CBNRM and agriculture are practiced and finally, larger towns and urban complexes. The village lands that are currently titled CBNRM generally include both agricultural lands that are under family-based management and common lands that are/were under traditional land tenure and are appropriate for community-based management. CBNRM is not an appropriate title for a macro-zone that includes both community-managed and family-managed lands – "Village Lands" may be a better title (although these macro-zones often include towns that are significantly larger than a village).

Beyond the LUP, the achievement of IR1 then requires that management systems be developed and applied for the PA, ERZ and Village macro-zones – at least those that are considered to be of highest priorities for conservation. CARPE will fund some of this directly and will serve as catalyst to mobilize many other sources of funding. IR1 requires a whole set of management systems for each land use type. If proven/tested management systems don't exist, they will have to be developed. Then, a whole set of sub-strategies or guidelines for adapting the management systems to the local conditions in each landscape needs to be developed and applied. An important aspect of CARPE strategy is to define management responsibilities and to get basic management systems in place as early as possible with the understanding that the effectiveness of management systems can then be improved incrementally over time.

LUP, PA management, ERZ management and Village/CBNRM/Agriculture all require suitable conditions of governance with appropriate legal frameworks. Governance and legal constraints are to be covered under IR2.

The Evaluation Team has first evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the landscape-level LUP process. Then, the degree of success in the development of management systems for the four major land use classes is analyzed.

Strengths of Landscapes and Landscape-Level Land Use Planning

The landscape-level land use planning has been the greatest strength of CARPE. This is somewhat surprising, as the Evaluation Team is unaware of any successful conservation project/program on the continent where land use planning has been a key strategic component. From this perspective, the CARPE design focus on landscapes and landscape-level land use planning must be seen as an innovative, but somewhat risky, strategy. Although the pioneering work for the approach had been done by WWF and WCS in the TNS landscape, the landscape concept was little known in the region and the term "landscape" does not even translate well into French (now many francophones speak of "*le landscape*"). Landscapes had no legal status and did not correspond to any administrative boundaries and were not recognized by planning agencies, forest services, or environmental ministries. Land use planning had rarely been applied successfully in rural areas in the nine countries though the idea of zoning for specific uses did exist.

What we find today is that the landscapes are formally endorsed by the CBFP and COMIFAC. A number of the trans-boundary landscapes, like Dja-Minkebe-Odzala Tri National Landscape (TRIDOM), TNS, Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati, Virunga and Lac Tele/Lac Tumba have been formally recognized by international agreements signed by the governments concerned. Most dramatically, the CARPE NGO partners in the landscapes have been enormously successful in leveraging huge amounts of other donor funding for the landscapes. As current examples: the African Development Bank (ADB) has just awarded a $62 million grant to cover six of the landscapes; the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has just won approval for Global Environment Facility (GEF) financing of the Lac Tele/Lac Tumba Landscape; and the TRIDOM GEF project is under implementation. The ADB funding alone is equal to half of the total CARPE Phase II funding.

The landscape approach has been very successful in moving conservation funding and the environmental NGOs more strongly away from a narrow PA focus and into a much broader perspective on conservation. The environmental NGOs have developed a range of new working relationships with groups like logging companies, oil and mining companies, and local populations well removed from the PA. Local stakeholders in these remote landscapes had rarely been consulted on land use decisions in the past and also had rarely any influence on such decisions. They are now involved and expectations have been raised.

While the landscape approach has led to a broadened perspective on conservation, significant elements of the strategy have yet to be translated into sustainable land use systems on the ground. Very good progress has been made on PA management and, in some cases, exceptional progress has been made in the development of more sustainable forest management systems in the ERZ. But relatively little progress has been made on the development of CBNRM and of productive, sustainable agricultural systems. The reasons for this are explored in detail in this report.

The guidance for landscape-level LUP has been adequate. The basic approach was laid out in the Request for Applications sent out by the CARPE office at the beginning of CARPE II (b). Later, guidelines were produced for CARPE by the USFS. The guidelines stress stakeholder participation, the development of a joint vision of what landscape conditions should be in the future, macro-scale zoning into three land categories – PA, ERZ and CBNRM (agricultural lands are included in the CBNRM category) – and the need for adaptive management. These guidelines have served as an adequate base for landscape-level LUP.

The land use planning in the landscapes has retained a focus on biodiversity conservation. The environmental NGOs have considerable expertise in biodiversity surveys and in protected areas. They made sure that biological surveys were conducted to identify biodiversity conservation priorities and that the need for PA and corridors were given full consideration in the land use planning process.

Weaknesses of Landscapes and Landscape-Level Land Use Planning

First, some landscapes are appropriate for landscape-scale thinking but are too large to be functional/manageable units. Second, the costs of just convening a landscape-level stakeholder group can be very high. Third, some of the landscapes have been criticized also on functional grounds. The director[10] of the *Agence Nationale pour les Parcs Nationaux* (ANPN – National Agency for National Parks) in Gabon claims that the definition of ecological zones for Central Africa was highly participative but that the delineation of the landscapes themselves was not. The ANPN director believes that the landscape approach is a very good one, but he feels that some of the landscapes have no functional justification for covering such large areas. He argues that ANPN's own analysis indicates that the Gamba Complex should be one landscape and another should be centered on Conkouati.[11] The agency believes the area

[10]This person was formerly the director of the national program of one of the CARPE partners, and he has had an intimate history with CARPE and institutions such as USFWS.

[11] The full landscape is the Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati Landscape. The complex of PA, logging and petroleum concessions and CBNRM zones in Gabon in the northeastern part of the landscape is called the Gamba Complex.

between the two has no strategic functional linkage. Similarly, the agency thinks the Lopé-Chaillu-Louesse Landscape and the TRIDOM Landscape are much larger than optimal. A number of specialists encountered by the Evaluation Team felt there is a need or an opportunity for revisiting the definition of some of the current landscapes. The Evaluation Team does not have the expertise to make a clear judgment on this issue but feels such criticisms should be addressed and that there should be flexibility for modifications to be made by those who are qualified.

CARPE has had a relatively small effect on the zoning for logging concessions, with the major exception of the DRC. The boundaries of most concessions were defined prior to CARPE II, and this delineation has had a much greater effect on the management of forests within concessions than it has on the zoning for logging concessions. In the DRC, CARPE worked with the World Bank through the WRI Independent Observer to completely revise the logging titles into the new and much-reduced logging concessions under the "conversion process". CARPE also has had little effect on the awarding of mining permits for prospecting and for mining (and this is typical throughout the world). Landscape zoning for CBNRM has been hampered by a weak understanding of the basic principles of CBNRM and a poor understanding of the CBNRM opportunities and constraints.

Land use planning was often initiated by environmental NGOs without clear buy-in from government or key ministries. Several of the landscapes have not received any form of formal recognition by government. Such LUP may receive donor support but lack critical support from government. As an example of what can happen without central government support, the Gabonese Forest Service recently created a large new logging concession in the corridor between Loango National Park and Moukalaba Doudou National Park in the Gamba Complex of the Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati Landscape even though this was not foreseen in the landscape zoning plan. On the positive side, the *Compagnie des Bois du Gabon* (CBG - Timber Company of Gabon) logging company that has been awarded this concession is working with the landscape partners and is working towards Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. With ANPN's collaboration, the landscape partners are now undertaking a re-zoning of fragments of former unmanaged protected areas that were leftover after the creation of the new logging concession.

The land use planning process has been completed for only five of the landscapes. Of these five, three have been formally adopted by government agencies (see Tables 1 and 2). Table 1was compiled from the landscape data on the CARPE web site and shows the percentage complete (designed) and the percentage of the landscapes that have received formal approval by government.

The CARPE team provided table 2. It represents the most recent CARPE Data Quality Assessment (DQA) system data from November 2010. One can see that there are differences in the totals for these two categories. As discussed elsewhere, the ongoing CARPE internal DQA often results in the downgrading of results reported by the NGO partners, and that is probably the case here. The Table 2 results should be considered as the most accurate for the LUP data.

Another initiative related to the landscape-level land use planning that is certainly noteworthy is the USFS bilateral support to DRC/MECNT/DIAF on national level LUP/forest zoning process.

TABLE 1. PERCENT COMPLETION (DESIGNED) AND ADOPTION OF LAND USE PLANS FOR THE 12 CARPE LANDSCAPES

LAND USE PLANS	DESIGNED	ADOPTED
Monte Alen-Mont de Cristal	100%	50%
Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati	80%	0%
Lopé-Chaillu-Louesse	50%	0%
Dja-Minkébé-Odzala	60%	0%
Sangha Tri National	100%	100%
Leconi-Bateke-Lefini	50%	0%
Lac Tele-Lac Tumba	100%	33%
Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru	60%	0%
Maringa-Lopori-Wamba	100%	100%
Maiko Tayna Kahuzi Biega	100%	100%
Ituri-Epulu-Aru	80%	50%
Virunga	30%	0%

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF LANDSCAPES COVERED BY LAND USE PLANS BASED ON CARPE DQA MONITORING SYSTEM DATA FROM NOVEMBER 2010.

FY 10 RESULTS	GRAND TOTAL
Convened	10
Designed	4
Adopted	3
Implemented	0

MANAGEMENT OF LANDS ZONED FOR PA, ERZ AND CBNRM

Progress on the management of PA and of forests in logging concessions has been good, overall, but variable. Relatively little progress has been made on CBNRM. Under CARPE conservation strategies, the next step beyond the development of landscape-level land use plans is the development and implementation of management plans for the PA, ERZ and CBNRM macro zones. There has been good progress on PA management and generally good collaboration with the government and parastatal field agencies responsible for PA management. The development of forest management systems in some of the landscapes and the development of forest certification that has been supported by CARPE are remarkable achievements and represent a dramatic change from the situation that existed at the beginning of CARPE II. On the other hand, there has been relatively little progress on the development of community-based natural resource management systems with the one exception of the Cameroonian portions of the TNS and TRIDOM Landscapes. The limited progress on CBNRM is judged to be the weakest aspect of CARPE, and it remains a critical challenge in most of the CARPE landscapes. The lack of progress on the development of sustainable productive agriculture is also a weakness, but the levels of deforestation caused by clearing for agriculture at this point in time remain quite low, especially in comparison to other major areas of tropical humid forest in the world. Also, CBNRM has the potential to be developed as a form of forest and biodiversity conservation in its own right and the potential to be developed as an economic alternative to agriculture.

Tables 3 presents the CARPE DQA data on the percentage of management plans convened, completed (designed), adopted and implemented. For CARPE, a land management planning process is convened when a finished written strategy document exists that plans the tasks and responsibilities necessary to produce the plan.

TABLE 3. CARPE DATA QUALITY ASSESSMENT SYNTHESIS TABLE ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT PLANS

FY 2010 RESULTS	GRAND TOTAL	TOTAL PA	TOTAL CBNRM	TOTAL ERZ
Convened	105	33	49	23
Designed	35	15	15	5
Adopted	17	5	8	4
Implemented	3	0	1	2

While results presented in Table 3 are relatively modest, Tables 4 and 5 present a more realistic picture of progress because it gives the percentage completion of the management plans for each category for each landscape. (Tables 4 and 5 present the landscapes as numbers, and the corresponding name for each number is presented in Table 6.) Also, it should be pointed out that landscape partners maintain that there is often some level of implementation taking place throughout the planning process.

The USAID CARPE office engaged the USFS to prepare a set of guidelines for the development of management plans for PA, ERZ and CBNRM to be used for budgeting and monitoring and to be used by the landscape partners for developing natural resource management plans for the macro-zones. These guidelines all tend to follow the same basic format that worked quite well for the landscape-level land use planning guide. However, these guidelines do not work nearly as well for natural resource management planning and the three guides have serious shortcomings for this purpose. They are analyzed in some detail below.

TABLE 4. PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION OF MANAGEMENT PLANS (MP) FOR PROTECTED AREAS (PA), COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (CBNRM), AND EXTRACTIVE USE ZONES (ERZ) IN EACH LANDSCAPE, BY PERCENT AND NUMBER OF MACRO-ZONES, AS ASSESSED IN 2009 DATA QUALITY AND ANALYSIS*

LAND-SCAPE	LAND USE PLANNING IMPLEMEN-TATION**	PA	NO.	CBNRM	NO.	ERZ	NO.	AVG. MACRO-ZONE MP COMPLETION (PERCENT)	WEIGHTED AVG. MACRO-ZONE MP COMPLETION (PERCENT) ***
LS1	95	53	4	30	3	20	3	34	36
LS2	73	75	5	66	6	44	4	62	63
LS3	65	73	3	55	3	56	2	61	62
LS4	62	81	5	71	9	50	12	67	63
LS5	75	69	3	63	11	48	8	60	58
LS6	30	61	2	44	7	14	1	40	44
LS7	98	45	3	47	12	12	6	35	37
LS8	66	66	1	90	3	0	1	52	67
LS9	93	46	3	28	5	17	2	30	31
LS10	100	96	4	27	4	NA	0	62	62
LS11	57	84	1	90	3	10	1	61	73
LS12	40	86	1	43	4	NA	0	65	52
Total	71	70	35	55	70	27	40	52	54
Weighted Total		70		55		37			

* Results are current as of November 12, 2010.
** In CARPE terminology, this is the Landscape Management Plan.
*** This is weighted by number of macro-zones in each category to correct for potential average of averages bias.

TABLE 5: IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT PLANS (MP) FOR PROTECTED AREAS (PA), COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (CBNRM), AND EXTRACTIVE USE ZONES (ERZ) IN EACH LANDSCAPE, BY AVERAGE PERCENT AND NUMBER OF MACRO-ZONES, ACCORDING TO 2010 FIGURES REPORTED BY PARTNERS*

LAND-SCAPE	LAND USE PLANNING IMPLEMEN-TATION	PA	NO.	CBNRM	NO.	ERZ	NO.	AVG MACRO-ZONE MP COMPLETION (PERCENT)	WEIGHTED AVG. MACRO-ZONE MP COMPLETION (PERCENT) ***
LS1	25	28	3	22	3	15	3	22	22
LS2	60	52	5	56	4	48	4	52	52
LS3	45	38	3	13	3	30	2	27	27
LS4	50	44	5	51	8	37	10	44	43
LS5	50	52	3	52	3	59	8	54	56
LS6	20	35	2	1	7	15	1	17	9
LS7	33	33	3	7	14	0	6	13	9
LS8	0	10	1	0	3	0	1	3	2
LS9	60	42	3	54	5	38	2	45	47
LS10	35	46	4	21	4	NA	0	34	34
LS11	50	75	1	12	3	0	1	29	22
LS12	30	25	1	15	4	NA	0	20	17
Total	36	40	34	25	61	24	38	30	28
Weighted Total		42		24		32			

* Note that the number of active zones changes from year to year depending on realities on the ground.
** This is weighted by number of macro-zones in each category to correct for potential average of averages bias.

TABLE 6. NUMBERING SYSTEM FOR CBFP LANDSCAPES

LANDSCAPE NUMBER	LANDSCAPE NAME
LS1	Monte Alen-Mont de Cristal
LS2	Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati
LS3	Lopé-Chaillu-Louesse
LS4	Dja-Minkébé-Odzala
LS5	Sangha Tri-National
LS6	Leconi-Bateke-Lefini
LS7	Lac Tele-Lac Tumba
LS8	Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru
LS9	Maringa-Lopori-Wamba
LS10	Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega
LS11	Ituri-Epulu-Aru
LS12	Virunga

Protected Areas Management

CARPE Phase II has achieved significant successes in strengthening protected area management across the Congo Basin. Protected areas are core areas around which the logic and planning frameworks for landscape management are developed. The establishment of national protected area systems and international trans-boundary mechanisms to protect critical habitat that straddles international borders was therefore understandably the launching point for conservation NGOs in the region. USAID began supporting these early efforts through a number of small grants in the early 1990s and continued this focus through the first phase of CARPE. CARPE's foundation and starting point for the expanded Phase II effort stems from the identification of important concentrations of wildlife and prioritizing these areas for protection.[12] These core areas remain the anchors for the landscapes that were crafted to complement and reinforce them as part of the program's approach to conservation. The 11 original CBFP landscapes had a strong initial focus on securing these core areas by creating formal protected areas where previously absent or by strengthening the management and infrastructure of those that existed. Working conditions in these areas are challenging – remote and isolated locations, non-existent infrastructure, resistance of local populations to accepting restrictions in access, weak governance and not-infrequent conflict, and nascent institutional capacities of national government institutions – so it is remarkable that so much as been accomplished. CARPE landscape partners combined a number of common elements in their approaches:

- Participatory engagement of a wide range of stakeholders;
- Flexibility in defining boundaries, use rights and other management elements;
- Building capacity of local protected area staffs from rangers to chief wardens as well as in civil society and local NGOs;
- Development of the knowledge base regarding the resources;
- Efforts to establish at least some early benefit to local populations through local employment revenue sharing or other mechanisms; and
- Pursuit of on-the-ground conservation activities (monitoring, enforcement, ecotourism, etc.) concurrently with movement toward creating formal management plans.

RESULTS

At the time of the Phase II midterm evaluation, protected areas still absorbed an overwhelming share of CARPE implementing partners' attention and resources. Given this historical foundation, it would be expected that IR1 monitoring would show the greatest advances in institutionalizing the management plans for the protected area macro-zones. On the other hand, of the three categories of macro-zones, PA management is the most dependent on government involvement and the performance of government services is not, of course, under the direct control of the landscape partners. As with other macro-zones, USAID monitors the planning process – convened, designed, and adopted – for each protected area in the 12 landscapes.

CARPE has supported the development of both conventional and new types of PA. The development of community reserves in the Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega Landscape was done through the provincial government at a time when the national government had minimal presence. CARPE and its partners have been instrumental in the establishment of new parks such as the Natural Reserve of Itombwe where conservation needs are better assessed and valuable biodiversity assets are identified. At least two formal "community" reserves were established in Eastern DRC, and two others based on this model were established in the low-lying bonobo habitat of Central DRC. In Lac Tele, a new community

[12] Under CARPE Phase II, conservation management in the region, as elsewhere, increasingly recognized the need to focus on larger geographic areas and the connectivity of the core protected areas. Moreover, threats-based analyses indicated that managing protected areas necessarily involved integrating protected area management with conservation needs across larger ecosystems, landscapes, or ecoregions.

reserve was also initiated. CARPE helped set up traditionally gazetted parks across the region, including the entire national park system in Gabon that was formally declared in unison with the CBFP. In Gabon, a conventional but entirely new protected areas system was put into place. There was early enthusiasm by the US National Park Service and WCS that Gabon could become an ecotourism destination – the "Costa Rica of Africa." Numerous wardens visited US Parks, and the government set about establishing viable national protected area institutions in a process that continues with an ongoing review by the new National Authority for National Parks.

As the mid-term evaluation pointed out, protected areas received strong attention from the beginning of Phase II (a). Landscape partners have generally forged increasingly strong relationships with protected area management authorities such as the *Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature* (ICCN – Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature) in DRC. The ICCN Assistant Director noted collaboration with the NGOs was good but that ICCN was not yet satisfied with the information and management systems in place. While ICCN felt reasonably well-informed through a variety of informal channels, their role – important to the adoption end of the planning process – required additional formal involvement. Of note, ICCN management stated that they benefited from the NGO support and would likely choose the very same support NGOs as those leading CARPE landscape efforts but expressed a need to be included in planning and oversight. Some draft plans still exist only in English versions – such as the plan for the Mayumba Marine Park that the team visited – and the CARPE team say it is undertaking initiatives to correct this.

At the individual PA level, CARPE collaboration and progress with park wardens/conservators as well as with ecoguards was almost universally positive. Protected area staff in most countries does not receive an adequate living wage, and this presents problems. Salary supplements or top-ups are a tool that USAID seeks to avoid, but these nevertheless persist as a business management concern as plans are adopted and implemented. In the MLW landscape, this constraint was so acute that AWF brought in a conflict resolution team to deal with PA staff concerns.

Trans-boundary institutional advances closely linked to CARPE support took place across the basin, beginning with the TNS and Virunga landscapes (where work was initiated by NGOs before CARPE) and then TRIDOM. It has continued most recently with the signing of a bi-national agreement between the two Congos for the Lac Tele-Lac Tumba landscape that provides for joint approaches to management.[13] Such an agreement is important in its own right but also indicates the degree to which the landscape concept is taking hold in the region. The LUP for TNS has been officially adopted by the administrations of all three countries.

CARPE has worked with COMIFAC States to help develop national policies on PA network size and extent – to help define and determine limits to the PA networks and to establish and orient responsible government structures to manage protected areas at the system level. Currently, Gabon/ANPN and DRC are carrying out reviews of their PA systems. The ANPN Director is seriously weighing CBFP landscape units against pragmatic management challenges, administrative and natural units. Already, the Gamba Complex is undergoing a rezoning effort to adjust macro-zone boundaries and consolidate protected area boundaries to make management more practical.

PA financing is generally the weakest element of PA sustainability. CARPE has financed business plans for a small number of PA. CARPE partners fostered the development of the TNS Trust that is now providing financing for the TNS landscape. CARPE supported the development of a tourism strategy in Rwanda and is exploring the longer-term viability of a sustainable tourism strategy in other areas. Resources in the Mbeli Bai, Dzanga Bai and Bai Hokou are potentially world class destinations, and

[13] *Accord de coopération entre les gouvernements de la République Démocratique du Congo et la République du Congo relatif à la mise en place de la binationale Lac Télé-Lac Tumba* was signed by the forestry ministers of the governments of the DRC and ROC and by COMIFAC. The agreement was signed just as this evaluation got underway and provides clear evidence that "institutionalization" of CARPE's Land Use Planning model is beginning to occur.

bonobo tourism does not yet exist but could enhance revenues in the MLW and Lac Tele-Lac Tumba landscapes. There are, however, very substantial obstacles to be overcome before such potential can be realized.

CARPE encourages business plans as a next step in its blueprint to achieve long term institutionalization and sustainability. Business plans explore revenue sharing of PA tourist revenues, as well as Payments for Environmental Services like biodiversity, watersheds, and carbon.

NEGATIVE FINDINGS

The options for financial sustainability are limited, at least in the short term, in most areas. PA management remains highly dependent on donor funding – and will remain so for the foreseeable future. The limited potential for ecotourism in the context of instability, poor accommodations, and challenging customs and visa procedures can only be compounded if oil depletion drives rising transport costs. Virunga, TNS and Gamba have a greater potential than most of the landscapes.

Of the three macro-zones, PA management is more dependent on effective government collaboration than is the management of the other two macro-zones. Protected area management authority remains tenuous. Getting formal adoption of management plans remains challenging and slow, even when protected area authorities have been implicated in the design of the plan. Recently, Gabon had two different sets of park authorities, a situation resolved by intervention at the presidential level. National parks represent areas set aside from productive use and thus imply lost revenues. This sets the stage for conflicts with other sectors that can put into question the very continuation of PA that may have only recently been created. Mineral and oil exploration and production are the main sources of actual and potential conflict. CARPE and partners are challenged to resolve issues at this level. The WWF Central Africa Regional Programme Office, for example, has recently created a position to deal with extractive-industries-based threats. WWF and WRI are teaming to map mining, forest and protected area concessions in Gabon in an effort to encourage the stakeholder institutions to confront conflicts themselves, but this is an area of risk to conservation and forest management in the Congo Basin.

ANALYSIS OF THE USFS GUIDE FOR THE PREPARATION OF PA MANAGEMENT PLANS

For PA management planning, the CARPE office requires the landscape partners to address all of the management plan components that are laid out in the USFS Guide for Protected Area Management Planning in Central Africa. The draft guide was disseminated to NGO partners in December 2006, and the approved guide that was in use at the time of the evaluation was presented in a USFS workshop in November 2008. The USFS guide is also a basic tool for work planning, budgeting and CARPE performance-based monitoring – the completed PA management plans are systematically ranked against the key components called for in the guide.

The Evaluation Team has attempted to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this guide. In addition to the team's collective expertise on PA management, the team also made use of the PA Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (the METT) that was developed by WWF and the World Bank. The METT is a widely used tool for monitoring 30 basic aspects of PA management effectiveness. The METT was used as a reference to determine how thoroughly the USFS guide covers the different aspects of PA management. The 30 key questions in the METT are presented in Appendix F and the full METT can be found at http://assets.panda.org/downloads/mett2_final_version_july_2007.pdf.

The strengths and weaknesses of the PA Management Planning Guide are presented in Annex G. Key strengths include an emphasis on adaptive management, a participative planning approach involving all key stakeholders, the development of a joint vision of desired future conditions and priority setting to guide interventions based on changes to funding levels over time. However, when one reviews the content of the guide against the key components of PA management identified in the METT, one finds many aspects that are not covered by the PA Guide. These are all detailed in Annex G. Review comments received just before finalizing this report indicate that a good number of these weaknesses

have been addressed in the second version of the PA Management Planning Guide that came out in November 2010. Also, it can be argued that some of the weaknesses identified may be addressed in annual work plans rather than in a management plan.

In some ways, the shortcomings of the USFS guide for PA management may be less important than in other areas. The PA management authority in each country often has their own internally approved guidelines for the preparation of PA management plans. Also, PA management is something that can be improved incrementally over time – and that is fully compatible with CARPE adaptive management strategies. What is most critical is to establish a physical presence on the ground with a level of patrolling and enforcement that is adequate to reduce the immediate direct threats to the PA. Outreach with local stakeholders should be another short-term priority. A full-blown participatory management planning process requires very considerable resources. In Itombwe, hundreds of villages are being visited multiple times as part of the process of elaborating PA management objectives.

The Evaluation Tea learned in December 2010, while working on the final revisions to this report, that the PA management planning guide (and the other three guides prepared by USFS for CARPE) had been under revision during the evaluation and the revised versions were made available to CARPE partners in November 2010. The USFS claims that many of the Evaluation Team criticisms of the guide have been addressed in the revised version. Unfortunately, the Team learned of the existence of the revised guides too late to review them to determine to what extent this is true. In any case, the versions of the guides that were reviewed are those in use by the USAID CARPE Kinshasa office and the landscape consortia during most of CARPE II (b).

Extractive Use Zones

CARPE has been a key player supporting the development of forest management systems on logging concessions. This includes a number of concessions in three CARPE countries that have now received FSC certification; 4.5 million hectares are now certified in Gabon, ROC and Cameroon. The movement towards improved/low impact/more sustainable forest management was moved forward prior to CARPE by the WWF-led Global Forest and Trade Network and is now driven strongly by legislation in western markets – for instance, by the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan in Europe and the Lacey Act in the United States. Logging companies that sell to these markets are being required to invest in more sustainable forest management systems. No similar market forces have developed for Asian markets, although those Asian buyers who process and export for European or American markets are subject to FLEGT or the Lacey Act. However, the COMIFAC Convergence Plan and most, if not all, national legislation call for the development over time of forest management plans for all logging concessions.

A good example of the dramatic changes taking place is found in the operations of the *Congolaise Industrielle des Bois* (CIB – Congolese Industrial Timber) logging company in ROC. The team leader for this CARPE evaluation was also team leader for an IUCN assessment of CIB back in 1995. CIB had been awarded a half million hectare concession of forest in northern ROC that had never been logged, and in 1995, CIB had no forest management plan and they were only harvesting three species – sipo (*Entandrophragma utile*), sapele (*E cylindricum)* and ayous (*Triplochiton scleroxylon*). Research conducted in their own concession (as a result of early dialogue between WCS and CIB) had shown that, in economic terms, there was no regeneration of these three species. Furthermore, there were no controls whatsoever on commercial bushmeat hunting in their concession.

CIB was one of the first companies in Central African to obtain FSC certification. They now have two certified concessions (Pokola and Kabo) and a third (Loundougou) underway. The number of commercial species had expanded to over 40 prior to the recession that began in 2008, and the allowable annual cut is now calculated on the in-growth of those commercial species. Harvest operations have been modified to reduce the environmental impacts of logging, and furthermore, CIB – in partnership with WCS – has undertaken initiatives to control commercial bushmeat hunting on their

concessions. Ecoguards man control posts and monitor all vehicle traffic in the concession to prevent the transport of illegally hunted wildlife. Portions of the concession are zoned for limited, controlled hunting by CIB employees. CIB is supporting the creation of community development zones (called for in the forest legislation) which are to include community hunting zones. CIB forest managers claim there is a higher population density of elephants in their concessions than in the Nouabale-Ndoki National Park. This may, however, reflect the dense undergrowth and favorable elephant habitat produced by poorly controlled, intensive harvesting in the Kabo Concession in the past. Poaching is still a problem – a poacher was killed recently in a shootout with ecoguards in the Kabo Concession.

This is not to say that there are not significant issues remaining. While some problems have been resolved or greatly reduced, others have grown or made their appearance. For example, the major mill town of Pokola was just a small village before the concession was created, and the town grew to an urban population of about 15,000 people before the recession reduced it to about 12,000 inhabitants. The prevalence of slash-and-burn agricultural lands around Pokola represents a major impact on the environment. Also, around an urban center of this size, elephants invariably come out on the short end of elephant/human conflicts. The sawmill/wood processing center at Kabo was closed early in 2010 leaving many people unemployed. (The global economic/financial crisis has had a very significant impact on CARPE Phase II, including financial costs for some extractive sectors, increasing pressure on species, limiting options for co-management, etc.) CIB has opened a major road that runs very close to Nouabale-Ndoki National Park, bringing with it all of the risks to biodiversity that come with roads (see Figure 3). CIB has begun a revenue sharing scheme with local populations and is supporting the development of the community development zones, but there are numerous problems associated with both of these endeavors. FSC criteria for biodiversity conservation are considered weak by WCS, as logging companies tend to zone portions of concessions as conservation areas because of physical constraints to logging (flooded forests, steep terrain) rather than because of their biodiversity values. Although significant efforts have been made to control poaching in managed forests, the jury is still out as to how effective these efforts are, and thus impacts will need to be monitored closely in the future.

The USFS also prepared draft guidelines for the development of management plans for extractive resource zones. This guide remained in draft until November 2010 when a revised version was produced, and its use by CARPE partners has not been required because of the political sensitivities related to commercial logging of humid tropical forests. For these reasons, this guide was not reviewed in detail as were those for PA and CBNRM. As ERZ include the extraction of both non-renewable and renewable resources (mining, petroleum and logging concessions), it is hard to envisage a single set of guidelines that would be very useful for both types of resources without remaining extremely generic in substance. For logging concessions, it would seem much more appropriate for CARPE to use the FSC criteria as the basic working guidelines for forest management, which could be modified and strengthened by CARPE in the area of biodiversity conservation.

USAID AND CARPE

The CARPE Evaluation Team is very concerned about growing political pressures that would prevent USG-funded projects/programs from being associated in any way with logging of tropical forests. The exploitation of tropical forests for international markets is not going to disappear in the foreseeable future. Logging for national and regional markets will grow rapidly as urban areas continue to grow. CARPE has shown that the US government and its NGO partners can have a very positive influence on how these forests are exploited – minimizing environmental impacts and increasing sustainability.

In the socio-economic context of Central Africa, it is simply not practical to think that one can lock up all of the remaining humid forests of Central Africa like a giant protected area. Forests that do not generate employment and benefits for local populations and other stakeholders will be progressively lost. Sustainable management systems that generate revenues and employment can be developed as self-financing systems that create incentives for sustainable use while conserving biodiversity and sequestering carbon. Forest management is one of the tools for the conservation of tropical biodiversity.

Figure 3. Huts of the indigenous forest people along roadside between Kabo and Bomassa in the TNS Landscape

The world's economy is heavily dependent on the unsustainable drawdown of non-renewable resources. The production of some non-renewables has already gone into decline, and the average net energy of all fossil fuels has been in decline since they were first developed, as is the average mineral content of all types of ores. As non-renewable resources are depleted and their relative costs increase, renewable resources will become ever more important. The sustainable management of humid tropical forests is one of the most challenging types of natural resources management, but great progress has been made in the last ten years. One must continue to develop and improve upon forest management systems for the humid forests of Central Africa at both the industrial and the community levels if one wants to conserve significant forest areas that lie outside of the network of protected areas.

Community-Based Natural Resource Management

CBNRM is probably the weakest component of CARPE. Except for Cameroon, there is no adequate legal framework for CBNRM in the CARPE countries. In particular, most countries lack the legal tools needed to empower community managers with the exclusive rights to control access to lands and resources, to manage the resources, and to harvest and to market products from the lands and resources that they manage. Except for Cameroon, there are almost no tried and tested models/systems for community management of forests, wildlife or fisheries in the humid forests of the CARPE countries. CARPE has focused on the development of community-based natural resource management plans rather than on the development and testing of functional systems or models. The skills and expertise needed to develop functioning, successful CBNRM systems that give satisfaction at the social, economic, ecological and technical levels for the first time in a new geographic region must never be underestimated. In

West Africa, only two of the first dozen and a half pilot projects in the 1980s succeeded. Making improvements to a functional model is relatively easy; however, developing the first functional models for forest, wildlife and fisheries management in each country and landscape is the big challenge. Developing such proven models usually takes about five to 10 years, and some of the pilot initiatives will fail. Model development has been attempted under CARPE in the CAR and DRC but was not successful. The socio-economic and ecological conditions in Central Africa are very different from those of Sahelian West Africa and southern Africa where the major CBNRM success stories are found. None of the CARPE CBNRM initiatives about which the Evaluation Team found information have developed the strategy of conditionality under which commercial harvest and marketing rights are granted to communities in return for their obligation to undertake measures critical for biodiversity and forest conservation – such as no hunting of protected species.

Although our sampling is certainly incomplete, the Evaluation Team encountered little understanding of the basic principles of CBNRM and little awareness of the major success stories in CBNRM across the continent. The Team also encountered little expertise in NRM or CBNRM amongst the landscape partners they met with in the landscapes or in the capitals. There are few examples of functioning CBNRM initiatives outside of Cameroon, and there has been little capitalization of lessons learned/ best practices in Central Africa or across the continent. The USFS Guidelines for CBNRM are exceptionally weak.

There are two major CBNRM success stories on the continent. Both became operational in the mid-1980s, and each now covers multiple countries and millions of hectares. Both of them are commercially oriented management approaches. The first is focused on the production of wood-based fuels (fuelwood and charcoal) for urban markets from community-managed savanna forests in seven West African, mostly Sahelian countries. The second success story is focused primarily on community management of wildlife for sport hunting and for ecotourism in semiarid ecosystems, primarily in Namibia and Botswana (and formerly in Zimbabwe). USAID played a key role in the early development of both of these success stories and remained a key supporter of the southern African experience of a period of about two and a half decades. Members of the Evaluation Team have extensive experience in these, and other, CBNRM experiences across the continent. The Team recognizes that the socio-economic and ecological context of Sahelian West Africa is very different from that of Namibia and Botswana and both are very different from Central Africa. Faced with a the low level of understanding of CBNRM amongst the CARPE actors, the Evaluation Team developed their own list of basic principles of CBNRM based on their collective knowledge of the state-of-the-art, recognizing that they must be adapted to the socio-economic conditions of the CARPE countries. This set of principles has been used as a base for evaluating the CBNRM component of CARPE and are listed below.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CBNRM

(1) Participation in CBNRM should be voluntary and not imposed from outside.

(2) The community should define itself – whether they are a single village or a group of villages – or perhaps a lineage within a village.

(3) The community should create an institutional structure that represents all the members and subgroups of the community – not just a particular user group.

(4) The community should negotiate clearly defined, agreed-upon borders/limits to the lands/resources they wish to manage. This is usually done following traditional land tenure/resource rights (It is not evident that CBNRM can work for mill towns composed almost exclusively of outsiders with no traditional ties to the land who have come for employment in the sawmill/ processing facilities).

(5) The community should commit themselves to the sustainable use of their natural resources – to ensure the adequate regeneration of the resources they harvest/use for both commercial

and subsistence uses. (The systems/techniques for ensuring sustainable use will often have to be developed later.)

(6) The community management structure must be empowered (by the government) with the exclusive rights to control access, to manage resources and to harvest and market resource-based products from the lands/waters they will manage. NRM is not possible under conditions of open access. Pilot CBNRM development should work only where authorities are willing to grant exclusive rights to land/resources.

(7) The rights and obligations of each party (community and government services) should be clearly defined.

(8) The empowerment of the community should be conditional. They should have the guarantee that they can continue to exercise their rights as long as they respect their new obligations (such as ceasing to hunt protected wildlife species). The community should know that their rights can be suspended or nullified if they do not live up to their obligations.

(9) The community should have a plan for the equitable (fair) sharing of the costs and benefits derived from NRM.

(10) The community managers should set up a system of sustainable financing whereby some of the revenues generated from the marketing of natural resource-based products are reinvested into the management of the resource (i.e., the creation of a management fund). CBNRM is generally much more sustainable when it relies on paid, rather than voluntary, workers.

(11) The community must develop a set of agreed-upon rules or a management plan governing access and use of the natural resources that they manage.

(12) Under CBNRM, the community managers – rather than government agents – become responsible for enforcing the rules governing access to and use of natural resources within the community. The community will frequently need assistance from local authorities/government agents in dealing with people from outside the community.

(13) There should be some community-run system for monitoring resource abundance/ regeneration and off take, as well as a system for adjusting off take so that it does not exceed the regeneration of the resource.

THE CRITICAL NEED FOR LEGAL TOOLS FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

The sixth CBNRM principle in the list above is a statement that community managers must be empowered to control access to resources, to manage and to harvest and market products derived from the resources they manage. CBNRM will not work if people from outside the community can come in and harvest and market the "fruits" of the community's investments in natural resource management – the community must have the exclusive rights to control access to the resources they manage. Furthermore, CBNRM can be expected to enjoy only limited success if community managers and members are not allowed to market the wood products, non-timber forest products, fish and wildlife they harvest from the land and resources they manage. All of the major success stories across the continent are based on the management of natural resources for commercial ends. Monetary revenues are a strong incentive and provide the basis for CBNRM to become a self-financing economic activity.

The Evaluation Team looked at the empowerment of communities under CARPE closely. Under the prevailing situation in the landscapes at the beginning of CARPE II, communities were not empowered. All land and natural resources in the CARPE countries belong to the State. At the beginning of CARPE II, only Cameroon had a legal framework for the empowerment of communities for CBNRM. Although there has been movement towards the development of legal frameworks for CBNRM is some countries during CARPE II, most of the laws that have been passed still lack the ministerial regulations needed to make them operational. Legal reforms for CBNRM have not been targeted as a specific priority under the IR2 for improved governance.

In Cameroon, CARPE has made use of the existing legal framework for the empowerment of communities for forest management for extractive use and for sport hunting concessions. The situation in the Tayna and Ituri Landscapes in eastern DRC is quite unique. The national government has had a very weak presence there and effective power is held by the provincial governments. The provincial governments have empowered communities in Tayna for community reserves and in Ituri for various forms of natural resource management. This arrangement certainly runs the risk that these provincial acts may be called into question by the national government at some later point in time, but what was done seems to be quite appropriate under the prevailing conditions. The community reserves in Tayna have already received official recognition by ICCN at the national level. In ROC, WCS told the team that communities in the Lac Tele Community Reserve (there are 27 of them) have been empowered through PA legislation and the adoption by government of PA management plans. The management plan for the Lac Tele Community Reserve states that Congolese law does not have a PA category for "community reserves" but formal adoption by the State is probably fully adequate means of empowerment. Also, the Lac Tele example cannot be applied to CBNRM areas in general, because the Lac Tele CBNRM are inside of an IUCN Category 6 protected area and most CBNRM macro-zones are not inside of PA. Local area legislation is another legal tool that can potentially be used for community empowerment. For example the special reserve category does not figure in the CAR legislation but was created specifically for Dzanga-Sangha and has now been in existence and unchallenged for decades. Potentially, this could also be done for CBNRM.

With these exceptions noted above, most of the CARPE CBNRM initiatives seem to be progressing in the absence of identified legal instruments for community empowerment. The CARPE Strategic Plan, the PMP and the USFS CBNRM Management Planning Guide do not provide guidance on how communities are to be empowered. Most of the CBNRM management plans reviewed do not explicitly address this question. CBNRM management plans are frequently being drafted without first having identified the legal instruments to be used for community empowerment and/or without a formal commitment by government authorities that community managers will be empowered. When communities are engaged in management planning for CBNRM, their expectations are necessarily raised. This all seems to be a very uncertain basis for CBNRM development.

This directly raises the question of what the minimum conditions should be for proceeding with CBNRM development. It is clearly not practical to wait until national legal frameworks are revised before beginning work on CBNRM. Indeed, this is probably not even desirable as the best legal reforms for CBNRM are generally based on tested, proven pilot experience in CBNRM in a limited number of sites. Such pilot CBNRM development, however, usually necessitates exceptional legal instruments for the empowerment of the pilot communities. A ministerial decree (*décret ministériel*) is often used for this purpose but the specific legal instruments may vary considerably from site to site. The Evaluation Team does believe that, in the absence of well-established legal instruments for empowerment, most CBNRM development should be constrained to a limited number of pilot sites. This "dual track" strategy will allow for the critically needed development of pilot CBNRM management systems for forest, wildlife, fisheries and community reserve management at the same time that national legal frameworks for CBNRM are being revised. The pilot CBNRM development should be used to inform the legal and regulatory reforms. However, exceptional legal instruments or written commitments from the appropriate authorities should be obtained for these pilot sites before the participatory development of CBNRM management plans is begun or continued, especially for CBNRM for commercial purposes. Further detailed recommendations for moving forward on CBNRM are developed in the Section Five recommendations.

CBNRM IN THE LANDSCAPES VISITED

The Team's review of CBNRM in both the landscapes visited and the landscapes not visited are based, in general, on the principles for successful CBNRM presented above. Time did not permit, however, a

systematic review against each principle for any of the CBNRM sites. The Team's observations and analysis of CBNRM in the landscapes are presented in Annex H.

The Lessons Learned document prepared by IUCN presents three CBNRM case studies from the CARPE landscapes. However, all three of the case studies present initiatives that are still in the planning phase, making it difficult to judge how successful these initiatives will be and to distill lessons learned as to which approaches work best. In many landscapes, CARPE is still in the planning stage and does not have established, functioning systems. The real CBNRM lessons learned will only be developed in the future after a robust network of pilot CBNRM systems have been established for forest, wildlife, fisheries and community reserve management across different countries, ecological zones and socio-economic conditions.

ANALYSIS OF USFS GUIDELINES ON CBNRM PLANNING

The US Forest Service prepared a document entitled Guide to Land-Use Planning for Community-Based Natural Resource Management Macro-zones in Central Africa that was disseminated to CARPE landscape partners in December 2008. The USAID CARPE office uses these guidelines for budgeting and monitoring. For monitoring, they use the guidelines as the standard against which they determine whether CBNRM management plans have been successfully completed by the landscape partners. The CARPE landscape partners use them for CBNRM management planning. The Evaluation Team found that most of the CARPE landscape partners have a great need of high quality guidelines that represent the state-of-the-art of this subject. Given the importance placed on these guidelines, the Evaluation Team has analyzed them closely and identified several strengths and weaknesses of the guidelines. The results are presented in Annex F, following the Team's review of the PA Management Planning Guide.

When evaluated against the set of principles for successful CBNRM presented above, the CBNRM Planning Guide was found wanting in several respects. The Team only learned when making the final revisions to the report that a revised version of this guide was released in November 2010. Unfortunately, the Team did not learn of this earlier and did not have time to review the revised guide for incorporation into the present evaluation.

CBNRM, AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS

There is a great deal of confusion in CARPE amongst the terms CBNRM, agriculture and livelihoods. Starting from the CARPE Strategic Plan, CARPE has always grouped agriculture and CBNRM together. CARPE documentation on livelihoods mixes agriculture, natural-resource based livelihoods, CBNRM and non-resource based forms of livelihoods all together.

Agriculture and CBNRM are very different at three different levels at least:

- Under CBNRM, communities are structured and empowered to manage the natural resources on common lands. The resources are managed or co-managed by community institutions. In contrast, agriculture is a family-based enterprise. Communities do not manage farms, and attempts at communal agriculture have almost always failed or given very disappointing results. Strategies and technologies for developing sustainable management systems for the management of common lands by communities are fundamentally different from those for the development of more sustainable agriculture. One targets communities and the other targets farm families.
- CBNRM is primarily concerned with the management of ecosystems, fauna and flora, and other components of those ecosystems – trees and other plants, wildlife, fisheries, etc. The ecosystems are modified by man, but natural regeneration and natural processes still predominate. Agriculture almost always starts out with the destruction of the natural ecosystems and their conversion to anthropic systems. Domesticated crops and livestock are no longer "natural", and they will rarely survive and regenerate without the farmer. Soil and water are two of what are usually the only remaining "natural" resource components in agricultural systems.

- Although there are some exceptions, agricultural lands are usually under private tenure and common lands are under traditional collective tenure. CBNRM development is usually built upon the traditional tenure systems for common lands.

The macro-zones that CARPE calls CBNRM include settlements, agricultural lands and common lands. CBNRM is, therefore, not an appropriate name for these macro-zones. This macro-zone would better be called "village lands" or something similar. The village lands macro-zone should then be divided into micro-zones for a) settlement areas, b) broadly defined agriculture, and c) CBNRM or common lands. The CBNRM might be further subdivided for different forms of CBNRM. The zoning for agriculture should be done by the community. The management of the agricultural lands should be done by the farm families that hold the traditional tenure rights to the farms and fields.

CARPE should develop separate criteria and strategies for how CBNRM development can contribute to biodiversity and forest conservation and how the development of more productive and sustainable agriculture can contribute to forest and biodiversity conservation. Both CBNRM and agriculture can form the basis of livelihoods or contribute to livelihoods. Support for livelihoods, employment and income generation should be basic parts of CBNRM and agricultural strategies for conservation. As the CARPE Strategic Objective seeks to minimize deforestation – and clearing for agriculture is the main cause of deforestation – CARPE should seek to minimize the area devoted to agriculture in the landscapes. This can be done by favoring CBNRM rather than agriculture whenever there is a choice between the two options, as well as by promoting the development of more productive, more sustainable agriculture.

CARPE'S LINKAGES BETWEEN ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS AND CONSERVATION

The Evaluation Team did not find written strategies for how CBNRM and agriculture should be developed in support of conservation. But CARPE lays out their strategies for linking livelihoods to conservation in the chapter titled "The Role of Alternative Livelihoods in Achieving a People-Centered Approach to Conservation: Lesson Learned from the CARPE Program" by David Yanggen (former Deputy Director of the USAID CARPE unit in Kinshasa) in the IUCN document, Landscape-Scale Conservation in the Congo Basin: Lessons Learned from the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). This document is one of the few places where the Evaluation Team found a presentation of some of CARPE's strategies for conservation.

One quickly finds that CARPE's livelihood strategies cast a wide blanket that includes an extremely broad range of very disparate activities that include:

- Broadly defined agricultural systems including livestock raising, Agroforestry, fish ponds, etc.;
- Natural resource-based livelihoods. No clear distinction is made between those based on open access, non-managed land/resources versus those that are based on community-managed lands/resources; and
- Other economic activities that are not based on renewable natural resources.

The Evaluation Team finds that the focus on livelihoods for conservation rather than on CBNRM or agriculture for conservation to be less than optimal. The livelihood categories covered are so broad and so different that there is little strategic value in attempting to group them together. CARPE's blurring of livelihood strategies reflects their grouping of settlement areas, agricultural lands, and common lands under the single macro-zone category they call CBNRM.

The IUCN Lessons Learned chapter on livelihoods goes on to state, "The CARPE approach is to engage in an environmental threats-based analysis to identify those livelihood activities that are currently leading to environmental destruction (area 1) and seek to promote sustainable alternative livelihoods that contribute to conservation."

The document states that all the main livelihood activities in rural areas of Central Africa can contribute to environmental degradation. They list the primary livelihoods as the following:

- Slash-and-burn agriculture,
- Hunting,
- Fishing, and
- Gathering of wood products.

Examples given in Lessons Learned of livelihood alternatives to these destructive livelihoods are the following:

- Livestock raising as an alternative to bushmeat from wildlife hunting;
- Woodlots as an alternative to destructive forest harvest; and
- Fishponds as an alternative to over-fishing.

The CARPE livelihood strategies continually refer to alternative livelihoods. It is clear from the discussion in Lessons Learned that they are primarily referring to true alternatives – livestock raising, fishponds or woodlots as alternatives to the use of natural resources from natural ecosystems. CARPE livelihood strategies leave one with the impression that use of natural resources by communities is to be avoided or minimized. There is no recognition in the CARPE livelihood strategies that the purpose of IR1, as presented in the results framework of the CARPE Strategic Plan, is not to develop alternatives to the existing livelihoods but to transform the present unsustainable natural resource use systems into sustainable natural resource management systems. The purpose of IR1 is to develop sustainable forest management, sustainable wildlife management, sustainable fisheries management, sustainably-managed protected areas and sustainable agriculture. IR1 is formulated as "Natural resources are managed sustainably", and the word "alternative" does not appear in the CARPE Strategic Plan. It is clear in the original CARPE Strategic Plan that livelihoods were to be based on the community-based management of the natural forest resources themselves or on the sustainable management of agricultural land. One of the illustrative activities proposed in the Strategic Plan is:

> Promote forest-based livelihood opportunities that improve local quality of life and increase incomes from the sustainable use of ecological resources

CARPE livelihood strategies do talk a good deal about livelihoods based on natural resources. However, it makes no clear distinction between the exploitation of unmanaged, open access resources and the harvest and marketing of sustainably managed natural resources. For example, when medicinal plants are referred to as a livelihood activity to be promoted, it is never specified that one needs to analyze the sustainability of the use of the medicinal plants or that one may need to develop measures to ensure that they are managed and harvested sustainably. Increasing the harvest and profitability of unmanaged resources frequently leads to an acceleration of their rate of degradation/destruction. Increasing the profitability of managed resources leads to increased revenues and increased incentives for conservation through sustainable use while providing sustainable financing for the resource management system.

The development of more sustainable agriculture contributes to livelihoods, incomes and food supply, thus reducing the need for clearing additional forest. Where markets exist for agricultural products, agricultural development may serve as an alternative to illegal logging and/or hunting. In these ways, sustainable agriculture can contribute to forest and biodiversity conservation. It does not, however, create direct incentives for forest-biodiversity conservation. The development of community-based natural resource management systems contributes to livelihoods and incomes and creates direct incentives for forest and biodiversity conservation. It creates economic interest groups who will defend the forest from agricultural encroachment. Without interest groups to defend the forest, farmers will

have less incentive to intensify production. The single greatest advantage of sustainable natural resource use strategies, compared to protected areas, is that they can frequently be self-financing. The classic strategy for biodiversity conservation is the creation and management of protected areas. In the Central African context, PA rarely benefit from sustainable financing and the probability of developing sustainable financing is very questionable. The sustainable management of natural resources in ERZ and CBNRM/village lands macro-zones is an alternative – albeit "less pure" – strategy for biodiversity conservation, but one that can pay its own way where access and market conditions are suitable, with the simple requirement that a portion of revenues are reinvested to cover management costs. The Evaluation Team has found no mention of this strategic advantage in any of the CARPE documentation.

The CARPE/IUCN Lessons Learned document presents CARPE's *Typology of Linkages between Livelihoods and Conservation* as follows:

(1) Threats based;

(2) Quid pro quo; and

(3) Interdependency.

Threats-based linkages

We have already seen from the Lessons Learned document that CARPE livelihood strategies seem to give priority to alternatives to threats/unsustainable uses rather than the development of sustainable natural resource management systems. This is one of the main weaknesses of CARPE livelihood strategies. The prime example given of a threats-based linkage is overexploitation of wildlife for bushmeat. The livelihood "solution" given is to promote animal husbandry as an alternative protein source. Although such an alternative may reduce the need for hunting for one's personal protein supply, it creates no incentive to stop hunting as a money making activity. CARPE has given relatively little attention to wildlife management for sustainable production of bushmeat as a solution to unsustainable hunting for the bushmeat trade. Throughout rural areas in the Congo Basin, commercial hunting for bushmeat is often the principal money making activity and is often one of the only forms of employment available to rural men. Providing alternative protein sources is certainly not going to stop people from market hunting, and it won't stop professional hunters from outside the community from market hunting on village lands. Providing alternative sources of income might lead to reduced pressures from market hunting, depending on the relative advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives.

Quid pro quo linkages

This refers to the practice of linking the funding for a development activity in return for a change of behavior that leads to better conservation. For example, CARPE could fund a grinding mill or a dispensary in return for a commitment to quit hunting protected animals. Such a strategy, if executed properly, can often give good results during the life of a project. *Quid pro quo* livelihood activities can be important for establishing good will and a positive working relationship with communities. This could be used in conjunction with CBNRM, especially in the preparatory phase before revenue streams can be established. *Quid pro quo* livelihoods, however, create little or no lasting incentives for conservation. The incentive ends with the project funding and then there is little or no further incentive for conservation. The bigger problem is how to withdraw from such an exchange once such a trade is initiated. Quid pro quo trade-offs can easily lead to the development of the mentality of "Give us X or we will hunt your bonobo". In CAR, local dissatisfaction with CARPE interventions led to the hunting of elephants to manifest their dissatisfaction and the army ultimately had to be called in[14].

Interdependency linkage

This starts to become a valid linkage because the benefits are derived from – or are dependent on – the natural resource that one wishes to conserve, but it is not sufficiently developed. Three examples are given in the Lessons Learned document:

[14] Marc Thibault, 2009, Principal Technical Advisor, Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas Complex, WWF. Bayanga, CAR.

(1) Honey,
(2) Medicinal plants, and
(3) Caterpillars.

Yes, these three can create incentives for conservation of the forest in the right context, but the CARPE discussion on interdependency linkages doesn't specify what the context must be. Products that come from the forest or that are dependent on the forests can create incentives for local populations to conserve the forest, if it is the local population that benefits and not outsiders. Honey production may or may not be dependent on the forest (tree crops and agricultural crops may also be good nectar producers). Local caterpillars will be totally forest dependent, generally, as will most medicinal plants. If the forest is open access, medicinal plant and caterpillars collectors who benefit from these products may have incentives to conserve the forest, but they will have no mechanism for conserving the forest. Under open access, harvest of medicinal plants may be unsustainable and destructive. For incentives to be translated into better conservation, the community must be structured and empowered. If harvest of a product is unsustainable, the community must be structured and empowered and management systems/rules must be developed and enforced to ensure sustainable use. These serve as examples of why livelihoods need to be developed as part of CBNRM strategies for conservation rather than CBNRM as part of livelihood strategies for conservation.

Two other examples of interdependency linkages given in the Lessons Learned document have much stronger linkages. These are ecotourism based on community reserves and community-based wildlife management for sport hunting. These are both forms of community-based natural resource management and both of them, in the right context, can generate substantial incentives for conservation. The revenues and benefits received by the community is a direct function of the conservation of the land and resources that they manage.

A limitation to these forms of CBNRM is that both of them generate revenues for the community as a whole, but they do little to generate employment and direct revenues for community members – tourism development is probably better than safari hunting in this aspect. Forms of CBNRM that create employment and benefits for community members as a direct function of their personal initiative, skills and hard work tend to produce greater incentives for conservation. Community-based forest management for sawtimber, construction wood or wood fuels production and community-based wildlife management for bushmeat production create many more employment opportunities for community members and puts cash revenues in the pockets of wood cutters and hunters as a function of their skills and how hard they work. These differences in livelihood strategies do not seem to have been developed by CARPE.

One key livelihoods linkage that is not mentioned at all in the CARPE strategies is the one of conditionality (it does exist to some extent in the field, at least in Cameroon). Conditionality works like this:

(1) Land and resources belong to the State;
(2) Communities are empowered by the State to manage, harvest and market resource products that generate substantial revenues and/or benefits for community members and the community as a whole;
(3) The empowerment of community managers is conditional upon their respect for well-defined contractual obligations, such as respect for approved management plans, no hunting of protected species, not engaging in slash-and-burn agriculture outside of areas zoned for this, etc.;
(4) Communities know they can lose their harvest and marketing rights if they do not respect their obligations – a strong, direct linkage between livelihoods and conservation; and

(5) If communities know they risk losing their commercial harvest and marketing rights if they do not respect their obligations, then they will generally adhere to those obligations if they know that there is at least a minimum of monitoring and oversight.

Under the legislation governing access and exploitation of natural resources put in place in francophone countries in the 1930s, communities have had usufruct (non-commercial) rights to resource use. But communities have rarely benefited from any commercial use of resources. Under CBNRM, they have the opportunity – usually for the first time – to legally harvest and market natural resources products. Experience has shown across Africa that when empowerment is done conditionally, communities are usually very careful to respect their obligations for fear of losing their commercial harvesting and marketing rights. A USAID FrameWeb Internet discussion of Community-Based Natural Forest management (CBNFM) in the seven Sahel countries in 2006 led by the team leader of this evaluation specifically challenged participants to identify any cases of abuses by empowered community managers after project support had been discontinued. Not only were none identified, but cases were registered of communities rallying the support of authorities to repel the invasion of slash-and-burn farmers who had been engaged by wealthy individuals seeking to expand their land holdings at the expense of the communities.

CBNRM for forest management for the production of wood products and CBNRM for wildlife management for bushmeat production for sale have the advantage of creating local employment and cash revenues for community members. Forest management for timber production has the disadvantage of perturbations to the forest ecosystem. It has the advantage – where the economic conditions are right (access, market availability) – of the possibility of generating very significant levels of employment and revenues. Forms of CBNRM that only generate revenues for the community as a whole generally do not generate much employment, they run a higher risk of elite capture and a higher risk that revenues will be stolen, and they generally are used only for community development projects rather than cash revenues for community members.

Community-Based Wildlife Management (CBWM) has the advantage, as a biodiversity conservation strategy, in that wildlife is generally dependent on healthy forest ecosystems without slash-and-burn fields interspersed in the forest. It is reputed to have the disadvantage of being harder to manage and control, but almost no pilot attempts have been made to attempt this. It is also believed by some that commercial sale of bushmeat is not possible because of the low productivity of the tropical forest ecosystems. But it would seem that the real question is whether those low but sustainable yields can provide adequate incentives for CBNRM. There are many situations where CBNRM offers the possibility of empowering small numbers of people with management and harvest rights over large forest areas. Large area size can make up for low productivity while still creating an economic interest group – the community managers – who will have an incentive to conserve the forest and its wildlife. One needs to test the relative merits for biodiversity conservation of subsistence versus commercial use of wildlife by community managers.

The strongest linkages between livelihoods and conservation should be found in CBNRM systems that generate substantial revenues for both community members and the community as a whole for communities that are empowered under the condition that they must respect their contractual obligations or run the risk of losing their harvest and marketing rights.

Agriculture

The challenge of developing sustainable agricultural systems is a much more difficult one than that of developing sustainable NRM systems. The Evaluation Team has not found specific CARPE strategies for improving agricultural sustainability in support of biodiversity conservation. Agricultural interventions presented in CBNRM plans include measures to increase productivity, to improve soil fertility, to develop mixed agriculture with crops and livestock, to improve fallows and to increase the proportion of perennial crops. In general, these all seem appropriate and most of them should help make agriculture

more sustainable or less unsustainable. The Team had little opportunity to visit agricultural activities in the field, and it is difficult to accurately judge the merits of specific interventions proposed in the management plans without good knowledge of the specific context for each one. The team understands that agricultural activities funded by CARPE will have provided justification in terms of how the agricultural activity reduces threats to biodiversity.

Much of the CARPE documentation on agriculture speaks of improving the sustainability rather than the much more ambitious goal of making agriculture fully sustainable. The Team finds this to be appropriate as it is easy to question the sustainability of nearly all forms of modern agriculture[15]. Nearly all of traditional agriculture in the CARPE countries is based on slash-and-burn, which can be quite sustainable with fallow periods of 25 years or more, but long fallows like that are rarely practiced anymore. The transformation from slash-and-burn to permanent, sustainable cropping systems is a very radical change in farming systems. The development of permanent cropping systems that are ecologically, socially and economically viable in the generally remote, poorly accessible areas of the CARPE landscapes is an extremely difficult challenge that is not to be underestimated. Perhaps the most difficult challenge is the maintenance of soil fertility at good productive levels wherever annual crops like cassava still make up part of the cropping systems. Perennial tree crops are inherently much more sustainable, but even those have problems. For example, the famous "chagga home gardens" traditional agroforestry systems on the foot slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro, widely acclaimed to be highly sustainable, have suffered serious and poorly understood declines in productivity in recent years.

CARPE should engage very senior level specialists in the sustainability and productivity of African humid zone agricultural systems to develop strategies and guidelines to assist CARPE partners to improve the sustainability of agriculture in the landscapes. It is especially important to identify specific forms of intervention that will allow CARPE partners to have maximum impact with limited resources. CARPE is faced with a range of difficult challenges, and the program cannot afford to engage high levels of expertise in all areas. CARPE and partners could try to use the landscape programs to leverage expertise in this area, as it should be complementary/synergistic with landscape activities.

The development of more sustainable agriculture would also be a very appropriate use of funds for climate change because the expansion of low productivity, low-sustainability slash-and-burn agriculture is the main cause of deforestation and the addition of carbon to the atmosphere.

IN CONCLUSION

First, the landscape approach and landscape-level land use planning are strategically sound interventions that are having significant, positive impacts. These approaches have led to much more strategic thinking about forest and biodiversity conservation, much greater involvement of stakeholders and the development of a suite of new working partnerships. With the landscape plans, CARPE has been phenomenally successful in attracting large amounts of other donor funding for the landscapes. USAID coverage of the core costs of infrastructure, communications and transportation remains a critical factor to this success.

Second, the development of forest management of logging concessions and the certification of good forest stewardship are remarkable initiatives that have been strongly supported by a number of CARPE partners. These have been initiated since CARPE II began, and they have made rapid progress in transforming the largely uncontrolled, exploitive logging practices into managed forest lands with a much higher degree of sustainability along with social responsibility and sharing of economic benefits.

Third, the weakest aspect of CARPE is the CBNRM component. Only one country has a clear legal framework for the empowerment of community managers, and such empowerment is a prerequisite for

[15] Agricultural systems that rely on the drawdown of non-renewable reserves of oil, gas, phosphate and potassium are, by definition, not sustainable over time.

CBNRM. Empowerment has not been a problem in eastern DRC where central government control is weak and provincial governments have been supportive of CBNRM initiatives. CARPE partners have a variable but frequently poor understanding of CBNRM principles and have not mobilized adequate levels of expertise in CBNRM. The USFS CBNRM planning guidelines are weak. The emphasis on community-based natural resource management planning in the absence of tested, functioning pilot initiatives in each country and each sector is a questionable strategy. Finally, none of the CBNRM initiatives encountered have developed the strategy of conditionality that the Evaluation Team considers to be critical for biodiversity and forest conservation. This strategy makes the granting of commercial rights to the harvest and marketing of natural resource products conditioned on the community's respect for a number of agreed-upon obligations, such as discontinuing the hunting of protected species, ceasing to perform slash-and-burn agriculture in areas not zoned for agriculture, etc.

Lack of progress in the development of productive, sustainable agricultural systems to replace the prevailing slash-and-burn systems is another weakness of CARPE. Fortunately, deforestation caused by agricultural clearing in still at a relatively low level, but this could become much more of a threat in the future.

3.2 IR2: NATURAL RESOURCES GOVERNANCE STRENGTHENED

This intermediate result has remained constant throughout both phases of CARPE II but has been approached with quite different strategies in each. In both instances USAID has attempted to budget the limited funds available to best address the ambitious agenda laid out in the 2002 Strategic Plan. The main elements of the strategic plan call for increased capacity of institutions and human resources to improve policies, laws and their implementation at multiple levels:

- Regional multi-national institutions and policy coordination;
- Protected areas, sustainable logging, and other sustainable NRM;
- Integrated national land use planning and enforcement;
- Civil society and NGO sector advocacy; and
- CBNRM, decentralization, and local-level management.

In both Phase II (a) and II (b), the CARPE team supported a core governance partner and complemented that partner by encouraging landscape and crosscutting partners who were mainly funded under IR1 and IR3 to contribute where relevant to the IR2 outcomes. In effect, the CARPE II (a) strategy for improved governance continued and built on Phase I activities of building the capacity of local and national civil society. During this period, most of the 9 CARPE countries were in the throes of war and civil conflict. Others were in complete disarray with public administration either in shambles or non-existent. Accordingly, the governance grant to WRI was focused on forestry policy and governance in Cameroon, which was the one country whose institutions were relatively developed and functioning. The mid-term evaluation found this policy work to be innovative and useful but only narrowly relevant to the governance challenges facing the landscape programs across the other countries of the region. USAID CARPE also used a range of additional tools including small grants (learning by doing) and massive training of local NGOs in both technical and administrative functions and to enhance their capacity for environmental advocacy. However, the limited resources available, the lack of a consistent and appropriate home for the small grants program, and the structural contractual constraints of USAID to provide sufficient management direction to this effort resulted in a mid-term recommendation to consolidate these disparate policy initiatives to the degree possible into a single and more accountable implementing mechanism.

After the mid-term evaluation, USAID revised the approach to the governance IR to create a more consolidated delivery mechanism and strategic approach, which involved: 1) shifting responsibility for the results of this IR directly to IUCN from a previously diffused set of actors; 2) attaching the CARPE Focal

Points to IUCN as part of an Institutionalization Strategy to build on the IUCN mission and mandate to convene their members and partners to tackle national-level issues with more coherence and strategic focus; 3) developing the concept of a stakeholder-driven "country team" comprising a range of environmental stakeholders to advance a national policy agenda; and finally 4) developing a tool called the "Country Matrix" which allowed the stakeholders to assess NRM and environmental governance priorities at national level and to create a multi-year work plan to achieve national strategic objectives.

IUCN was selected mainly because of the recognition of its central convening role in natural resource management in the Congo Basin, achieved mainly through working with civil society networks largely under the *Conférence sur les Ecosysthèmes Denses et Humides d'Afrique Centrale* (CEFDHAC - Conference on the Ecosystems of Dense Rainforests of Central Africa) and now integrated into the COMIFAC structure. In principle, IUCN's wider networks, partners, membership, commissions and specialists groups (e.g., the Great Ape Section of the Primate Specialists group) could be expected to improve results and provide value to its partnership with USAID CARPE.

The 2008 PMP stresses outcomes in terms of both new policies and existing policies reformed and in terms of increased Civil Society action to advocate for change, provide oversight and pressure on natural resource abuses (the virtues and shortcomings of IR2 indicators were addressed in Chapter 2 of this report).

The CARPE management team has encouraged IUCN to enhance the strategic interrelatedness of the three IRs supporting its strategic objective. Indeed, in each of its technical policy areas, IUCN also supports human resource and capacity building, which builds on its role, particularly for civil society, in IR3 Indicator 3: "Assessment of capacity of Congo Basin (African) institutions (e.g. government agencies, universities and research institutions, NGOs, regional institutions) to collect and analyze information of adequate quality for decision making."

While the IR2 activities are focused under IUCN, other CARPE partners continue to contribute to governance objectives. For example, IR2 results are also reinforced – particularly for logging but increasingly for reconciling conservation and extractive industry policy conflicts – by WRI in conjunction with its support to IR3.

LEGAL AND POLICY REFORM

Achievements

At the time of the award – according to mid-term review findings – IUCN's capacity and presence were minimal, thus the new mandate required substantial change. Under CARPE II (b) cooperative agreement, IUCN assumed its lead responsibility by expanding its regional office in Yaoundé. The IUCN effort is managed out of this regional office. IUCN has recruited a Regional Program Manager and CARPE Focal Point in Yaoundé and National Focal Points in each of the CARPE countries. The Focal Points have been responsible for the creation and coordination of Country Teams to advance policy and legal reforms in each country and for the development of advocacy programs for improved governance in the natural resources sector. The expansion of national IUCN offices in some countries further buttresses the resources available to IUCN in executing its tasks.

IR2 is a crosscutting theme of the CARPE Phase II (b) Program designed to track each country's policy, legislative and regulatory environment and to develop and apply tools to enhance the enabling context for land use planning and resource management. Existing forestry and wildlife conservation laws in Central African countries generally address the legal basis. However, regulations for implementing the laws are frequently missing and conflicting laws, insufficient protections, inappropriately centralized command and control approaches, and changing needs all limit effective management at the ground level. Additionally, the enforcement of improved laws is impeded by poor legal knowledge, corruption and weakness of enforcement agencies. IUCN analytical review of existing legal frameworks is insufficient; there are various compendia of laws for some CARPE countries (e.g., IUCN-CARPE 2010). For specific

laws and instruments, IUCN has supported more detailed analysis,[16] and these have led – as outlined below – to numerous positive contributions. The evaluation team, however, did not find evidence that the legal frameworks had been sufficiently inventoried and reviewed and priorities established and shared across the range of stakeholders encompassed by the country team concept.

CARPE documents indicate that at least two laws or regulatory frameworks were passed or improved in each of the nine countries except Sao Tome, and country-by-country legal reforms supported by CARPE are summarized here and included in Table 7 below.

BURUNDI

- Contribution to the revision of the Environment Code in 2010.

CAMEROON

- Contribution to the Joint Ministerial Order No. 520 by the *Ministère de l'Administration Territoriale et de la Décentralisation* (Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization), *Ministère des Finances* (Ministry of Finance), and *Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune* (Ministry of Forests and Wildlife), which lays down the modalities for the utilization and monitoring of the management of revenue accruing from the exploitation of forest and wildlife resources and intended for sharing with local governments and local communities. The first Ministerial Order of 1998 was signed only by the first two ministries listed above, and this Ministerial Order also involves the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife. Furthermore, the Order of 1998 concerned only forestry revenue and this one involves wildlife revenue. Several provisions are aimed at minimizing the embezzlement of funds and elite capture and at stimulating appropriate utilization of revenue.
- Inputs for the development of the revised version of the "Manual of Procedures for the Community Empowerment and Norms for the Management of Community Forests" published in 2009. The major innovations in this manual are simplified procedures for community empowerment compared with the previous version. More discretionary powers are transferred to local communities, and the manual recommends changes to the functions of village management committees and revised institutional arrangements, and it takes into account other ecological zones.
- Contribution to the drafting of the "Manual of Procedures for Community Empowerment and Norms for the Management of Community Managed Hunting Zones" (*Zones d'Intérêt Cynégétique de Gestion Communautaire* – ZICGC), in progress.
- Contribution to the drafting of the regulatory framework for the harvest and marketing of non-timber forest products, in progress.
- Contribution to the drafting of the Protected Areas Management Guidelines, in progress.
- A series of policy instruments and strategies have benefited from the contribution of the suite of CARPE partners under the coordination of the CARPE Focal Point. These include:
  - The National Poaching Control Strategy approved in 2008, which includes innovations such as improved regulation of bushmeat trade and improved measures to control poaching;
  - The Forests and Environment Sector Program (PSFE) approved in 2005, which is a comprehensive policy document supporting sustainable forest management in Cameroon;
  - The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II, also called the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (DSCE), validated in 2010. This document lays out strategies to enhance the

[16] The 2002 DRC Forestry Code is one such example. USAID, through IUCN, supported a review of the code in order to assist the country in preparation for better application of the 2002 Code provisions including those pertaining to legal forest concessions.

contribution of forests to economic growth and employment and places particular emphasis on community forests and ZICGCs as well as on forest governance in poverty reduction.

CAR

- Contribution to the Revised Forestry Code that was passed in 2009.
- Contribution to the draft Wildlife Code, which was completed but not yet adopted.
- Contribution to the development of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper that was validated in 2007. It identifies forest resources as key assets in poverty reduction.

DRC

- Contribution to the signature of the 2008 Presidential Decree on the Conversion of Forest Titles, with measures to reduce illegal logging and corruption in the forestry sector.
- Contribution to the finalization of the "Manual of Procedures for Community Empowerment and Management of Community Forests", validated in 2009.
- Inputs for the drafting of the Law on Nature Conservation and the Environment, awaiting signature.
- Contribution to the drafting of the ministerial regulations for the application of the 2002 Forestry Code, awaiting signature.
- Contribution to the development of the National Forests and Conservation Program, validated in 2009.
- Contribution to the development of the 2010 Operational Guide for the Norms for Forest Zoning with reference to the demarcation of the "local community forests" and to the "*terroirs des populations autochtones*" (traditional lands of indigenous peoples) and USFS technical assistance to the inter-ministerial steering committee for forest zoning, established by ministerial decree.
- Sporadic inputs in the drafting of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, validated in 2006.
- USFS, WWF, and other support to the development of guidance for the *cahier de charges sociales for timber concessionaires.*

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

- Inputs for the 2007 Presidential Wildlife Decree prohibiting the hunting of primates and other endangered species.
- Inputs for the 2008 Presidential Decree on the Milling of Sawtimber before exportation. The CARPE/IUCN Focal Point has been designated as the point person to facilitate and follow up on its implementation.

GABON

- Some NGOs in the suite of CARPE partners provided decision makers with information for the 2004 Presidential Decree on the Conditions and Procedures for the Attribution of Community Forests.
- Contribution to the development of the Law on National Parks, adopted in 2007.
- Inputs for the 2007 Presidential Decree creating the National Parks Agency and USFS contribution to the management planning template for ANPN for national parks in Gabon.
- Contribution of IUCN and other implementing partners to the drafting of the Law on Ecotourism, in progress.
- Contribution to the Ministerial Order on the Detention and Commercialization of Wildlife, in progress.

ROC

- Contribution to the development of the Wildlife and Protected Areas Law passed in 2009. It contains measures to reduce poaching.
- Law on Fisheries and Freshwater Aquaculture passed in 2008.
- Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper adopted in 2007. It places a strong emphasis on sustainable forest management.

RWANDA

- Contribution to the revision of the Forest Code adopted in 2010.

Analysis

It is difficult to determine the importance of CARPE's role in these legal reforms. The IR2 indicator is the "number of laws promulgated or revised with CARPE/IUCN as the *initiator"*. Most of the legal and policy reforms listed above benefited, or are benefiting, from CARPE/IUCN's support. But it is generally not possible to determine from the documentation available which, if any, of these reforms were initiated by CARPE/IUCN. In some cases, such as in Gabon, IUCN contributed to modifications in the protected area law that was later revised with WCS input and continues to undergo modification today. Certainly, many of these reforms would have taken place if the CARPE program had not existed. The two primary tools to have achieved more positive outcomes, the "country team"[17] and the "country matrix"[18] remain works in progress.

There is a good deal of confusion in the CARPE documentation relating to the contribution of CARPE partners to legal and policy reforms. For countries like Equatorial Guinea, information sources contradict each other about what CARPE/ IUCN has done. Clearly, CARPE partners, IUCN and country team members have attended many meetings and have supported a range of reforms, but their impact is very difficult to judge. They have convened meetings and inventory policy actions for reporting against USAID's PMP.

There is little evidence for a strategic framework behind the reforms that have been supported. Specifically, there is little evidence that IUCN and the CARPE partners have undertaken a structured, organized approach to identifying the reforms that are strategically important for the achievement of the CARPE intermediate results and strategic objective. The legal/policy/regulatory constraints to sustainable management of natural resources and to the reduction of forest and biodiversity loss have not been adequately identified and chronicled. Achievements presented by CARPE/IUCN's team are not the result of a predefined "policy agenda" or "advocacy agenda".

[17] The Country Team represents a task force to ensure that the national environmental challenges have been properly taken into account in the CARPE work plan. Depending on policy priorities and needs in each country, team composition and size varies, ranging from eight (Gabon) to about 30 (Burundi) members. National representatives are drawn from mainly NRM-related institutions and include mines, protected areas, parliament, nongovernmental organizations, and projects/programmes. Regional bodies are represented by COMIFAC, CEFDHAC and *Réseau des Aires Protégées d'Afrique Centrale* (Network of Protected Areas for Central Africa – RAPAC). Other donors and CAPRE implementing partners as well as USG (USAID and/or US Embassy) are also members of the Country Team.

[18] The "country matrix" is a compendium of policy action agenda items developed as IUCN convenes country teams who prepare the document based on inputs from all members. The matrix takes into account all national policy documents (poverty reduction strategy paper), environmental sector policy (forest policy, national plan of environment, national biodiversity plan of action, etc.), national environment-related laws and regulations, regional master plan (COMIFAC's convergence plan), and fields projects and/or programme documents. Work groups prepare elements that are screened and approved in a country team plenary session. As an action plan, it is updated each year based on current priorities and previous accomplishments.

TABLE 7. LEGAL/POLICY INSTRUMENTS SUPPORTED UNDER CARPE II AND THE MACRO-ZONES AFFECTED

COUNTRY	TOOL	MACRO-ZONE
Burundi	Draft Revised Environment Code	
Cameroon	(1) Joint Ministerial Order on the Management of Forestry and Wildlife Revenue	ERZ, CBNRM
	(2) Manual of Procedures for Community Empowerment and Norms for the Management of Community Forests	CBNRM
	(3) Forests and Environment Sector Program	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(4) National Poaching Control Strategy	CBNRM, PA
	(5) Growth and Employment Strategy Paper	CBNRM
	(6) Manual of Procedures for Community Empowerment and Norms for the Management of Community Managed Hunting Zones – in progress	ERZ, CBNRM
	(7) Regulatory texts on the exploitation and marketing of non timber forest products – in progress	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(8) Protected areas management guidelines – in progress	PA
CAR	(1) Revised Forestry Code	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(2) Draft Wildlife Code	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(3) Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper	
DRC	(1) Presidential Decree on the Conversion of Forest Titles	ERZ
	(2) Law on Nature Conservation (awaiting signature)	PA
	(3) Implementation Decree for the 2002 Forestry Code (awaiting signature)	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(4) Manual of Procedures for Community Empowerment and Management of Community Forests	CBNRM
	(5) Operational Guide for the Norms of Forest Zoning	
	(6) National Forests and Conservation Program	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(7) Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper	
Equatorial Guinea	(1) Inputs for the 2007 Presidential Wildlife Decree, which prohibits hunting of primates and other endangered species	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(2) Inputs for the 2008 Presidential Decree on the milling of sawtimber before exportation	ERZ
	(3) Manual of Procedures for the Community Empowerment and Norms for the Management of Community Managed Hunting	ERZ, CBNRM
	(4) National Poaching Control Strategy Forests and Environment Sector Program	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(5) Growth and Employment Strategy	
Gabon	(1) Presidential Decree on the Conditions and Procedures for the Community Empowerment for Community Forests	CBNRM
	(2) Law on National Parks	PA
	(3) Presidential Decree creating the National Parks Agency	PA
ROC	(1) Law on wildlife and Protected Areas	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
	(2) Law on Fisheries and Continental Aquaculture	ERZ, CBNRM,
	(3) Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper	
Rwanda	Draft Revised Forest Code	ERZ, CBNRM, PA
Sao Tome		

One weakness of the CARPE governance component has been the failure to recognize the lack of legal tools for the empowerment of communities as a key constraint to the development of CBNRM. The Evaluation Team agrees with the 2005 USAID guide "Biodiversity Conservation – A guide for USAID

Staff and Partners", in which it stresses the importance of secure tenure for all forms of community conservation and resource management. In most countries, the development of CBNRM requires major innovations at the legal and/or regulatory levels. The lack of legal tools for community empowerment now poses a serious constraint to CBNRM development under CARPE III at a time when the emphasis should be shifting from land use and management planning to the implementation of management systems.

Land management issues are crucial in the sub-region.[19] In many countries – e.g., Cameroon, DRC, ROC, and Gabon – there is a conflicting superposition of forestry codes, land codes and mining codes. CARPE/IUCN and the country teams have not targeted the harmonization of these various overlapping legal texts. Mining has not received attention in CARPE II. Permits for mineral prospecting typically overlap with logging concessions, CBNRM zones and protected areas. In DRC, mining companies are a part of the landscape planning committees and also key participants in the Ministry-led zoning processes. In Gabon, significant efforts have been made to take mining into consideration in zoning work related to TRIDOM. The most critical conflicts to resolve are those between mining and protected areas, but there is a range of other legal issues that need to be dealt with. For example, in certified logging concessions, the logging company can – in some cases – be held responsible for the environmental impacts of the mining companies who are prospecting for minerals within the logging concession but lack the legal rights to control the activities of these mining companies. The extent of the rights of mining companies to use the roads opened and maintained by logging companies is another gray area that needs to be clarified. CARPE partners WWF and WRI are working on clarifying some of the relevant issues. Recognizing the importance of this subject, the WWF Central Africa Regional Program Office recently engaged an extractive industries specialist who will provide cross cutting support to field activities in the region.

There is a range of legal and regulatory constraints related to the legal status of landscapes, LUP, PA, concessions, and CBNRM macro-zones at the landscape level. There have generally not been any formal procedures developed to ensure that legal and regulatory constraints encountered by CARPE landscape partners are targeted for reform by IUCN and the country teams. Country reviews conducted so far have been weak and generally do not answer the question, "What to do?"

Most of the Congo Basin countries have a large network of rivers, lakes and/or coastlines. Water, fisheries and biodiversity resources are abundant. CARPE has paid some attention to the legal and policy aspects of aquatic ecosystems and community-based management of aquatic resources. WWF has done some work with this in multiple landscapes (e.g., Lac Tele-Lac Tumba, Salonga, TNS, Gamba-Conkouati, etc.), as has AWF.

Many landscapes have a trans-national dimension. Each country has its own legal regime. As a result, these landscapes are managed and governed by different legal regimes. This could potentially be a problem, but no significant constraints of this nature were identified by the Evaluation Team.

ADVOCACY

The key tool that CARPE has available to support advocacy is its small grants program. The small grants budget is now divided more or less evenly between advocacy grants and field activity grants. Local NGO and civil society actors are also an important beneficiary of CARPE's important training program. The IUCN grants program works in conjunction with the landscape program around the grant making process. Many proposals come from groups in the landscapes where implementing partners are active or from urban advocacy organizations with whom the landscape partners have been associated. Among grant criteria, the small grants manual explicitly calls for proposals to further the civil society advocacy

[19] Given numerous challenges, including demography, transnational migrations, resource conflict, poverty, land grab, etc.

role for relevant policies for landscapes, bushmeat, and natural resources management. Final selection is made at the regional level where CARPE-wide relevance of proposals can be better determined.[20]

The second key indicator for IR2 is:

The number of NGOs' (and other civil society organizations') advocacy initiatives and activities (e.g. media articles about environmental issues; illegal logging; bushmeat; natural resource court cases/complaints; etc.).

Strengths

In each country, CARPE Focal Points and country team members have organized dozens of "roll-out" or "face to face" meetings with key governmental officials, including ministers, directors and other prominent policy and decision makers. Strategic, semi-formal alliances have been established with parliamentarians in each country.[21] Domestic branches of the *Réseau des Parlementaires d'Afrique Centrale* (Central African Network of Parliamentarians – REPAR) and environmental caucuses[22] have been established and made operational with the contribution of CARPE Focal Points.

The number of NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) supported by CARPE Focal Points at the country level has increased (see Table 8 below). Some NGOs, CSOs and advocacy networks have been very active and have performed well, including: *Conseil pour la Défense Environnementale par la Légalité et la Traçabilité* (CODELT - Environmental Defense Council for Legality and Traceability) and *Avocats Verts* (Green Advocates) in RDC; Brain-Forest in Gabon; *Alliance Homme-Forêt-Environnement d'Afrique* (Man-Forest-Environment Alliance) in ROC; the *Réseau de la Foresterie Communautaire* (RFC – community Forestry Network), the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development (NESDA), *Centre d'Etudes de Recherche Actions et d'Appui pour le Développement* (Center of Action-Research and Support for Development - CERAD), Cameroon Ecology, *Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement* (Center for Environment and Development – CED) and *Le Réseau des ONGs locales du Sud-Est Cameroun* (ROSE - Network of local NGOs of South-East Cameroon) in Cameroon.

At the sub-regional level, CARPE Focal Points have participated in efforts aimed at the harmonization of different legal and policy tools in the Congo Basin. Strategic alliances have been set up with COMIFAC and regional networks such as the *Réseau des Aires Protégées d'Afrique Centrale* (RAPAC – Network of Protected Areas for Central Africa) and the *Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales d'Afrique Centrale* (REPALAC – Network of Indigenous (Autochthones) Populations of Central Africa).

In some countries, annual work plans for advocacy have been developed by CARPE Focal Points.[23] Among the 60 small grants allocated to NGOs/CSOs during CARPE II, numerous grants have been awarded for advocacy projects. Focal Points in countries like DRC, Sao Tome & Principe and Cameroon have each organized more than ten workshops targeting legal and policy reforms as well as decision-making at the national level.

[20] This actually creates some issues between focal points and grant proponents as contradictions may appear between the first-stage selection and the second-stage. It is not clear or transparent to proponents whether the national selection committee, whose thresholds they have met, uses the same criteria as the regional one. The complex process favors organization with writing and proposal skills that are far higher than those of most local associations and even national nongovernmental organizations.

[21] Evidence of this in Cameroon, DRC, Gabon, and ROC exists in the form of letters and email exchanges between the CARPE Focal Point and parliamentarians.

[22] These environmental caucuses are set up from existing "environmental commissions" in parliaments.

[23] Somda and Angu. 2010. Internal Pre-evaluation of Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE's) Intermediate Result Number 2 Performance.

TABLE 8. NUMBER OF NGOS/CSOS PARTNERING WITH CARPE/IUCN AND COUNTRY TEAMS IN ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES (POLICY AND DECISION MAKING ADVOCACY)

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF NGOS/ CSOS	ACTIVITIES
Burundi	7	Workshops, media articles, TV interventions, support to court cases
Cameroon	15	Workshops, media articles, press releases, TV round tables
CAR	2	Meetings, TV interventions
DRC	10	Workshops, roll-out sessions, media articles, press releases, TV interventions, support to court cases
Equatorial Guinea	7	Meetings and media articles
Gabon	3	Workshops, media articles, TV interventions, support to court cases.
ROC	5	Workshops, meetings, roll-out sessions, media articles, press releases.
Rwanda	7	Meetings, media articles, TV interventions
Sao-Tome & Principe	3	Workshops, media articles, TV interventions

NGOs/CSOs working directly with CARPE/IUCN and country team members have corresponding Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in the field. Information on advocacy needs was therefore shared downwardly and upwardly. The result was an increased awareness on issues relating to CARPE goal and strategic objective.

Weaknesses

Advocacy approaches encapsulate strategic thinking, strategic alliances, collaborative agendas, tactical claims, campaigning, pressure, performance, etc. CARPE's advocacy program has suffered from the absence of credible and publicized policy agendas in the same way that its legal reforms suffered from the lack of a clearly articulated and widely shared agenda. Focal Points and country teams make reference to "advocacy agendas". Where these do exist, they do not appear to be rooted in strategically identified and analyzed legal and policy needs.

There is no clear division between what was actually done under CARPE and its country team and what was done by NGOs/CSOs under their own agendas. Once again, it is very difficult to distinguish between advocacy activities that have been initiated by CARPE from advocacy initiatives that have simply been supported, but not initiated, by CARPE. Many advocacy activities supported by CARPE have not been clearly linked to CARPE's Strategic Objective.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONS

Strengths

Local governance rests on a number of key elements including rules, rule enforcement, decision making processes, accountability, sanctions, etc., on one hand, and institutions on the other hand. CARPE and its partners have centered attention on the potential contribution of local institutions and local level governance institutions needed to achieve its strategic objective.

Customary authorities and institutions were directly involved in the creation of the Tayna Gorilla Reserve and the establishment of local governance institutions for improved biodiversity conservation in the Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega Landscape. The *Union des Associations de Conservation des gorilles pour le Développement Communautaire à l'Est du Congo* (UGADEC – Union of Associations for Gorilla Conservation and Community Development in Eastern Congo) is headed by traditional chiefs and was instrumental in the creation of a total of three community reserves that now have attained the legal

status of protected areas.[24] CARPE partner Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International provided support to the traditional leaders of UGADEC for the establishment of alliances with local governance institutions.

CARPE and its partners have developed various forms of functional institutional arrangements for the management and governance of landscapes. These include consortium governance committees, landscape planning teams, advisory groups, ERZ working groups, CBNRM macro-zone groups, dialogue committees, re-zoning committees, project management committees, CBO network conflict resolution committees, local good governance cells, etc.

In the Cameroon segments of the TNS and TRIDOM Landscapes, CARPE partners have supported the development of functioning CBNRM management institutions for forest and wildlife management. These include the wildlife management and marketing committees (*Comités de gestion et de valorisation des ressources fauniques* – COVAREF) and the community forests management committees. Local committees for community hunting areas and for anti-poaching activities have been set up and implemented in the ROC and CAR segments of the TNS landscape.

CARPE and its partners have provided strong institutional support to local NGOs and CSOs, which have consequently gained visibility. The Cameroonian Focal Point has supported ROSE in its campaign against the mismanagement of forestry fees accruing from commercial logging. CARPE and its partners have facilitated the development of several trans-boundary agreements for landscapes that cut across national borders such as TNS, TRIDOM, and Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati. WWF and WCS have contributed to the creation – and are part the management board – of the TNS Trust, a trust fund providing sustainable financing of TNS.

Weaknesses

CARPE and its partners have not shown a strong strategic interest in developing new forms of institutional pluralism that integrate traditional authorities, traditional land tenure and access rights and traditional resource management systems in the rest of the landscapes. Traditional authorities were involved in UGADEC, and – to some extent – the UGADEC accomplishments are being adapted in the MLW landscape and in nearby reserves with whom the Bonobo Conservation Initiative has been working. Governance is associated with decision making and responsibility. By and large, community participation remains weak at the landscape level, and elite capture has been a problem in CBNRM/community forests in Cameroon.

There is evidence of a persistent lack of transparency in the management of revenues stemming from the management of community forests and community hunting zones in the Cameroonian sections of TNS and TRIDOM. NGOs working with WWF have not shown enough skills in developing safeguards and accountability for these revenue streams. In addition, the portions of forestry fees accruing from commercial logging that are supposed to be shared with local communities are regularly embezzled and too seldom shared as foreseen. Local governments have not always been adequately involved in the planning and implementation of the landscape-level land use plans.

CONFLICT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

CARPE and its partners, including governmental agencies in charge of conservation, work on very sensitive issues such as land use planning, resource access rights and forest and land tenure, wildlife species conservation and living aquatic resources. From the perspective of local communities and, especially, indigenous peoples, these issues deal with their own survival (rights, powers, livelihoods, income generation, and medicine). Therefore, the stakes are high.

[24] One of these reserves is the Tayna Gorilla Reserve. The originality of the UGADEC approach lies in the fact that they have developed community conservation prior to any enabling legal framework.

Multifaceted conflicts have been frequently recorded under CARPE. Some were/are located at the national level, others at the regional or landscape-level and others at the local-level. Table 9 (below) outlines a qualitative distribution of the frequency of major conflicts.

TABLE 9. FREQUENCY OF MAJOR CONFLICTS, BY TYPE OF CONFLICT AND STAKEHOLDERS CONCERNED

TYPE OF CONFLICT	STAKEHOLDERS CONCERNED				
	State and state agencies vs. local communities	Bantu vs. indigenous peoples	State structures vs. CARPE & landscape leaders	Local communities vs. landscape leaders et al.	Local communities vs. local governments & local communities vs. management committees
Mutually contested rights to forest land	Extremely frequent	Frequent			Occasionally to Frequent
Micro-territoriality	Frequent	Frequent			
Programmatic recognition			Very frequent		
False promises				Frequent	
Revenue sharing & management	Frequent	Infrequent			Very frequent

Some of the above conflicts have been successfully mediated while others are worsening. A successful mediation conducted by WCS between ICCN and the local communities on the conflict over the boundaries of the Mokoto CBNRM corridor in the Salonga led to the local communities gaining 30 km along the Lifombo river.

IN CONCLUSION

The governance component of CARPE II (b) has not yet achieved the impact envisioned in the cooperative agreements. Through IUCN and the country teams, a wide range of policy, legal and regulatory reforms have been supported. At the same time, some of the most critically-needed reforms have remained unidentified. In some cases, the process of revision of laws and regulations has not even been initiated. The lack of a legal framework for CBNRM presents a significant constraint to rapid progress on CBNRM under CARPE III.

IUCN was given the mandate for IR2 only under CARPE II (b). Considerable efforts have been made by the IUCN CARPE Regional Coordinator, the Focal Points for each country and the country teams. However, their efforts have reflected the general emphasis of CARPE implementing partners on PA and ERZ. Through grants and training and catalyzing civil society networks, the program has strengthened civil society voices for improved governance.

The Congo Basin includes some of the poorest countries of Africa, some with very weak governance frameworks, and a number of countries recovering from armed conflicts and/or with some areas of continuing or sporadic outbreaks of armed conflict. In many of the countries, military officers and government officials are involved in the illegal trade in ivory, bushmeat and tropical timbers. Natural resources are largely under state control and are often used as political resources. In this context, CARPE is confronted with a range of serious challenges, and its policy efforts must be led by individuals and institutions that are highly skilled in operating under such difficult circumstances.

In spite of these limitations, IUCN's *Programme de l'Afrique Centrale et de l'Ouest* (PACO) has made significant contributions toward the IR2. During the course of CARPE II, resources available for this IR

have been limited, and CARPE management has only partially been able to draw in additional resources or reallocate internally. Innovative approaches such as the country team and matrix have only partially met expectations but have prepared and strengthened IUCN to build on the high level of knowledge and approaches, and logic needed to help bind together the complex and disparate pieces of such a complex program as is CARPE. IUCN is well-positioned to continue such a role, but will need to be complemented by stronger voices on the policy front if similar arrangements are carried forward in a follow-on phase. This is particularly the case if CARPE expands to include global climate change and REDD issues.

3.3 IR3: NATURAL RESOURCES MONITORING INSTITUTIONALIZED

This IR is often referred to loosely as "natural resources monitoring" in CARPE documents. Throughout CARPE II (a) and (b), the IR3 indicators used to measure this monitoring have evolved and changed, yet the activities under the IR have remained consistent. Implementing partners have shown consistent progress in increasing and improving the quantity and quality of data about the resources and the dynamics affecting the resources of the Congo Basin. Issues with the IR and its indicators were discussed in Section 1, although some issues are elaborated further in this section, which discusses IR3 results.

Confusion over the scope of IR3 is reflected in the recent CARPE publication on lessons learned wherein the CARPE monitoring and evaluation system is included in the chapter that covers lessons from the actual direct monitoring of the resources – e.g., through Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and satellite mapping of forest cover, forest concession monitoring, and wildlife monitoring – that are the focus of monitoring efforts supported under IR3. In addition to the areas covered by the case studies in CARPE Lessons Learned, CARPE II monitoring addressed bushmeat monitoring and forest degradation. Monitoring of the social aspects of natural resources management were covered in the CARPE strategic plan and are touched upon, for example, through monitoring threats in ranger based monitoring, but these have not received systematic attention in their own right.

The current set of CARPE PMP indicators demonstrate that effective monitoring systems are in place for:

- Remote sensing-based monitoring of deforestation (NASA/UMD/SDSU);
- Forest concessions, PA, other concessions;
- Illegal logging via remote-sensing-based monitoring of logging roads;
- Populations of key animal species; and
- Development of landscape-level Land Use Plans.

IR3 OUTCOMES: INDICATORS

Indicator 1 – Number of landscapes or other focal areas with forest cover assessments. This indicator has met its CARPE II targets, as all twelve landscapes possess forest cover assessments and are using them in different ways. These forest cover assessments are the product of collaboration between NASA partners to acquire and analyze satellite data to create both a baseline composite image and data set and trend data that illustrates the progression of forest loss. Recently these assessments have been used to help in Reducing Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) planning (REDD will be described in more detail in Section 3.7).

Indicator 2 – Number of CARPE countries implementing surveillance system for illegal logging. To assess the outcome of this indicator, it is important to understand that there are two main forms of illegal logging in Central Africa. The first is a more "industrial-scale" form of illegal logging involving the opening of logging roads on which trucks remove the illegally harvested logs for transport to a sawmill or directly for export. The second form is an artisanal-scale logging using chainsaws or

pitsaws and manual transport of sawn wood products out of the forest to the nearest road. WRI has developed an innovative and highly successful system for monitoring the industrial-scale illegal logging (described below) but no effective monitoring systems have been developed for artisanal-scale illegal logging, although this sector in DRC is huge.

Wherever logging roads are opened, satellite imagery can detect them. When combined with a GIS-based forest information system, the satellite detection of new logging roads provides a very innovative and effective means of detecting illegally opened logging roads. WRI has been assisting Central African forest agencies to develop such GIS-based forest information management systems. Once forest concession boundaries and the limits of annual cutting plans are entered into the GIS-based forest information system, then any new logging roads that fall outside of the approved annual cutting plan boundaries can be detected. This information can then be sent to the local forestry agents responsible for enforcement, thus enabling the field agent to directly locate the site of the illegal activity. Although the capacity for detection has been built and put in place, at this point there exists no system to ensure such information is acted upon.

This satellite-based monitoring of illegal logging, however, is probably not a function that can be easily integrated into government forest agencies. CARPE III will need to find an appropriate mechanism for institutionalizing this important new capacity.

Indicator 3 – Assessment of the capacity of Congo Basin (African) institutions (e.g. government agencies, universities and research institutions, NGOs, regional institutions) to collect and analyze information of adequate quality for decision-making. This indicator is broadly spread across nearly the entire suite of CARPE partners. The Evaluation Team finds it to be an impractical indicator. The team did not find meaningful data reported for this indicator. Generally, USAID is supporting this overall ability of institutions to collect and analyze data through training programs, through field ranger involvement in gathering data, through management systems such as Management Information Systems (MIST) and through support to the preparation of the State of the Forest report every two years. However, no mechanism has been developed for doing this assessment and the indicator does not effectively serve to tell this story.

Indicator 4 – Content/quality analysis of annual State of the Forest Report for the Congo Basin. This represents an interesting qualitative indicator that is intended to help USAID assess the extent to which African technical and policy specialists are taking ownership of the process of preparing the periodic synthesis of technical data concerning forest degradation and biodiversity trends in the Congo Basin. The assumption is that, in addition to the technical quality of such reports, it is important to track the degree to which these are being prepared by African specialists and institutions in order to ensure long-term sustainability beyond the immediate context of donor-financed projects. In the past, nearly all such reports have been prepared and published by international organizations, and little regional capacity has been developed to take over responsibility for such a function. While the indicator has not been updated to reflect its biennial nature, the team found that the most recent 2008 State of the Forest report showed increasing authorship by scholars, administrators and conservation practitioners from the region, including many women who are entering the field of conservation. This authorship by regional experts is helping to build capacity in the sub-region to monitor and report forest cover loss. Editors hired from the sub-region are now steering the production of this biennial publication. Moreover, COMIFAC has taken over authority for the State of the Forest report, which further underscores success in the transfer of the specific but overarching function of the report's synthesis. The report gives little coverage to politically sensitive issues such as the involvement of the military and government authorities in poaching, bushmeat networks and illegal logging.

MONITORING FOREST COVER: REMOTE SENSING-BASED MONITORING OF DEFORESTATION AND DEGRADATION

Deforestation rates and location are remotely monitored and reported at the Strategic Objective level. Monitoring deforestation in the Congo Basin is undertaken by CARPE crosscutting agencies NASA, UMD and SDSU using satellite imagery. Forest cover loss can be monitored quite accurately from cloud-free satellite imagery, although such cloud-free imagery is relatively rare for western Central Africa, especially for Gabon. Establishing a baseline rate for deforestation requires two cloud-free images obtained several years apart for each area on the ground. For lack of cloud free images, the baseline deforestation rate is not quite complete for all nine countries covered by CARPE.

Monitoring of forest cover loss is being institutionalized with the work by OSFAC and soon by the Forest Observatory for Central Africa under COMIFAC.

MONITORING CONCESSIONS: FORESTS, PROTECTED AREAS, CBNRM AND MINING

As mentioned above under the indicator for monitoring illegal logging, WRI is providing direct institutional support for national forestry services in the development of GIS-based forest information systems for the logging concessions in each country.

WRI developed a prototype forest information management system in Cameroon prior to Phase II of CARPE through their Global Forest Watch initiative. This system uses a web-based GIS that was developed to continuously monitor all commercial forestry concessions. Forest ministry staff is trained to run the information management system. Implementation of the system works like this: First, forest concession boundaries are updated by the forest service. Second, logging companies are required to draft forest management plans for each concession. Logging is then carried out in conformity with the management plans. Under CARPE, this model has been improved upon and replicated in the forestry services of several CARPE countries. When the data set for a given country is completed, the country is equipped with a formal interactive web-based atlas containing all information required to monitor all logging concessions in the country. This interactive forest atlases are intended to reinforce good practices and to highlight possible illegal exploitation, and these atlases are being developed to guide decision makers, such as members of parliament, in each country.

WRI has already integrated the boundaries of all protected areas into the forest information systems in each country where they are working, and CBNRM areas can easily be added as they are created in the future. Boundaries of mining prospecting permits and mining concessions could also be integrated wherever the ministry of mines would be willing to release this information.

The forest information management systems are being directly institutionalized in the forest service of each participating country. Increasingly, logging companies are required to submit their annual cutting plans in GIS format that can be directly integrated into these systems.

MONITORING KEY SPECIES

Another variable being monitored by CARPE NGO partners is the population density of key animal species in a forest. These surveys focus primarily on high profile species such as elephants, gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos. Such surveys require specialized expertise and are costly and thus can only be done infrequently. Landscape partners maintain that CARPE funding for surveys has been insufficient. To detect trends, they need to be very well done with a confidence interval that is inferior to the size of the change that is being measured. Such inventories can provide one of the most direct measures of the conservation of biodiversity, and the environmental NGOs have the specialized expertise needed for such surveys.

Some capacity for such surveys exists in specialized research institutes or at universities, and such capacities could be enhanced. The possibility of institutionalizing the costs of such surveys is a much more difficult question. This monitoring is very important to conduct during the life of CARPE to quantify the impact of CARPE conservation strategies, but one should not expect it to be fully

institutionalized by the end of CARPE III. One should build national and regional capacities for this type of monitoring, but it would be unrealistic to expect much of it to be funded locally.

MONITORING ZONING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LAND USE PLANNING

The CARPE staff in the Kinshasa, DRC office is closely monitoring the development of landscape-level land use plans and the development of management plans for PA, ERZ and CBNRM macro-zones. The final chapter of this report includes a number of recommendations for how the monitoring of the macro-zones might be improved. The possibilities for institutionalizing the monitoring of the landscapes will need to be explored during CARPE III. Possibilities exist with RAPAC, the Forest Observatory for Central Africa, COMIFAC and others.

ATTEMPTED MONITORING OF THE BUSHMEAT TRADE AND FOREST DEGRADATION

CARPE did not succeed in developing an effective system for monitoring the bushmeat trade as was originally envisioned, and the monitoring of populations of key species in the landscapes is not a substitute. Bushmeat tracking systems had been pioneered under CARPE with support of the Bushmeat Crisis taskforce and USFWS, but this central effort was abandoned in the second half of CARPE II. More localized monitoring is carried out by some landscape consortia.

Forest degradation is much more difficult to detect and monitor from satellite imagery. This is unfortunate because the Strategic Objective is stated as, "Reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity". The harvest of widely-spaced individual trees that characterizes logging on most forest concessions can be detected shortly after the logging takes place if cloud-free imagery is obtained at the right time. However, within two years the forest recovers sufficiently so that this can no longer be detected. With cloud free imagery at a premium, this type of monitoring cannot be made operational at this time. For the same reasons, forest degradation caused by illegal artisanal logging that does not involve the opening of new logging roads cannot be monitored remotely. It is not known if future advances in technology will lead to significant improvements in the ability to monitor forest degradation.

3.4 SO: REDUCTION OF THE RATE OF FOREST DEGRADATION AND LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY

The two SO indicators from the 2008 PMP are the following:

Indicator 1: Change in area of forest from intact/pristine to "degraded," modified, or secondary forest or to non-forest; and from "degraded" forest to non-forest.

Indicator 2: Population status for selected biodiversity "indicator" species such as: wide-ranging "landscape" species and/or ecological keystone species (e.g. elephants, large predators) and/or globally threatened species (such as, mountain gorillas, bonobos, etc.).

IMPACT OF CARPE ON DEFORESTATION AND DEGRADATION

There has been not yet been any effective monitoring of deforestation during the life of CARPE that would indicate whether or not CARPE has had an impact on deforestation rates. However, such monitoring results should become available over the next few months.

As we have shown in Section 3.3, there is no effective system for monitoring forest degradation at the scale of the landscape or the Congo Basin. Therefore, CARPE has been unable to monitor the change from intact/pristine to "degraded" or from "degraded" to non-forest.

However, CARPE has a system developed and implemented by NASA/UMD/SDSU for monitoring *deforestation*, and they have measured deforestation rates under their Decadal Forest Change Mapping Project for landscapes and for the whole basin between approximately 1990 and 2000 (the dates are approximate because they vary for each site as a function of cloud cover and image availability). The

deforestation rate inside the landscapes for this period as measured by this project[25] was 0.023% per year and the rate outside the landscapes was 0.206% per year. Of course, the landscapes were not defined until after 2000 and CARPE II did not begin until 2003, so this is not a measure of the impact of CARPE. The difference probably just reflects differences in population density, with the landscapes being, in general, more thinly populated than the Basin as a whole, with fewer people practicing slash-and-burn agriculture.

For the landscapes, another comparison of deforestation rates was done between the period from 1990 to 2000 and from 2000 to 2005. The change in deforestation rates per year varies enormously amongst the landscapes from -80% to +231%. The average change is an increase of +1.2%, which – out of a rate of 0.023% – is essentially no change at all. Again, this cannot be construed as a measure of the impact of CARPE on deforestation because the midpoint of the period 2000-2005 is approximately the same as the startup time for CARPE. Also, one would expect deforestation rates in the landscapes to be relatively low based on the criteria used for the identification of the landscapes. Furthermore, the web page for the Decadal Forest Change Mapping Project on the CARPE web site has not been updated since June 16, 2008.

USAID/CARPE expects to receive updated deforestation rates from NASA/UMD/SDSU by the end of 2010 for the period 2000 to 2010. This should provide the first meaningful measure of the impact of CARPE II on deforestation rates. Of course, the results must always be interpreted with care when they become available because of the complex factors that influence deforestation rates. Also, measuring deforestation is a "post mortem" indicator, and it does little to predict where trends are heading in the future.

However, looking at this from another perspective, CARPE has done a great deal to create **the enabling conditions** for reduced deforestation. In order to control deforestation and to ensure the protection or sustainable use of natural resources, one must have an empowered management authority and a management system. CARPE has supported the management of PA and the constructive engagement in forest concessions, and the program is actively supporting the development and implementation of management plans for PA and managed natural forests in logging concession. CARPE has played a strong role in creating the enabling conditions for the control and reduction of deforestation and/or degradation of forests in PA and in many of the logging concessions in the 12 landscapes. CARPE is also creating these conditions for CBNRM macro-zones in Cameroon, and it has generally not been successful in doing this for CBNRM macro-zones in other countries.

IMPACT OF CARPE ON THE STATUS OF INDICATOR SPECIES

Biodiversity is notoriously difficult to monitor. CARPE chose the monitoring of the populations of key indicator species of wildlife, especially elephants and great apes, as one of the two key SO indicators. Although this is expensive and can only be done at infrequent intervals, it is probably a good indicator of forest ecosystem degradation and loss of biodiversity. Results of this monitoring of key indicator species are presented in a CARPE document called Briefing Paper CARPE/CBFP Funding and Achievements FY 08/09 Appropriations. Out of 78 studies in CARPE landscapes, 11 showed no appreciable change (less than the 20% increase or decrease that one would expect to find under natural variability), 22 showed negative change and 45 showed positive change in populations of the key species. What these studies show is a strong overall positive trend for key wildlife species inside the landscapes, and this presents evidence for a positive impact of CARPE on biodiversity conservation. However, these findings are not the result of a systematic Meta analysis of existing survey results. It has been suggested to CARPE that the most appropriate means of rigorously looking at the impact of the program based on surveys of signs/species should involve the short term engagement of appropriate external expertise (which may exist within partner organizations already).

[25] Briefing Paper CARPE/CBFP Funding and Achievements FY 08/09 Appropriations.

There are no study controls from outside the landscapes, but there is widespread evidence that market hunting is reducing – and sometimes decimating – wildlife, often in very remote areas. People frequently speak of the "empty forest syndrome" and bushmeat hunters who walk for one or two days or more before they find anything worth hunting.

STRENGTHS

Approximately 30,000 persons have been trained in various thematic areas under CARPE; in fact, CARPE has had the largest training program of any regional project in Central Africa. A bit timid before 2005, landscape lead organizations' and federal agencies' efforts to achieve capacity-building objectives was meaningfully invigorated under CARPE II (b). There has been a wide diversity of training activities in all the landscapes and capital cities.

Capacity-building themes/domains have included land use planning and micro-zoning; monitoring of the loss of forest cover; remote sensing monitoring, data collection in forest concessions; forest certification; monitoring of illegal logging; monitoring of animal species and the evolution of wildlife populations; and use of satellite images for the development of the interactive forest atlases. Training programs/sessions were developed and conducted by WRI, OSFAC, NASA, UMD, SDSU, USFS, USWFS, management units consultancy firms, NGOs, etc. The beneficiaries have been agents of ministries in charge of forests and wildlife, ministries of health, ICCN and other country-level conservation agencies, and OSFAC, as well as regional scientists, university students, logging companies' mid-level and senior staff, NGO staff, etc.

Through their participation in COMIFAC, WWF and WCS have contributed to REDD negotiations in the Congo Basin and have helped prepare proposals for REDD funds at the country level (Cameroon, CAR, DRC, Gabon, and ROC). WWF helped some private sector members to measure carbon stocks, and with the support of CARPE/IUCN, WWF also helped develop training modules on wildlife legislation intended for universities in Cameroon. Furthermore, about sixty percent of the IUCN/CARPE small grants have been devoted to capacity building activities.

At the local level, CARPE and its partners have contributed to the strengthening of the capacities of local NGOs and CBOs in a variety of skill areas like GIS, participatory mapping of community lands, development of alternative livelihoods, micro-project management, information collection, generation and sharing, environmental education, etc. Ministries of health staff have also been involved in capacity building in HIV prevention in forestry towns such as Kika and Pokola in the TNS Landscape. The Population, Health, and Environment program in Salonga also provides a good example of leveraging complementary support and innovative approaches to make conservation more relevant and responsive to local needs, recognize the linkage between family health and the environment, etc. Also, AWF has launched a program of conflict resolution skills intended for PAtaff and eco-guards at MLW.

In itself, the CARPE Lessons Learned volume is a result of capacity building in information sharing.

WEAKNESSES

The effectiveness of capacity building has not been measured, as the number of persons trained gives little indication of the effectiveness of the training. To be effective, capacity building programs should lead to change in skills and attitudes likely to lead to the achievement of the CARPE strategic objective.

Additionally, little has been done to increase capacities on a wide range of crucial issues including: strategic analysis; advocacy and policy influence strategies; power negotiation; CBNRM design and implementation; design of monitoring tools for ERZ and CBNRM; and others.

Figure 5. ICCN Ecoguards for Lomako Yokokala Faunal Reserve at Lingunda

3.5 CONTRIBUTIONS TO BUSHMEAT STRATEGIES

CURRENT STATE OF NATIONAL BUSHMEAT STRATEGIES

CARPE has made good localized progress towards controlling the market hunting for bushmeat in certified forests/logging concessions but little progress in dealing with the overall bushmeat crisis in Central Africa. The bushmeat market chain represents a huge economic venture that reaches into the most remote corners of the Central African rainforest in order to supply the explosive growth in demand from Central African urban centers and beyond (see Figure 6). In many rural areas, hunting for bushmeat markets is one of the only sources of cash income (or barter). Bushmeat is also aggressively hunted for protein in local diets, especially in areas of conflict, resource extraction and rural unemployment. In areas where bushmeat commerce is one of the only economic opportunities, less bushmeat protein is going to the family. This makes it not only a biodiversity issue but increasingly a health and nutrition problem. Disease transmission is another issue. Traditional management systems and traditional controls over hunting have broken down. Market hunting for bushmeat is out of control and is having a huge impact on biodiversity, including the biodiversity of many protected areas. Nearly all species of animals are hunted for their meat. In most countries, military leaders and/or government authorities and other active and decommissioned personnel are involved in the bushmeat trade, including the supply of arms and ammunition.

A number of CARPE countries have prepared – or are preparing – national bushmeat strategies, and CARPE partners have usually participated in the preparation of these strategies. Such national strategies generally deal with the market chain for bushmeat but do relatively little for the productive base of the supply side of the market chain. Bushmeat strategies generally include measures for strengthening legal frameworks, enhanced enforcement of laws governing hunting and marketing, awareness-raising at various levels, development of economic alternatives to hunting, development of alternative sources of animal protein (usually through animal husbandry), and efforts to change food preferences away from bushmeat to other alternative sources of protein. There have been no clear-cut success stories to date from these strategy elements.[26]

Although the focus of CARPE IR1 is on the sustainable management of natural resources, national bushmeat strategies have generally given little or no attention to the strategy of developing wildlife management with controlled marketing of bushmeat as an option for putting bushmeat markets on a sustainable basis. For example, Gabon has a full draft national bushmeat strategy, and wildlife management is not included as a strategic option. The idea of legalizing the sale of bushmeat tends to be a very polarizing issue that elicits strong emotions. Some people believe that legalizing the trade in bushmeat would make the situation totally uncontrollable. Others believe the situation is already largely out of control, and that community-based sustainable wildlife management may be the only way to regain control of the situation.

HUNTING CONTROLS IN MANAGED FORESTS

CARPE partners have worked closely with certified logging companies to develop controls over market hunting in their concessions. This generally involves the recruitment of eco-guards who are paid by the logging company, and the main means of control are vehicle inspections by these guards to ensure that logging trucks and other vehicles are not transporting bushmeat. In the CIB concessions in northern ROC, a wildlife management plan was prepared by WCS with USFWS funding, and limited controlled hunting by logging company employees is allowed in areas of the concession that are zoned for this. In the Kabo concession, the Evaluation Team questioned several different villagers seeking to determine if the eco-guard system has been "corrupted" but found no evidence in the affirmative. Logging companies throughout the basin are involved in supporting anti-poaching operations; some mining and petroleum companies such as Shell® in Gamba also support hunting controls. CARPE partners have supported alternative protein production or importation to reduce the company employee demand for bushmeat. In Salonga, the *Société de Développement Forestier* (SODEFOR – Forest Development Corporation) is interested in purchasing livestock from local communities. They are also requesting WWF's assistance with local communities to look at other food provisioning as well as assistance in controlling bushmeat transport on their barges and other transportation networks.

CARPE partner experience affirms that – on balance – the opening of forests to extractive industries draws people and urban growth. Markets usually develop to the detriment of forest wildlife.[27] Private companies, projects and collaborating authorities can achieve localized controls over uncontrolled bushmeat hunting, but the problems resurface where concentrated and sustained efforts are not in place. Although longer distance transport systems are more difficult to control, WCS has had some success with CAMRAIL (the company operating the Cameroon National Railway) outside the CARPE zone; and, with CARPE support, Gabon has outlawed transport of bushmeat on the country's rail system.

[26] Outside of CARPE, WCS reports greatly reduced marketing of bushmeat in an area where the rail lines – as the principal transport link – were closely monitored.

[27] The team visited the remote area of Lomako in the MLW landscape where landscape lead Jef Dupain underscored the geographic pervasiveness of urban influences, citing studies suggesting that 30% of the bushmeat found in the regional Basankusu market had its origin in the remote area in and around the new Lomako-Yokokala Reserve. Additionally, bushmeat from the area is apparently prevalent in the more distant Mbandaku market as well.

SPORT HUNTING

As previously cited, the one country where CARPE landscape partners have developed community-based wildlife management systems is Cameroon, and it is done for sport hunting. There are community-managed safari hunting areas in the humid forested Cameroonian sections of TNS and TRIDOM. CAR also has ten community-managed safari hunting zones in their northern savanna ecosystems, although these zones were not a CARPE initiative. The zones have functioned for 15 years and now enjoy the highest density of large ungulate populations in the country. Controlled sport hunting, with low offtake and tighter management regimes, is a very different form of land use than the pervasive uncontrolled exploitation of bushmeat for commercial markets with which it actually competes.

POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

A component of the bushmeat problem revolves around cross-border trade in high volumes of bushmeat, yet there are essentially no laws or policies in place to control this trade in bushmeat (or other forest resources). Since many of the core areas of concentrated biodiversity straddle country borders in the region, the absence of sub-regional laws prevents the harmonization and coordination of control activities. Substantial efforts to control this have been made at TNS and continue to expand with partners such as the Last Great Ape Organization (LAGA). Trans-boundary anti-poaching is well coordinated in TNS and exists in other landscapes such as TRIDOM. Such initiatives, however, are the exception, and most of the cross-border trade is largely uncontrolled. WRI, through its Global Forest Watch activities and interactive atlases, has begun working with ministry officials in some countries to pursue illegal bushmeat traffic, resulting in some convictions. USFWS uses funds transferred from CARPE to its Great Apes fund to support transparency through civic action and media, directing public pressure and attention toward conviction and deterrence even of high ranking officials. And awareness can make a difference; for example, *Réseau de Femmes Africaines pour le Développement Durable* (REFADD – the Network of African Women for Sustainable Development) claims some success in translating bushmeat laws and regulations into local languages and assisting in their dissemination. In Ituri-Epulu-Aru Landscape, these efforts resulted in local communities identifying okapi hunters who were later prosecuted.

3.6 CONTRIBUTIONS TO CLIMATE MITIGATION POLICIES

This evaluation examines how CARPE contributes to climate change policies in the different Congo Basin countries and also looks toward what CARPE can do in the future, based on what needs to be done now, regarding climate mitigation.

The CARPE program actively supports global climate change mitigation through the evolving REDD process. REDD – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in developing countries – was introduced in 2005 at the United Nations' Conference of the Parties in Montreal and has gained substance and support in the past two years, particularly in the period leading up to and through the Copenhagen meetings on climate change. The CARPE II Strategic Plan, which predates REDD, recognizes the growing threat of atmospheric carbon, and – noting the role of forest management – suggests that "carbon trading possibilities may offer new economic incentives to keep some central African forests intact."

Concern with climate change has been an implicit and sometimes explicit factor in forest conservation activities supported by USAID in Central Africa since the first phase of CARPE. At the outset of the first phase of the program, USAID and USFS carried out an initial desk review as part of the baseline assessment.[28] This review identified the vast forest reserves of Central Africa as the most important sub-region of Africa for sequestering carbon. Maintaining the carbon "sink" potential of the region was –

[28] Job, D.A. 1994. Global Climate Change, Natural Resources Management, and Biodiversity Conservation in the Congo Basin: A Preliminary Literature Review. Consultant Report. United States Forest Service, International Forest Section.

and continues to be – an important objective of USAID's climate change program. CARPE did not have any direct or formal mandate to work on climate mitigation. However, through its efforts to conserve biodiversity in tropical forests, CARPE has been at the forefront of climate change mitigation through enhancement of carbon stocks of the forests under protected area and sustainable use regimes.

Because CARPE II has been fully funded from earmarked biodiversity funds, the climate change activities have been undertaken to the extent that they are compatible with biodiversity funding criteria. The direct but uneasy link between biodiversity conservation and global climate change, referred to by one observer as "twins separated at birth" (Naeem, 2010) is a challenge that CARPE has attempted to meet by looking at the scope for integration. In fact, the biodiversity earmark has limited the scope of climate change activities thus far. CARPE and its partners have worked through local stakeholders, including indigenous populations, and use local and national planning processes to identify ways to limit deforestation by strengthening trends towards monetizing forest carbon. Studies have also been supported to determine the effects climate change might have in the region. Analyses show that without the Congo Basin forest, climatic patterns in the region would be severely altered and could lead to drought and major increases in temperature. As new funding becomes available that is directly linked to forest conservation or "sustainable landscapes," CARPE's climate change activities will require new strategic guidance.

That said, the focus on global climate change and the preparation for REDD and/or REDD+ (which will be described in more detail below) programming is already modifying the situation in the Congo Basin.

CARPE's contributions to climate mitigation measures can be summarized as follows:

- Forest cover baseline maps and capacities developed for monitoring forest cover loss are very important for REDD/climate mitigation measures.
- The strengthening of PA management, forest concession management and CBNRM all serve to bring previously unmanaged lands under the control of a management authority and serve to improve the sustainability of natural resource management. The enhanced knowledge base and formalization of management units paves the way to conserving and building carbon stocks.
- Strengthened CBNRM and local land use management capacities. To be effective, future carbon credits need to provide real benefits to the local populations who threaten the forest through slash-and-burn agriculture and uncontrolled artisanal logging. For carbon credits to be effective on community lands, local populations need to have representative structures empowered to control land/resources within well-defined agreed-upon boundaries and must have internal governance capacities to control the access and use of their land and resources – most of the same things that are needed for CBNRM. Future use of carbon credits on community lands will involve different forms of revenue sharing at the community level. Building present-day capacities for transparent, equitable revenue sharing is therefore critical to the future use of carbon credits.
- Zoning to constrain slash-and-burn is a promising measure to reduce loss of carbon stocks; this is an important part of land use zoning for Maringa-Lopori-Wamba. Its use needs to be monitored closely, and safeguards need to be built in to avoid a "land rush" mentality with those who have access to land within the area zoned for agriculture competing to be the first to clear land in order to establish traditional land tenure. Such a land rush may have taken place in the community development zone (*serie du développement communautaire*) created in the CIB concession next to Pokola in TNS in northern ROC.

CARPE actively participates in the REDD+ activities that aim to enhance forest carbon stocks through:

(1) Maintaining or improving forest carbon sequestration and sinks;

(2) Improving sustainable forest management (increasing carbon density per hectare) through, for example, certification of forest concessions and empowerment of local community forest management; and
(3) Dialog with responsible government bodies.

CARBON SEQUESTRATION OR SINKS

Tropical deforestation and forest degradation contribute to global warming[29] at a rate estimated at between 14 and 20% of all global greenhouse gas emissions.

Forests – in both above ground biomass and in soils – sequester significant amounts of the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide (CO_2), from the atmosphere. Huge amounts of carbon are stored in mature forests in the Congo Basin[30] and slash-and-burn practices of local communities in the Congo Basin release this carbon and contribute to emissions of CO_2.

Avoided and reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation, forest conservation and sustainable forest management are all together referred to as REDD+. Financial incentives are being developed to fund strategies and activities that reduce emissions through (a) the maintenance of standing forests through conservation and sustainable use or (b) the creation of new forests on non-forested or degraded land. The mechanisms of REDD+ are already being implemented at a local scale under voluntary standards on the principle that somebody is willing to pay for the environmental service of carbon sequestration. Increasingly, green labeling, corporate marketing, polluters under external pressure, motivated individuals and corporations are willing to pay for forest products of forests that practice conservation and sustainable use. There is now a recognized international market for trading emission reductions and carbon sequestration, also referred to as carbon credits. These carbon markets are expected to expand in the post-Copenhagen context.

Preparation to enter these markets is underway and several Central African countries (such as DRC, Cameroon, Gabon, and ROC) have written and submitted proposals with the World Bank Department of Carbon Finance for the preparation of their REDD strategies and plans during the forthcoming three years (USAID is gearing up to provide similar assistance to developing countries). Essentially, this involves establishing a national or regional accounting system that: tracks the amount of carbon stored in forests; protects threatened and intact forests alike; and establishes local models where stakeholders are all appropriately recognized and incorporated into the framework.

From a climate change perspective, there is a growing awareness of the need to (a) estimate and (b) maintain or increase levels of carbon stocks in the Congo Basin. Following Copenhagen, the USG reiterated its commitment to reduce illegal logging. CARPE, anticipating the growing importance of maintaining or increasing carbon stocks, commissioned a study using the USFS PASA mechanism. The ensuing report[31] underscores potential compatibility between CARPE-supported forest zoning and the implementation of a national REDD+ strategy. USAID has indicated that future CARPE funding will likely be linked to so-called "sustainable landscape" funding, which supports the United States' post-Copenhagen commitment to the REDD+ process. The agreement on REDD+ and other related land uses in Copenhagen suggests a longer lead time and focus on national REDD readiness ahead of specific field "demonstration" projects.

In sum, the concept of REDD+ is a new element in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Actual definitions and regulations for REDD+ are being negotiated with forest ministries, and COMIFAC is playing an important role.

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[29] United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, 2005. Discussion continues with the respect to an overall rate, but 17% is frequently used now.
[30] Laporte, N.T. et al., Science 316, 1451 (2007).
[31] Sidle, John G. *Mission to Support Forest Zoning Ministry of Environment, Conservation of Nature, and Tourism.* USAID/CARPE: April 2010.

REDUCED DEFORESTATION THROUGH FSC CERTIFICATION

Some logging companies work with landscape partners to participate in CARPE LUP and macro-zoning exercises for landscapes. Two examples include CIB in Congo's TNS Landscape and CBG and *Société Nationale des Bois du Gabon* in Gabon's Gamba Complex. They made considerable efforts and incurred costs to go through the FSC certification process for sustainable forest management on their concessions.

Under certified management, third-party verification that establishes the legality of forest products also offers a valuable tool to reduce emissions from illegal deforestation. When combined with legislation and enforcement that discourages the trade of illegal forest products – such as the 2008 Lacey Act amendment in the United States and the European Union's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, the result is greater transparency in forest management, also necessary for the effective functioning of the United Nation's Program for REDD+. The additional monitoring activities can engender the creation of forest reserves, which are found in the CIB Kabo concession's conservation/wildlife management plan. Also, sustainable forest management practices, as opposed to conventional logging, reduces carbon emissions and promotes regeneration, which can actually result in net carbon sequestration when carbon from timber products are not quickly returned to the atmosphere.

Calculation of carbon benefits requires additional capability outside the competence of FSC certification but the scope for complementary action is already in place through CARPE's support of NGOs who work with logging companies to improve practices. CARPE has supported Payment for Environmental Services activities with some CARPE partners such as WWF by introducing carbon credits into Payment for Environmental Services mechanisms.

Information collected by CARPE partners is forming the backbone for the biennial State of the Forest reporting. Generally, editors from the sub-region are hired to write these reports by country using CARPE-generated information on forest cover, forest tenure, planning status and other variables important to REDD+. National experts drawn from forestry departments contribute to different sections of the State of the Forest reports. These publications are used as input for decision makers to allow them to develop sound climate change policies, and CARPE uses the reports as part of its dissemination on REDD+ in the Congo Basin.

REDUCED DEFORESTATION USING COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Community-based natural forest management and community-based wildlife management are both self-financing economic activities that also conserve biodiversity and conserve forest carbon stocks. These two types of CBNRM are developed and operational in Cameroon, and both have very broad potential for replication and adaptation in Central African forests.

Existing CARPE macro-zones could be adapted for use as local units for carbon marketing. Although the match with appropriate units for monitoring carbon may not always be perfect, many are well-suited without modification. As they become more generally adopted, CARPE could also assist by explicitly creating units under which carbon projects can be developed. To some degree, CARPE partners are already beginning to do this on an individual, case-by-case basis. These units are consistent with low carbon economic strategies in the countries.

CARPE is part of the study of standing carbon stocks in the Congo basin, especially the WCS-Smithsonian forest plots in the Ituri landscape and the more recent plots in the Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru landscape where there are plots established in secondary forests, mature forests outside PA, and PA forests.

COUNTRY SPECIFIC PLANS

To date there has not been much direct participation of CARPE in the formulation of country adaptation strategies, but CARPE partners are being engaged by others in the REDD readiness preparation. In 2009 and 2010, CARPE partners contributed to the formulation of REDD readiness and planning proposals with World Bank Carbon Finance in different countries (DRC, Cameroon, and Congo). These plans, when completed, would enable countries to make sound climate change mitigation policies. CARPE NGOs through COMIFAC and CBFP helped Congo Basin negotiators in the climate change talks to prepare themselves and draw a common position for these countries.

CARPE partners support standardization of forest resource inventories across countries in the region, and these inventories generate comparable information to measure the levels of carbon stocks by countries in the basin. In Tayna, students at UGADEC have been trained in conservation and PA management as well as in carbon stock assessment. There has also been training on this subject for ICCN and students/faculty from the University of Kisangani carried out by WCS in the Ituri Landscape

CONCLUSION

There is a growing need to (a) estimate and (b) maintain or increase levels of carbon stocks in the Congo Basin. CARPE should continue to position itself to participate actively in this process by building on existing strengths and investments. CARPE and its implementing partners have relevant expertise to monitor and calculate levels of carbon stocks in the Congo Basin and to monitor changes to these levels over time. Although there is relatively little focus on field level interventions at present, CARPE's greatest competitive advantage for climate mitigation strategies over the mid-term is in the area of developing field capacities for deferred deforestation through PA management, natural forest management and CBNRM.

3.7 INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND WOMEN

INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Strengths

CARPE and its partners have involved REPALAC in workshops and meetings, and Focal Points are very familiar with REPALAC and have enhanced the visibility of its coordinator. Under CARPE II (b), three indigenous peoples' community networks have benefited from small grants. The CARPE Focal Point in DRC has provided essential financial and technical support to REPALAC for setting up its organizational structure and action plan. CARPE partners have also provided financial and technical support to the organization of the first International Forum for the Indigenous Peoples (Autochthones) of Central Africa (FIPAC) in ROC in 2008.

In ROC and Cameroon, CARPE Focal Points and landscape leaders have contributed to the development and adoption of, respectively, the Law on the Semi-Mobile People and the Development Plan for Indigenous Populations. Both these actions acknowledge the special status of indigenous peoples and the need for specific measures to safeguard their legitimate rights with respect to forest resources.

Weaknesses

Despite notable exceptions, little has been done to systematically integrate indigenous peoples across the full spectrum of CARPE initiatives, although they are the most forest-dependent peoples of the sub-region. LUP operations, for example, were generally conducted without their involvement.

"The forest is our supermarket and drugstore. It is the same thing like when you people go to supermarkets and drugstores in towns. All of what is done in the forest without us is finally done against us […] CARPE should consider us as allies because over centuries we have been doing what it is trying to do now. We are – more than anyone else – the first persons to be concerned by the deforestation and the loss of biodiversity."

Source: Interview with Kapupu Diwa, REPALAC Coordinator, Kinshasa, August 19, 2010

Implementing partners have made few efforts to document the traditional conservation and resource management systems of indigenous peoples and to integrate these traditional systems into their conservation strategies. Environmental NGOs have done little to establish alliances with the indigenous peoples.

The Evaluation Team is not aware of any specific initiatives that focus indigenous peoples and biodiversity conservation but believes such initiatives should be undertaken. Problems relating to the marginalization of indigenous peoples in benefit sharing (e.g., the redistribution of forestry and wildlife revenue in the TRIDOM and TNS Landscapes) have not been appropriately addressed either by the landscape leaders, their local partners or CARPE/IUCN and its advocacy network.

INTEGRATION OF WOMEN

Strengths

The Assessment of Gender Issues, Potentials and Opportunities carried out for the CARPE Program in 2002 identified several sets of gender-related issues that have influenced the work of CARPE. They include: inheritance rules; education; employment/promotion opportunities; informal sector involvement; ethnicity and religion; and conflict situations.

CARPE and its implementing partners have been "sensitive" to gender issues. Though not well structured, reference is made and attention paid to the gender dimension of natural resources management with, for instance, frequent reference to the crucial role of women in managing natural resources.

Baseline studies have been conducted in order to generate strategic information likely to be incorporated in potential gender-based programmatic agendas. Though very geographically isolated and not systematized, development NGOs – such as the African Institute for Economic and Social Development (INADES), CARE (the Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere), the Netherlands Development Organizations (SNV), and Pact – have conducted thematic gender-based case studies (e.g., exploitation of non-timber forest products, contribution to bushmeat trade, and contribution to income generation) in a number of landscapes, including TRIDOM, TNS, Ituri, and others).

Numerous capacity building sessions at the local level – on alternative livelihoods and micro-project management, e.g., in MLW, TNS, Gamba Complex, Virungas, Lac Tumba, etc., – were oriented towards women. The CARPE Program has increased the institutional capacity of REFADD, for example, which in turn has carried out numerous activities to strengthen the position of women in resource management – such as translating forest laws into local languages and educating women on their rights using these materials. In addition, some women's organizations/networks are parts of landscape consortia (e.g., Tayna, Monte Alen-Mont de Cristal and Salonga Landscapes). Support is provided to women's livelihoods initiatives, such as in the Gamba Complex with WCS and with small animal husbandry in Tayna Landscape). An extensive program on women's saving and credit schemes, and women's literacy groups has been developed in the Ituri Landscape

CARPE initiatives have recognized and built on the following lessons learned:

- Recognizing the importance of promoting gender equity in its strategy on the empowerment of civil society organizations.
- Supporting two key partner women's organizations, REFADD and the Center for Support to Rural Women (CAFER), through mentoring and training.
- Recognizing the importance of women in the bushmeat trade and raising their awareness of the laws pertaining to bushmeat within the Congo Basin.

Additionally, many implementing partner NGOs employ local women and attempt to lead by example. Women work in protected areas as eco-guards, researchers, and, increasingly, in professional roles. About one-third of trainees in 2010 in CARPE-supported training programs have been women. The Tayna Center for Conservation Biology, launched with CARPE support, has trained several hundred conservation scientists, about 20% of whom are women. Similarly, 60 of OSFAC's first 400 trainees were women. WWF has a complementary program with non-CARPE funding to provide scholarships for women from the Congo Basin.

Weaknesses

The original CARPE Project Paper submitted to USAID's Africa Bureau in September 1995 addressed human resource use, household livelihoods, employment and politics. However, there was almost no mention of gender issues or women, nor is there much analysis of social groups and civil society organizations. People's motivations to deforest, collect non-timber forest products, or hunt were not given much attention.

Despite the existence of isolated actions, there is no specific gender-based approach within CARPE. Alternative livelihood initiatives recorded in the field are more a kind of "socio-economic assistance" to women and are not supported by a vision of ownership or empowerment. CARPE has not developed gender-specific strategies for addressing issues such as CBNRM, local institutional arrangements or the bushmeat trade, and the contribution of women in these areas is crucial. CARPE and its partners have not examined the structure of gender relations in natural resource governance, and there is no clear strategy to institutionalize women's rights of access to or control of land where power relations have characteristically disfavored women. These issues require deeper examination both at national and landscape levels. CBNRM is the CARPE component where better integration of gender issues offers the greatest potential for major, positive impacts for women, society and the resources under management. Unfortunately, CBNRM has been the weakest component of CARPE, and the potential for gender integration has scarcely been tested.

Data on capacity building activities conducted by IUCN/CARPE show that the number of men trained had been 10 times superior to the number of women (e.g. in Cameroon, the ratio was 151/11 in 2008), but this ratio was reduced to 2/1 in 2010. CARPE and its partners have had the tendency to consider women as a homogenous group, ignoring the fact that women fall into different categories, with the most vulnerable being women who are the heads of households.

Very few of the CARPE small grants have focused on social issues or have addressed gender issues. The grant proposal requirements do not require a discussion of how gender issues will be addressed. Two grants have been given to CAFER, which is a Cameroonian NGO working on women and forest conservation issues and providing environmental education and alternative livelihood activities for women who are involved in the bushmeat trade.

Figure 7. ICCN Ecoguard at Lomako Yokokala

Evidence that women were considered a specific interest group within the CARPE program is limited, and women remain a vulnerable group in the domain of natural resources management. War, population

dislocation and abuse have prevented normal program efforts in some parts of the basin. Given the fact that women in the landscapes are less educated and have relatively poor access to communication, more comprehensive actions could have been taken to ensure that specific programs were directed towards them. Illustratively, the Congo Basin Information Series, CARPE's premier publication about the lessons learned during its first six years, has very little information on gender and social issues.

3.8 DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

The Evaluation Team has analyzed the extent to which CARPE has created the enabling conditions for achieving its SO and IRs. Enabling conditions are analyzed from the following perspectives:

1) Legal framework;
2) Economic and financial conditions;
3) Social conditions; and
4) Political conditions.

PROTECTED AREAS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

Here, the legal framework is relatively solid. The sustainability of PA financing is largely dependent on donor funding and will probably stay that way for the foreseeable future. The potential for ecotourism to make significant contributions to PA financing in a world at or near Peak Oil is quite problematic. Habituated gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos can be significant attractions for a few select sites, but in general, Central Africa is a relatively expensive, distant destination; also, infrastructure is sorely lacking, and the political instabilities of the region combine to present a complex of significant constraints. Also, there is rapidly growing evidence that the world is at or near the peak in the world production of petroleum. When oil production goes into decline, the entire world's economy will suffer and the tourism sector can be expected to the one of the hardest hit. Financing of PA is closely linked to political support, which is variable from one country to another. Some Central African leaders see support for PA and nature conservation as a means of garnishing their international image – Gabon is an example. The support of lower level politicians is much more problematic. The lack of controls over poaching rings controlled by military officers and government authorities is an indicator of the fragility of political support for PA and wildlife conservation.

Attempts are made to increase the support of local populations for PA, but conservation of the protected areas is generally strongly dependent on guards and enforcement. More must be done to develop PA into economic assets that benefit local communities. This potential may be greatest on those relatively accessible sites where flagship species can be habituated for tourism development, but this cannot be generalized. Carbon credits may eventually present a more generalized option for PA financing and for revenue sharing.

ERZ AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

The most important enabling condition for the development of natural forest management in logging concessions and the certification of managed forests has been the passage and enforcement of FLEGT in Europe and the Lacey Act in the US. Logging companies that market their products in Europe are being forced to develop forest management systems for their concessions. The COMIFAC Convergence Plan strengthens and consolidates earlier initiatives that would oblige member countries to require the development of forest management plans for all logging concessions and national legislation is moving in that direction. The economic and financial conditions for forest management and certification have taken a setback with the economic recession that began in 2008. Logging companies all across Central Africa have scaled back operations and reduced their labor force. One must ask if the most remote forest concessions with the longest and highest transport costs will remain viable if oil and liquid fuel prices continue to rise.

CBNRM

With the exception of Cameroon, CARPE has failed to create the necessary national legal frameworks for CBNRM for most natural resource sectors. Land and resources remain the property of the State. In general, even those communities motivated to protect/conserve "their" lands and resources do not have the legal rights to do so. Without functioning CBNRM systems, the social, economic/financial and political frameworks/conditions are all problematic. CBNRM is poorly understood and lacks significant support, and its economic and financial viability remains largely untested in most areas.

THE LACEY ACT

The 2008 amendment to the Lacey Act[32] makes it possible to put pressure on supply chains to reduce the illegal timber trade. The amendment was created for the purpose of combating illegal logging and expanding anti-trafficking protections to a broader set of plants and plant products, including timber and associated wood products. Prior to the 2008 amendment, the Lacey Act only covered plants native to the United States that are listed in one of the three appendices to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) or protected by U.S. state law. The amendments to the Lacey Act extends the statute's reach to encompass products, including timber, that derive from plants illegally harvested in the country of origin and brought into the United States, either directly or through manufactured products, including products manufactured in countries other than the country where the illegal harvesting took place. Lacey Act enforcement/investigating agencies include the USFWS, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA Office of Inspector General, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and USFS. (The latest information on the Lacey Act can be found on the APHIS website – http://www.aphis.usda.gov.)

Anyone who imports to – or exports from – the United States illegally harvested plants or products made from illegally harvested plants, including timber, as well as anyone who exports, transports, sells, receives, acquires or purchases such products in the United States, may be prosecuted.

FLEGT

The European Commission adopted a European Union Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) in 2003. The ultimate goal of the Action Plan is to encourage sustainable management of forests. The plan focuses on governance reforms and capacity building to ensure timber exported to the European Union comes only from legal sources, and it includes ideas for action in areas such as public procurement and the private sector. A key element of the Action Plan is a voluntary scheme to ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported into the European Union from countries agreeing to take part in this scheme. The Council adopted a regulation in December 2005 that allows for the control of the entry of timber to the European Union from countries entering into bilateral FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements with the European Union. Once established, the agreements will include commitments and action from both parties to halt trade in illegal timber, notably with a license scheme to verify the legality of timber. The agreements will also promote better enforcement of forest law and promote an inclusive approach involving civil society and the private sector.

CONCLUSION

It remains to be seen how this potential international policy tool will be used or applied in CARPE. CBFP has supported FLEGT, with US funds only tangentially advancing the FLEGT negotiations, but this process may be instructive to the future of CARPE.

[32] The Lacey Act, initially enacted in 1900, is the United States' oldest national wildlife protection statute and serves as an anti-trafficking statute protecting a broad range of wildlife and wild plants. The Lacey Act makes it unlawful to import, export, transport, sell, receive, acquire or purchase any fish, wildlife or wild plants taken, possessed, transported, or sold in violation of state, federal, Native American tribal, or foreign laws or regulations that are related to fish, wildlife, or wild plants. As part of the 2008 Farm Bill, it was amended as per the discussion.

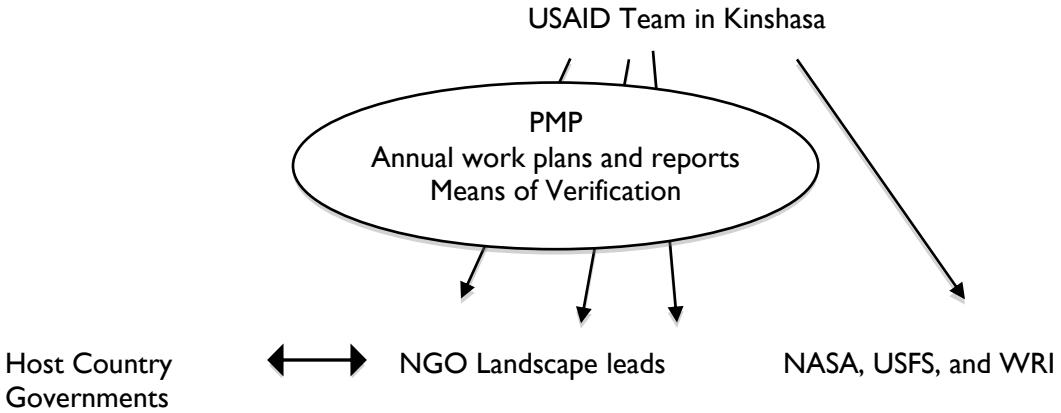
4.0 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 CARPE MANAGEMENT

CARPE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

A small but efficient staff has managed CARPE and has sought to bring an exceptional level of rigor to this large and complex environmental program that covers an area half the size of Texas. The Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) heads the CARPE Strategic Objective Team, and the other team members include an expatriate deputy to the COTR and two Foreign Service Nationals who are sometimes complemented by an intern.[33] Since the beginning of Phase II, this staff has managed the program out of the small CARPE office in Kinshasa, and the USAID Regional Office in Nairobi handles contracting and legal support services (USAID is still only present in two of the nine CARPE countries).

The CARPE team manages program implementation through cooperative agreements with various NGOs and other government partners. The core field activities in the 12 CARPE landscapes are implemented through consortia, each of them headed by an American-based environmental NGO. These NGOs – which are the landscape leads for each consortium – are funded through CARPE cooperative agreements, which are managed by the CARPE team as mentioned above. Other crosscutting services are supplied through interagency agreements with NASA, which provides remote sensing and monitoring, and USFS, which provides CARPE program support – e.g., LUP guides, training and direct support to landscape consortia, and other direct behind-the-scenes technical interactions with CARPE and other USG agencies in CBFP – and government-to-government technical assistance. Also, support for the development of forest information systems in national forestry ministries is done through a cooperative agreement with WRI. It is these CARPE NGO partners, rather than USAID, that have formal bilateral agreements with the host country governments, as mandated by USAID from the beginning of the program (see the diagram below for a graphical representation of this structure).



The CARPE team has made full and creative use of USAID's allowable influence and controls over cooperative agreements to put the landscape interventions on a results-based footing. The USAID CARPE team manages the program through the following control mechanisms:

- Approval of the different versions of the PMP;
- Approval of annual work plans;

[33] At the time of the evaluation, the deputy position was vacant and the team was supplemented by an intern working on data quality assessment.

- Approval of recruitment of key personnel; and
- Approval of changes to consortium teaming arrangements.

Two of the key tools used by the CARPE team for results management are the PMP and the annual work plans. The PMP defines the key results and the means of verification (MOV) for each result, and is therefore a more substantive document – at least with respect to specific actions to achieve stated goals – than the CARPE Strategic Plan. The PMP was prepared by the NGO partners themselves, who define their own targets for the completion of landscape-level land use plans and macro-zone-specific management plans. These are then translated into annual work plans. The CARPE SO team monitors progress towards the achievement of PMP targets and annual work plan activities in great detail. Over time, this monitoring has evolved to focus on the development of the landscape-level land use plans and the management plans.

ASSESSMENT OF THIS STRUCTURE

The CARPE management structure described above has benefits and drawbacks (outlined below and described in greater detail in the rest of this chapter), but on balance, this structure appears to be the best means through which to implement this complex, geographically huge conservation program in the Congo Basin.

Benefits

- Small CARPE staff size meets the mandate that only 10 percent of the program budget be allocated towards management;
- The PMP and work planning matrix allows the small CARPE staff in Kinshasa to monitor results of the program that spans 9 countries and 12 landscapes;
- NGOs who were already working in the Congo Basin before CARPE began – and thus possess local knowledge, experience, and contacts – are able to implement the program with local stakeholders and governments; and
- Other government agencies like USFS and NASA utilize their core expertise in support of the program.

Drawbacks

- USAID is relatively far-removed from the conservation "action", so ensuring results of the program is inevitably difficult, despite mechanisms like the PMP and MOV;
- There are few consequences to reporting "inflated" results by implementing NGOs – as inaccurate data is simply sent back to them to be changed – so the value of results reporting is diminished;
- Buy-in and support of the program by governments is less than ideal for a couple of reasons: it is the NGOs rather than USAID who have bilateral arrangements with host country governments and CARPE-funded projects have historically not always been recognized as such (i.e., a project implemented by an NGO is often seen as an initiative of that NGO rather than CARPE).

The benefits of the current CARPE structure outweigh the drawbacks (as just described) and furthermore, two of the three drawbacks listed above are fundamental constraints due to the program's mandate (USAID management cannot exceed 10% of the budget, and the program cannot give funds directly to governments). Various alternatives to the CARPE management structure can be imagined (a few are listed in the box below with their pros and cons), but the Evaluation Team was not able to identify any alternatives that are superior to the current structure.

Alternatives to CARPE Structure

One implementing NGO across all landscapes		Private firms as implementers	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
• Would learn from experiences across landscapes • Economies of scale in certain functions (management, preparing manuals and trainings, reporting, etc.) • NGO is more invested in program because receiving more $$	• Bigger risk for USAID • One NGO is unlikely to have the local experience or contacts in each landscape and/or country • USAID is not in the business of "growing" any one NGO • NGOs not funded might use their political influence to block the program	• May be better at certain functions like management overall and financial management in particular • May feel more accountable for measurable program success (since they would make a profit from their involvement in CARPE)	• Their presence would probably end when USG funding ends (in contrast to NGOs, who were present prior to CARPE funding and are very likely to be there beyond CARPE • Financial incentives that accompany the profit motive may lead to less funds being used for implementation
Local NGOs as primary implementers		**Spreading USAID staff throughout Congo**	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
• More local buy-in would give program a better chance for sustainability long-term • More $$ staying in local economies (a development goal in itself) • Provides a "path" for the development of local NGOs if demand for their services is seen	• Few local NGOs with capacity and expertise to implement conservation programs • Lots of $$ available for funding may provide incentives for the creation of illegitimate NGOs	• More direct management and oversight of program • Would understand local context better and thus propose more effective solutions to management and/or implementation	• Staff's added value is knowing USAID (rules, regulations, etc.) rather than providing technical expertise • Might lose objectivity if immersed in local conservation efforts • Could be more difficult to retain staff if thus isolated

Nonetheless, the current system can be tweaked somewhat – and has, in fact, been adjusted over the years since the program began – so as to improve program implementation and outcomes. For example, CARPE management moved from Washington DC to Kinshasa in early 2003 to better coordinate this complex program. The process by which program policies and practices should be modified and improved over time is called adaptive management, which is described in the next section.

4.2 ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

At a fundamental level, adaptive management can be understood as a systematic process for continually improving management policies and practices by learning from the outcomes of operational programs. The Biodiversity Support Program (BSP) administered the first phase of CARPE – its so-called learning phase – and it was in this phase that much of the early effort to introduce adaptive management principles into USAID programming was pioneered. BSP's adaptive management pioneers went to some length to counter the notion that adaptive management is simply a cover for shifting directions or even "merely an excuse to change one's mind" (Salafsky & Margoluis, 2001). Adaptive management – as applied in USAID conservation programs – is more systematic and – of note – evolved directly out of the BSP experience.

Adaptive management is a formal, systematic, and rigorous approach to learning from the outcomes of management actions, accommodating change and improving management. It involves synthesizing existing knowledge, exploring alternative actions and making explicit forecasts about their outcomes. Management actions and monitoring programs are carefully designed to generate reliable feedback and clarify the reasons underlying outcomes. Actions and objectives are then adjusted based on this feedback and improved understanding. In addition, decisions, actions and outcomes are carefully documented and communicated to others, so that knowledge gained through experience is passed on rather than lost when individuals move or leave the organization. In view of this, adaptive management aims to:

- Find better ways of meeting goals;
- Identify key gaps in understanding;
- Improve understanding of ecosystem responses, thresholds and dynamics, in order to adapt practices to fit changing social values and ecological conditions;
- Gain reliable feedback about effectiveness of alternative policies/practices;
- Encourage innovation and learning;
- Pass on information and knowledge gained through experience;
- Foster an organizational culture that emphasizes learning and responsiveness; and
- In some cases, adaptive management may also help detect cumulative, long-term, large-scale, and emergent effects of actions.

CARPE is a threats-based program, and both the threats and the program impacts on mitigating these threats are constantly changing. Tropical forest ecosystems are complex, dynamic and fragile. As a result, our knowledge and ability to predict how they will respond to management actions is imperfect. Regeneration of preferred timber species poses a particular challenge and has not been clearly demonstrated for Congo Basin forests – though the CIB concessions in Northern Congo report good progress in this regard. Together with changing social values, demographics, and market demand, knowledge gaps lead to uncertainty over how best to manage the region's forests. Despite these uncertainties, landscape managers must make decisions and implement plans. Adaptive management allows managers to proceed responsibly despite uncertainty and provides a sound alternative to the unforeseen, often negative consequences of either "thrashing forth blindly" or "being frozen with indecision." USAID's CARPE management unit continues to build on the early principles laid out under BSP.

Adaptive management may be particularly valuable for testing, refining and improving the landscape management following the shared principles. These have been agreed upon through the adoption by CARPE and CARPE implementing partners of USFS guidelines texts across landscapes. The weaknesses of the first versions of these guides have been documented; however, a new revised set of guidelines was published in November 2010, and it is claimed that many of the weaknesses of the first versions have already been addressed. The periodic review and improvement of these guides is an example of CARPE's adaptive management approach. COMIFAC is very interested in these guides and validation of the USFS/CARPE series of guides is planned for early calendar year 2011. The ADB-funded PACEBCo (Congo Basin Ecosystems Conservation Support Program) is also very interested in validating/adopting the USFS/CARPE guides for possibly even broader use. This adoption, amendment, and use of the guides represent an important step in the broader institutionalization of CARPE in COMIFAC and member countries during the transition of Phase II to III.

Adaptive management involves synthesizing existing knowledge, exploring alternative actions and making explicit forecasts about their outcomes. Management actions and monitoring programs are carefully designed to generate reliable feedback and clarify the reasons underlying outcomes. After seven years,

CARPE Phase II actions and objectives can be expected to show evidence of having been adjusted based on such feedback and improved understanding. In addition, decisions, actions and outcomes should be carefully documented and communicated to others, so that knowledge gained through experience is passed on rather than lost when individuals move or leave the organization. This applies equally to consortia partners as to other stakeholders in the implementation land use plans. Learning from experience is always valuable. A rigorous, deliberate approach to learning is appropriate whenever there is significant uncertainty about possible outcomes of alternative actions and where delaying action is either unnecessary or would have unacceptable ecological, economic or social impacts. To be effective, adaptive management requires a commitment to learn and adjust, adequate resources (e.g., for monitoring and data analysis), and access to necessary expertise.

The evaluation Scope of Work asks the Evaluation Team to consider the effectiveness of adaptive management as applied in CARPE in relation to current guidance from USAID Washington. The biodiversity team within USAID is currently revising its guidelines.[34]

APPLICATION OF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT IN MONITORING SYSTEMS DESIGN

The CARPE management team in Kinshasa possesses a limited set of tools with which to apply adaptive management principles, since the program is implemented primarily through the afore-mentioned cooperative agreements with US-based NGOs. Where crosscutting functions are carried out by other federal agencies, USAID has some capacity for direct intervention, except in the case of the USFWS, which – since 2005 – offers grants that are meant to complement CARPE but are managed autonomously. USAID management has authority to approve key staff, approve annual work plans, adjust funds between landscape programs, approve changes in the partners within landscape consortia, and call for periodic evaluations and other assessments. Within these limitations, USAID management has done a remarkable job of structuring their programming approach to build in adaptive management principles.

USAID was confronted with a large management challenge in Phase II when management was moved from Washington, DC to the field. The management team was small and was obliged to make effective use of interns and interim staff for the first years of the program; it was not until 2006 that the CARPE management unit gained a deputy. The managers confronted a suite of NGO partners who had largely established the parameters of the program (in the form of USG contribution to the CBFP) in collaboration with the Department of State. State selected USAID as the lead in its implementation of CBFP support. The transitional phase at the end of CARPE I was folded into CARPE II under direction of the new field unit. The field management unit was recognized in the CARPE II mid-term evaluation for effectively gathering the reins on a program that operated in nine countries – six of which contained vast CBFP landscapes – and doing so without USAID presence and support in most areas and where the mostly Washington-based institutions providing crosscutting support were not well-integrated with the NGO field effort.

The primary tools for accomplishing this were USAID's PMP with its attendant MOV reporting, and the work plan process with operational performance-based budgeting. The validity, strengths and weaknesses of the PMP and strategic plan that guided it are discussed in Section 2.1. Here, the Evaluation Team attempts to determine whether this management arrangement has served to establish coherence or whether the PMP and reporting process have become a "straightjacket" that inhibits effective implementation in the field.

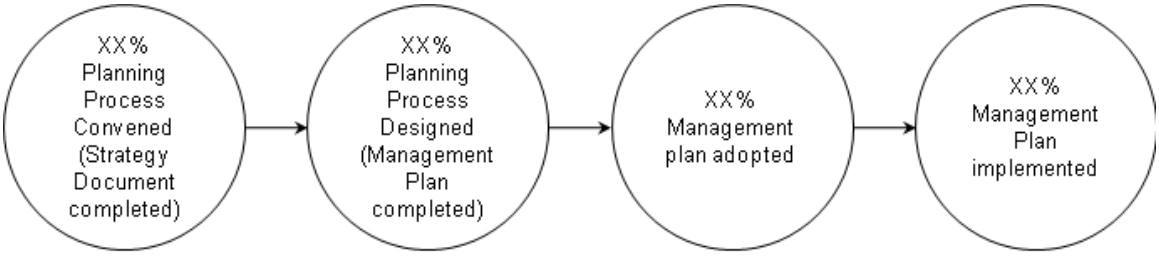
The team found that the reporting system – which is centered on the processes of convening, developing and implementing a range of land use plans and natural resource management plans – had been poorly understood at the outset by implementing partners. The mid-term evaluation found for the first years of CARPE II that implementing partners in the landscape consortia had difficulty understanding

[34] *Biodiversity Conservation: A Guide for USAID Staff and Partners.* USAID: Washington, September, 2005.

the concepts and reporting requirements and had a difficult time coordinating internally, especially where consortia involved more than one Leader With Associate partner and spanned international borders. In contrast, the present evaluation found that landscape partners had made significant progress towards a common shared conceptual basis for land use planning. As a result, reporting on this process by employing relatively standard MOV had become more routine, and the annual and semi-annual reports were no longer considered particularly burdensome. The Evaluation Team observed, however, that NGO implementing partners had not only these reporting requirements but were preparing reports and grant submissions on an ongoing basis. One respondent called what he observed to be an incessant attachment to communication and document processing as an addiction to "Wi-Fi conservation" that took time away from active field-level conservation actions and producing a culture where rural field operations were as office-bound as staffs in capital cities and home offices.

The reporting system follows a logical path that is more linear than iterative (see Figure 9 below), as would be anticipated in an adaptive management model.[35] The MOV reporting is captured in a well-organized publicly accessible framework known as the "CARPE Information Management Tool" (http://carpe-infotool.umd.edu/IMT/).

Figure 9. Stages in Land Use Planning



Since the planning process is carried out at the landscape level as well as for each macro-zone within a landscape, the landscape partners are constantly striving to report progress in terms of CARPE measures, which are assessed against the relatively standardized steps contained in USFS planning manuals. The result is a system that is, at its present stage, more of a closed internal reporting system than it need be. Despite both the accessible nature of the data via the information management tool and also the interest shown by COMIFAC in adopting the guidelines for application by its members, dialog and interaction is structured between landscape managers and CARPE managers. National and local governments are involved secondarily though participation in protected area and various multi-sectoral planning activities undertaken in the landscapes; however, national and local institutions are not engaged iteratively in the same manner as the NGO partners. For example, the CARPE Deputy reported going back and forth with landscape partners to establish plans that followed USAID/USFS guidelines as presented in the manuals. The result is uneven progress in institutionalizing the planning process laid out in the figure above.

In the case of the national park plan for Mayumba, the Park Director reported that the draft plan was not being worked upon because WCS had worked on the plan with CARPE, and it had not yet been translated into French. During this period of PA plan refinement, the Gabon National Parks Administration had undertaken a system of review of its parks, plans and planning process that was not driven by the same conceptual guide, budget process and timetable as that being addressed by WCS as the leader for the landscape segment that included Mayumba National Park. In the MLW landscape, the

[35] Once again, one sees the confusion in this diagram between the terms land use plan and management plan (as discussed in 3.1), as CARPE often uses the two interchangeably. However, they should each be used to describe two separate documents: the land use plan defines the macro-zones, and management plans are prepared for each PA or ERZ macro-zone, not for the landscape. (The best approach for developing CBNRM systems in each CBNRM macro-zone is yet to be defined.)

interaction between CARPE and the landscape lead resulted in the partner, AWF, taking ownership of the land use planning approach. They are now attempting to mainstream it into their programs internationally. The AWF landscape manager will assume an executive role in the organization and plans to incorporate CARPE's land use planning approach into the AWF Heartland planning process and generalize the modified approach to other AWF programs.

As CARPE moves more toward the implementation (and institutionalization) stages, adaptive management systems that currently focus on CARPE and the lead NGO for each landscape should benefit. The intent of the planning process is to include multiple stakeholders and to raise capacity across the range of government administration, NGO, CSO, private sector, technical ministry and other stakeholders. As noted below, landscape partners have involved these stakeholders, but the process remains largely internal to CARPE.[36]

The CARPE management team also used evaluation effectively to learn and modify the program. The specific discussion in this evaluation underscores the use of evaluation findings to modify program structures (improved grant management, broader consortia, more focus on policy change, etc.) with the aim of achieving improved conservation results. CARPE management also facilitated the modification of landscape boundaries, which were initially delimited with far less partner attention than that given to identifying the hotspots that were to serve as the core of the CBFP landscapes. This learning approach to landscape definition resulted in such changes as the Itombwe area being added to the Maiko Tayna Kahuzi Biega Landscape, the expansion of ROC landscapes to make them almost contiguous, and re-zoning of the Gamba Complex.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AT THE LANDSCAPE LEVEL

The Evaluation Team found that that the landscape consortia applied adaptive management principles prior to the intervention of the USFS but did so with more local specificity and variation than after the introduction of the process manuals. Initial planning was based on scientific assessment of the biodiverse resources and on a subsequent threats analysis. Different partners used differing program planning approaches but adopted a somewhat vague "leaning by doing" orientation that did not fully take advantage of their own conservation planning approaches. Despite the NGOs' expected expertise in this arena, the USAID CARPE Deputy Director, charged with the landscape program, noted that only after repeated intervention did the landscape consortia bring their planning in line with the adaptive management guidelines.

The Evaluation Team expected the NGO partners to have led the adaptive management process at the landscape level using more explicit organizational expertise that they have acquired in this area. The team found that the institutional expertise of large CARPE conservation NGOs was not being fully transferred to the field programs. The adaptive management principles advocated by USAID Washington are largely those of these same NGOs. The following figure illustrates the iterative learning nature of the adaptive management approach as it is embodied in the Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP).[37]

[36] WWF points out that making the process more inclusive involves considerable additional costs. Engaging all stakeholders in landscape LUP for a landscape like Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru (overlapping four provinces) requires the engagement of the provincial governments, which alone is an ambitious undertaking that requires considerable staff and financial capacity. In addition, there are local administrations, national government, multiple sectors, etc. For other landscapes like TRIDOM, CARPE partners have worked to secure additional support and partners – for instance, GEF TRIDOM is being implemented through UNDP – to engage national level stakeholders across sectors (e.g., planning, mining, forestry, energy, etc). All of these processes take considerable time to implement.

[37] When BSP ended in 2001, the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Foundations of Success (FOS, a non-profit which grew out of BSP) continued to actively work in promoting adaptive management for conservation projects and programs. The approaches used included Conservation by Design (by TNC), now reflected in TNC's Conservation Action Planning methodology, and in the BSP-inspired NGO Foundations of Success. In 2004, the Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP) – which includes several former BSP staff members – developed a common set of standards and guidelines for applying adaptive management to conservation projects and programs.

Figure 8. Conservation Measures Partnership Adaptive Management Cycle

APPLYING ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT TO CONSERVATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

The Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation embodied in the CMP lays out these 5 main steps to an adaptive management project cycle. These standards are integrated into adaptive management software, Miradi, which is available to landscape consortia. The standards represent a compilation and adaptation of best practices and guidelines across several fields and across several organizations within the conservation community. Since their release and subsequent updates, conservation organizations, local conservation groups, and donors alike have begun applying these standards to their work, and several CMP members have developed training materials and courses to help apply the standards. For example, WCS' Living Landscapes page contains extensive guidance materials on its approach to adaptive management. WWF offers its Standards of Conservation Project and Program Management, which contains detailed guidance, resources, and tools for the steps in WWF's adaptive management process. AWF applied its Heartland Planning process to the MLW, but has since determined that the USFS land use planning approach represented an improvement that the organization is attempting to internalize. The Forest Service manuals advocate an adaptive management approach but do not present detailed guidance on how to do adaptive management. The USFS says that they have highlighted the tools above as references in the November 2010 revision of the guides.

POSSIBLE WAYS TO ADDRESS THE SHORTCOMINGS HIGHLIGHTED ABOVE

As just detailed, the Evaluation Team finds that adaptive management principles are generally being applied in CARPE. For instance, the USFS planning guides have been reviewed, improved, and updated and if these guides continue to be improved regularly based on feedback from implementing partners and other stakeholders, the plans based on these guides will be most relevant and useful.

A few other program implementation difficulties were highlighted above. For example, implementing partners carry out the planning process for macro-zones and the landscapes themselves and report their progress based on the standardized requirements of the USFS planning guides. In addition, while the NGOs do communicate with the USAID staff in Kinshasa and go back and forth through the planning process with USAID, national and local institutions are not iteratively engaged in the same manner as the NGOs. The result is uneven progress in institutionalizing the planning process.

To address these issues, a couple of actions can be taken. First, the USFS planning guides can be further updated. The Evaluation Team proposes that the guides be improved periodically based on recommendations made in this evaluation, on a better review of best practices and lessons learned across the Congo Basin and across the continent, and – especially – based on periodic participatory adaptive management reviews with stakeholders at different levels (macro-zones, the landscape, the country and the CARPE region). These reviews should take a pragmatic approach to: identifying what works well and what does not; analyzing weaknesses; identifying options to overcome weaknesses; and modifying annual work plans based on these analyses to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses. Also, the planning guides can be reviewed by key host country officials to integrate into them specific country needs, taking into account such things as policy and legal frameworks and the level of enabling conditions that exist for each type of macro- and micro-zone. This engagement of host country governments is crucial to the sustainability of successful NRM in Central Africa. Furthermore, engaging host country governments when the planning guides are being prepared might induce these governments to take them into consideration when preparing their own plans for PA, for example.

4.3 PLANNING, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION TOOLS

As described in the first section in this chapter, the small USAID CARPE staff in Kinshasa has a large task in managing a complex conservation program across many landscapes and countries in Central Africa. To accomplish this, the staff utilizes tools such as the PMP with its variety of results indicators along with other management tools such as the work plans, reports, and MOV.

ANNUAL WORK PLAN, SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT, AND ANNUAL REPORT

These documents are prepared by the implementing partners and – in the case of the annual work plan – reflect the NGOs' specific plans for achieving the SO and IRs. Having the NGOs prepare these plans is essential for buy-in but also for the creation of a realistic work plan, since the NGOs themselves have the best sense of what they can achieve in a certain time frame given present constraints in the identified landscape, etc. The semi-annual and annual report, likewise, are important to assess whether the NGOs have indeed accomplished what they set out to do over six-month and one-year timeframes, respectively. In addition, knowing that these reports are expected should also provide the NGOs with further incentives to achieve the goals laid out in the annual work plan. The implementing partners report that preparing these reporting documents has become routine, and it is helpful that the semi-annual and annual reporting templates are straightforward and not over-burdensome.

MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)

These are quite extensive and the main MOV are the land use plans and the management plans for PA, ERZ and CBNRM macro-zones. Other MOV are for other work such as monitoring, design (ecological, biological, and economic), governance improvements, etc. Many of the MOV require considerable time to complete. While USAID examines LUPs and MPs in detail (described below), it appears that USAID

does not normally provide feedback on the other MOV submitted by partners, and this calls into question the usefulness of this wide suite of MOV. Alternatively, it would be more efficient if USAID were to reduce the MOV to a smaller number that are the most critical and on which USAID can provide feedback.

DATA QUALITY OF RESULTS REPORTING

USAID had made a strong investment in data quality assessment (DQA) – the independent verification of reported performance results. USAID's DQA has focused on the landscape-level land use plans and on the management plans for individual macro-zones in the landscape. This is consistent with the two indicators for IR1 (number of landscapes and other focal areas covered by integrated land use plans and number of different use-zones within landscapes with sustainable management plans). Landscape partners do their own ranking of progress, expressed as percentage completion, towards their PMP performance targets as part of their semiannual reports. USAID's independent verification consists of assigning a staff member to analyze the LUPs or the macro-zone management plans against a detailed set of criteria, which are based on the USFS guidelines for the preparation landscape-level LUP, PA management plans and CBNRM plans.

This system of DQA seems logical and effective, and it has actually revealed a high level of over-reporting on the part of the landscape partners. For 2008, the DQA rankings showed about 50 percent of the progress levels reported by the landscape partners. Some DQA rankings ran as low as 10 to 15 percent of the reported levels of achievement. In these cases, the DQA rankings are sent back to the landscape partners, who are asked to correct major deficiencies[38].

The tracking tool developed by USAID is a powerful instrument for monitoring program progress, but the main drawback to this system to date has been the shortcomings of the standardized USFS guides themselves from which the indicators have been drawn. These shortcomings are analyzed at some length in Appendix G. It is proposed that USAID should redo their indicators for the macro-zone management plan MOV based on the newly revised guides in conjunction with the analyses of the old guides presented in this report and also in consideration of the following:

- The Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) or similar tool for PA macro-zones;
- The principles for successful CBNRM presented in Section 3.1 for CBNRM; and
- The FSC certification criteria for logging concessions in ERZ with supplementary criteria for biodiversity conservation.

The CARPE III design team should propose specific indicators, and these draft indicators should be further debated and refined at the inception workshops at the start-up of CARPE III. With a good choice of indicators, the CARPE tracking tool should become an even more effective management tool leading to improved results and greater impact.

[38] Information received from Terah Dejong, the intern currently working with the CARPE Team on DQA for the LUP and management plans.

Land use plans versus management plans There is some confusion in CARPE documentation because the terms "land use plan" and "management plan" are sometimes used interchangeably. A land use plan determines the stratification of land uses within a landscape and provides basic guidance for each land use macro-zone and the integration of these zones. A management plan is usually developed and administered by a single entity that is empowered to control access and to manage a single area in a land use zone. The landscape is composed of macro-zones or blocks of land representing a range of different land uses with one or more managers for each macro-zone. Thus, a state protected areas management agency, or another party empowered by them, can manage a protected area macro-zone. A logging company that has been awarded a logging concession macro-zone can manage the forests within the concession. A CBNRM macro-zone may have several different community management structures, each managing (or co-managing) a different portion of the macro-zone. Each family manages their own agricultural land within the CBNRM zone (as defined by CARPE). The land use plan for a landscape should define the type of land use(s) for each macro-zone in the landscape and should define who will have management responsibility for each macro-zone. The managers of each macro-zone need to develop a management plan for the land and resources in their macro-zone. Specific institutions or individuals can control a macro-zone with sufficient authority to manage its resources, but no single corresponding entity can have direct management responsibility for the whole landscape.

4.4 APPROPRIATENESS OF BUDGET ALLOCATIONS AND IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS

CARPE has constantly been confronted with the challenge of allocating its budget across 12 landscapes and a number of crosscutting themes. The CARPE Management Unit itself is funded from program funds through a service agreement between USAID and the Foreign Agricultural Service of the USDA. The annual budget, which has ranged between $15 and $20 million over the life of CARPE II, is thus divided amongst 16 implementing mechanisms and the management unit itself. USAID Washington complements the field management unit with very modest backstopping and engagement with CARPE partner functions that logically fall to home offices of both field and crosscutting partners. USAID also engages with the State Department in CBFP meetings that are sometimes attended by Kinshasa-based program managers. CARPE field managers determine budget allocations amongst the implementing partners within parameters prescribed by Congressional guidance accompanying the Foreign Assistance Act appropriations for each fiscal year.

CARPE essentially inherited the CBFP landscape determinations and set of initial implementing partners that grew out of collaboration between the conservation NGO community, Congress and the State Department, alongside the initial three-year $52 million commitment by the State Department to the CBFP. In his July 2003 testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee regarding this CBFP pledge, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Walter H. Kansteiner, underscored that the effort was not starting from scratch and would build on the existing CARPE foundation in support of the Yaoundé principles. (This decision had come about earlier, following the launch of CBFP in September 2002.)

The eleven individual CBFP landscapes were determined, according to the NGO (WWF/WCS) Congo Basin Initiative concept paper submitted to the State Department in June 2002, through a technical regional process facilitated by Central African experts and COMIFAC with support from international conservation NGOs such as WWF, CI and WCS. The CBFP "adopted" these landscapes that formed the core of the USG program. The Evaluation Team determined, however, that only recently have the Central African governments begun to accept and codify the landscape model of conservation. USAID/CARPE simply inherited the landscapes as the principal on-the-ground conservation focus areas

in the CARPE Strategic Plan as instructed by State Department. CARPE I had included the Virungas, but neither Rwanda nor Uganda were original COMIFAC/CBFP members. Accordingly, USAID had to fight to keep adequate funding for this landscape.[39] This is significant because State Department mandated $12 million per year for the CBFP landscapes, which left only $3 million per year for all other activities.

The mandate to concentrate funding in landscapes, conveyed by the then-State/AF Deputy Assistant Secretary during a presentation by the State Department at the CARPE Strategic Objective Team meeting in October 2002, was reiterated in subsequent Congressional testimony. The CARPE Team meeting was held at WRI to review and modify a draft CARPE Strategic Plan under whose legal mandate CARPE still functions. The final plan was approved by the USAID/Africa Assistant Administrator in January 2003 for the period 2003-2011. Thus, it was not USAID that decided on the landscape program but rather a State Department decision that was given to USAID to implement. This framework puts a restriction on where CARPE can deploy funds as the proportional division of landscape and non-landscape funding persists through this evaluation. CARPE management has endeavored – and was supported in this effort by the 2006 mid-term evaluation – to seek a better balance between landscapes and other CARPE activities. Accordingly, the required percentage for landscapes has dropped from about 80% to just over 62% in the intervening years. CARPE can currently fund limited activities in non-CBFP landscapes, but such funds – as is generally the case for CARPE small grants – reduce the overall non-landscape budget. Expanded activity in the landscapes under this formula demands that landscape consortia receive support from other sources, such as USFWS multi-species grants, from foundations such as the Arcus Foundation and from other donors. This has been achieved with varying success across the region.

The mid-term noted many ways the modest budget adversely affected performance, particularly of IR2 and IR3. USAID's effort to make more funds available for activities outside landscapes has permitted both an expansion of the small grants program and other activities under IUCN as well as increased budgets for some crosscutting partners like UMD, WRI and USFS. Some key areas of important biodiversity such as the Campo-Ma'an landscape in Southwestern Cameroon or the TL2 landscape in the Bonobo region of DRC that could easily fit CBFP criteria remain under-funded because they are not official CBFP landscapes. Landscape boundaries have been modified under the approved Strategic Plan, but a new CBFP landscape would require that the membership of the CBFP (now over 50) officially concur with its inclusion, not to mention that this would stretch limited CARPE funds thinner unless more funding accompanied the inclusion of a new landscape.

Another budgetary limitation USAID must confront is the imposition of a congressionally mandated transfer of funds from the CARPE appropriation to the USFWS to expand its program of Great Ape Conservation Fund grants to support Great Apes and their habitat conservation in the Congo Basin. The 632(a) transfer designates an amount that has totaled $2.5 million per year for four years and was approximately doubled in FY 2010. The grants through this funding complement the program but also complicate CARPE budgeting efforts. The USFWS grants have funded landscape activities and often go to the same implementing partners with whom USAID works directly. Since the program coordination and information exchange between the two agencies is weak, USAID's decisions on landscape funding levels and allocation amongst landscapes can be distorted if additional USG funds are channeled to these same landscapes and partners. This may affect the performance-based approach USAID takes in shifting resources between landscapes from year to year. The USFWS grants do benefit from and complement the sustained CARPE support to the landscapes, and – though not clearly documented – the USFWS grants contribute to CBFP and USG interests in the region. USAID/Washington participates in the review of USFWS grant proposals, which contributes to their

[39] The CARPE Strategic Plan designates Rwanda/DRC Virungas as a "CARPE Focal Area" without Uganda. Subsequently, Rwanda became a COMIFAC member. COMIFAC management informed the Evaluation Team that the Virungas are now a COMIFAC landscape, but the Evaluation Team was not able to confirm its official status with respect to CBFP.

consistency with CARPE and CBFP concerns as well as insuring that they meet USAID biodiversity earmark requirements.

In fact, all funds, including the transfer funds to USFWS, must meet criteria under the USAID biodiversity earmark.[40] The program has been 100% funded under the biodiversity earmark up until this evaluation, and this has limited some investment in some livelihood, climate change and productive activities.

The team found that within these parameters, USAID budget allocations and implementing mechanisms have been imaginative, adaptive and results-oriented. The CARPE team increased funding for the two IRs of monitoring and governance, which were clearly underrepresented in the first three years. It also created a new implementing mechanism to reinforce IR2. CARPE has required very substantial matching funds, which creates leverage for direct USG investments in the landscapes. These matching funds are tracked by the program and made public via the CARPE Information Management Tool. Matching funds are programmed and approved by USAID in annual work plans, just as are the USG funds, and they are part of the entire budget for each landscape program. This is an unusual and important part of the program, and matching funds from the landscape leaders amount in aggregate to more than 50% of the USAID contribution. Also, importantly, the CARPE Director has been involved, together with other CARPE stakeholders, in communicating and promoting the validity of the landscape approach. Donor coordination and networking efforts by CARPE management are largely behind decisions by other donors to make significant landscape investments in CBFP landscapes.

BUDGET ALLOCATIONS WITHIN LANDSCAPES

CARPE employs a relatively complex tracking system for budget expenditures. Implementing partners develop work plans and activities in six program categories with associated budgets. In addition to the substantive areas of intervention (e.g. patrolling and monitoring protected area habitat, improving value chains for CBNRM products, monitoring wildlife plan compliance in forest concessions, etc.), CARPE tracks five other process activities that include: (1) data collection and assessment; (2) stakeholder meetings and workshops; (3) training/capacity building; (4) policy/advocacy; and (5) media/outreach/ sensitization. These are broken down for each macro-zone. The Evaluation Team did not have the opportunity to fully explore this six category budget reporting with a wide range of implementing partners, but in at least one case, a key partner reported that the allocations of budget to process level and macro-zone added little value as their internal systems tracked substantive activities and field results differently. As discussed in the previous section, the disaggregation of landscape grants into 12 separate agreements allows greater flexibility and differentiation. The cooperative agreement is an optimal vehicle because USAID simply could not manage a program of this scale without partners who add value through bringing a respected institutional presence in most countries, an autonomous voice, and specialized skills to CARPE to meet the challenges of operating in the Congo Basin.

[40] In 1987, the Agency programmed $5 million for biodiversity. Since then there has been a steady increase in funding levels with first, a directive, then a soft earmark, and eventually a hard earmark (which means that the Agency is legally obligated through annual legislation to meet set levels for investment in biodiversity conservation worldwide.) The funding level of the earmark set by Congress in FY07 was $165.5 million, in FY09 it was $200 million, and it has grown annually until the current fiscal year. The Agency's "Biodiversity Code" guides the Agency in determining what programs are included in the accounting toward the biodiversity earmark. This code was developed through discussions and negotiations between USAID experts and the US Congress. The biodiversity code is a minimum standard composed of four criteria, all of which must be met for activities and funds to be attributed to the biodiversity earmark:

- The program must have an explicit biodiversity objective;
- Activities must be identified based on an analysis of threats to biodiversity; and
- The program must monitor associated indicators for biodiversity conservation.

Site-based programs must have the intent to positively affect biodiversity in biologically significant areas.

BUDGET ALLOCATIONS BETWEEN LANDSCAPES

Landscape budgets are allocated based on performance. Each landscape receives a minimum base in funding that could potentially be suspended; allocations above this minimum level are determined by need and performance. Some landscape programs have moved more slowly than others. The IUCN lessons learned volume describes how historical and political circumstances have created varying conditions and levels of progress across landscapes. For example, after six years of CARPE II implementation, the landscape program in Equatorial Guinea had not yet established a baseline for large mammal population, which would have been expected to take place early in the program cycle. Obviously, work conditions in Equatorial Guinea are challenging even relative to other parts of the region. The landscape lead, CI, has struggled to get an established presence on the ground and is now in the process of restructuring its program based on performance criticism from CARPE/USAID. Implementing partners were not comprehensively surveyed on the performance-based budget, but generally, they reported that it kept them focused on progress towards their MOV. They, nonetheless, did not always agree with the criteria used to reduce or increase their proportional share of the overall annual budget for landscapes.

With regard to landscape funding, the Evaluation Team found:

- Landscape programs could absorb far more than the $9-12 million per year that is available. For the entire life of CARPE II, the USG investment in the 82 million hectares in six countries adds up to barely about $1 per hectare. Despite CARPE's limited resources, USAID reduced the landscape program budget from around $12 million to $10 million per year even as other component budgets were increased. The absorptive capacity of landscapes will increase even more as landscape stakeholders embrace approved plans.
- Partners are able to raise significant matching funds, but these funding levels are unpredictable. One key partner, for example, lost a major private funder and spent two years adjusting their field programs and staffs to lower levels. The notion that increased matching funds would replace the reduced landscape budget met difficulty during the recent economic slowdown, but other donors including USG funding from USFWS mitigate other reductions in some landscapes. New donor programs are also dramatically increasing funds in some landscapes.
- Some landscape areas appear to be underfunded. The Bonobo range was not fully understood at the time the landscapes were conceived and presently appears underfunded relative to other areas of the basin. The same could be said of mangrove and littoral forests, which are subject to human pressures that come from both land and sea.
- The requirement to focus at least 50% of the landscape budgets outside protected areas prompted much more attention to the land use planning process and to other zones (ERZs and CBNRM). Some implementers, notably WWF, felt that this shift negatively impacted their ability to meet PA objectives.
- The results of this balancing between protected area focus and attention to other macro-zones has produced mixed but not fully satisfying results: WCS and Pact efforts in ROC ended in contention, and AWF in the Maringa-Lopori-Wamba landscape has cycled through a series of development/CBNRM partners including World Fish and SNV but thus far remains unsatisfied despite current progress collaborating with REFADD and the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF, which is now known as the World Agroforestry Centre). Limited funding impedes the opportunities for development partners to make major commitments.
- Local NGOs are developing capacity but thus far have received only a small portion of direct CARPE funds. In FY 2005, CARPE added small grants to the landscape program in order to "force" implementing partners to work with local NGOs. While there was some success, local NGOs in general were not ready for this step. The landscape leaders had to dedicate substantial resources to train the local NGOs and implement their programs at the same time. In FY 2009,

only slightly over $22,000 of an overall landscape budget of $9,387,522, or ¼ of 1%, was allocated directly to local NGOs as consortia partners. This was limited to only a few landscapes including Monte Alen-Mont de Crystal. Based on field work in MLW and Gamba landscapes, the Evaluation Team believes that there is now scope to increase both direct and sub-contract funding to local NGOs for many field activities including livelihoods, community organization, local governance and others. For example, the local NGO PROGRAM (Protector of the Great Apes of the Moukalaba) played a key role in the CARPE support to Moukalaba-Doudou National Park and surrounding reserves and buffer area. As PROGRAM's capacity increases, WWF is in the position of increasingly delegating budget and responsibility. Likewise, WWF implements its Salonga program with substantial local NGO participation. Yet in three distinct cases, when asked what they were doing to raise local capacity, WWF and other lead implementing partners replied that they are hiring, training and promoting local technical and managerial staff *in their own organization*.

- In the DRC, the USAID Mission bilateral program contributed over $8 million over three years to three DRC landscapes to ramp up work on the agriculture and livelihoods part of the landscape planning and implementation program (Ituri, Salonga and MLW).

IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS FOR IR2 AND IR3

In CARPE II (a), IR2 in support of improved governance was limited to a single dedicated agreement with WRI and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) to carry out applied research on forest policy and governance in Cameroon. Other governance strengthening was diffused through landscape partners, some of whom had country programs that provided policy support – e.g., conservation finance for transboundary harmonization – to their landscape programs. Under CARPE II (b), an entirely new implementing mechanism was established to support governance across the region including all CBFP landscapes. This mechanism was funded through a cooperative agreement with IUCN through its regional Central Africa office and had the mandate to: establish individual CARPE country offices; employ country focal points; manage the CARPE small grant program; focus on national policy reform; and create a system for dissemination of conservation lessons learned and general coordination of CARPE activities and partners. Funding for this IR is still modest but was approximately doubled from about $750,000 to approximately $1.5 million per year.

The implementing structures for IR3, institutionalization of natural resources monitoring, are largely a continuation under CARPE II (b) of what was initiated under CARPE II (a). Under the current mechanisms, the cooperative agreements are more tightly linked to the revised PMP and indicators, but the main implementing partners – WRI and NASA/UMD – were retained in separate but related roles. One of WRI's primary roles is to monitor logging concessions across all of the forested Central African countries, and the NASA consortium was charged with developing and deploying a basin-wide remote sensing based monitoring system for deforestation. Institutionalization was built into this mechanism by supporting NASA efforts to collaborate with and strengthen the regional NGO, OSFAC.[41] OSFAC is taking the lead in training and broadening GIS and remote sensing skills across the region in an effort to expand work with deforestation monitoring and related data. WRI, through production, publication and distribution of its interactive atlases and other supportive actions, engages directly with technical staffs in governments and indirectly with them through other CARPE landscape partners who work with WRI products or information. Other monitoring functions such as the monitoring of keystone and other indicator species remain with landscape partners, who also provide monitoring information on biodiversity for the State of the Forest report, as well as provide ground-truth information for remote sensing deforestation monitoring.

[41] The terms of reference for the NASA consortium was narrowed with a new PASA to build monitoring technology and capacity for deforestation monitoring, and the budget was increased to produce specific outputs for regional monitoring capacity building through OSFAC.

Adjustments were also made to CARPE support functions that were believed in the CARPE II (a) framework to be intermittent technical needs that would be common across landscape partners but in areas where landscape partners might lack the necessary skills. This notion of "crosscutting" service providers available on demand to landscape partners had not worked well during the early years and was modified to establish definitive mandates and implementing mechanisms to a narrower group of providers. USG implementing partners were reduced, with just USFS providing crosscutting functions. In its new role, USFS expanded beyond its original targeted technical assistance to landscape partners to a more comprehensive and continual technical assistance role. Its role has evolved over the course of Phase II but can generally be described as two-fold: 1) CARPE program support – e.g., LUP guides, training and direct support to landscape consortia, and other direct behind the scenes technical interactions with CARPE and other USG in CBFP) – and 2) Government-to-government technical assistance (a. COMIFAC Executive Secretariat as stated; b. Significant bilateral work with DRC/MECNT/DIAF on national level LUP/forest zoning process; and c. bilateral work with Gabon on park management planning first with the *Conseil National des Parcs Nationaux* (CNPN) and then ANPN). The 2nd part of USFS technical assistance through CARPE has been strategically developed in light of improving government-to-government technical exchange and to help respond to many of the claims noted here of less than optimal CARPE relations with several host country government partners. CARPE's agreement with USFWS was dropped since funds were transferred directly to that Agency's Wildlife Without Borders program. Also, the Smithsonian Institution and National Parks Service agreements were not renewed.

The Evaluation Team found that these mechanisms responded to CARPE weaknesses and have resulted in a much more cohesive program. The performance of IUCN, WRI and NASA are explored in the section on implementing partner performance. The USFS services are regularly used and integrated into landscape plans. Local governments report satisfaction in their contact with USFS, but interestingly, they do not necessarily associate these contacts with CARPE. COMIFAC reported that CARPE support was minimal and indirect while, in fact, USFS had provisionally installed a technical assistant in the COMIFAC Secretariat, and COMIFAC had numerous points of direct association with the IUCN program. In both, COMIFAC was not able to clearly recognize and attribute assistance to CARPE because the link between the implementing partners and CARPE management and funding was not clear. The USFS COMIFAC Coordinator recently (November 2010) developed a draft CARPE report to COMIFAC that is expected to become regular means through which to convey information as to what CARPE is supporting in COMIFAC-member countries. The report briefly describes the CARPE program, including detailed activities in the landscapes and beyond pertaining to the ten axes of the COMIFAC *Plan de Convergence* for FY 2010. This has been done in an attempt to improve communications and flow of information between COMIFAC and CARPE.

There has been a persistent – yet less pronounced – perception by host country governments that USG CARPE funding provides support more to US organizations than to the region's governments, administrations and programs. There is a growing trend toward more government ownership of the landscape program, and these expanded regional mechanisms are all contributing to changing perceptions. This shift to stronger integration of CARPE activities with permanent structures remains a challenge in the final year of CARPE II and is to be a strong focus of CARPE III.

4.5 ADEQUACY OF SUITE OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

The suite of implementing partners has evolved continuously over the course of CARPE II but remains anchored by a core set of organizations that – in their functioning – fall into three general categories: (1) CARPE management and administration, (2) mostly US-based, crosscutting service providers, and (3) landscape-level consortia. CARPE's structure is designed so that these organizations counterbalance and complement the others. The structure of CARPE implementers is unique and adapted to the specific challenges of working over an incredibly wide, logistically challenging region that includes nine countries, four primary administrative languages, and a USAID presence in only two of the nine countries. Only

somewhat lightheartedly, the CARPE Director commented that if the USG had known how complicated the program was going to be, they may not ever have taken it on. Results, however, speak for themselves. The mid-term evaluation pointed to the dedication and perseverance of CARPE partners and management as key ingredients to successfully achieving progress in reducing the rates of deforestation and in conserving important biodiversity assets. The importance of this long-term presence of a set of core partners cannot be underestimated.

USAID's CARPE management consists of a small field-based management team who receive limited support from by Washington staff in the regional Africa Bureau and in the Economic Growth and Trade Bureau (EGAT). Their role and effectiveness are assessed elsewhere in the management sections of this report.

The suite of partners represents an inheritance from CARPE I but with an increased budget of some 500% concurrent with the commitment of the Unite States to support the CBFP. From the perspective of US participation, the CBFP was the product of close collaboration between the conservation NGOs, State Department officials and Congressional supporters of international conservation efforts. The CARPE I evaluation had already recommended managing this effort from a field office. Mike Faye's recently completed and highly publicized "mega-transect"[42] helped engage US commitment to the CBFP, so in effect the major partners and the newly expanded scale of the effort was handed back to USAID, who had been granted implementation leadership. According to the CARPE director, the landscape leads were determined as a product of internal deliberations between Leaders with Associates NGOs who presented a division of geographic areas to CARPE at the outset of the second phase, essentially as *a fait accompli*.[43] In the seven years hence, USAID has adaptively managed and modified the suite of implementing partners in a manner mindful of this atypical role.

For the initial 2003-2006 Cooperative Agreements, landscape leaders originally presented to USAID an internal division of the 11 CBFP core areas and surrounding landscapes. These landscape leads – WCS, WWF, AWF and CI – remain the same through Phase II (b) with only minor modifications from the original configuration. However, the mid-term paved the way for a competitive process of individual landscape Cooperative Agreements. The intent was to expand the expertise in the landscape consortia to better respond to challenges in the governance, livelihoods, and community management of resources. The present evaluation examines the adequacy of these new arrangements in terms of consortia partners' strengths and weaknesses and in terms of the CARPE partners retained for the supporting IRs for governance and natural resource monitoring.

ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS IN THE LANDSCAPES

Strengths

Overall –

- On the whole, have adequately conducted activities relating to the achievement of IRs and crosscutting themes, where needed. Equally, these environmental NGOs have shown a strong commitment to conservation, as they are all working in very remote areas and under difficult and constraining conditions.
- Are dedicated and possess the ability to recruit people to work in remote, difficult, and sometimes dangerous conditions.
- Show autonomy in countries and the region that brings added value to collaborative agreements.

[42] The interactive site for the 1999 megatransect is still a popular destination on the National Geographic website: http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/data/2001/08/01/sights_n_sounds/media.5.2.html.

[43] As a participant in the Leaders With Associates mechanism, AWF became an implementing partner despite a lack of experience in the region (although AWF had worked in the outlying Virunga focal area). The Nature Conservancy was also a Leader With Associates member, but at the time of the initial awards, they chose not to compete for the CARPE II (a) grants.

- Demonstrate openness to learn/test new concepts/strategies.
- Are very capable of mobilizing additional sources of funding; some of them have more than five sources of funding in addition to CARPE (e.g., WWF Gamba).
- Very often have a good understanding of the ecological conditions, human factors and social conditions in which they are working, often due to their long presence in these sites.
- Have demonstrated excellent capacity to create, develop and sustain partnership relationships with local NGOs.
- Have well-trained staff (for the majority) that possess relevant skills and expertise in areas such as forestry, biology, natural resource management, ecology, agriculture, fishing, etc. These technical proficiencies bring an additional value in the achievement of activities relating to conservation in protected areas and in forest management. In addition, they are open to new ideas and innovative concepts.
- Have conducted numerous relevant bio-physical studies and surveys in various landscapes over the past ten years. They have therefore developed appropriate data bases and information on the 12 landscapes.
- Are capable of engaging logging/mining extractive industries meaningfully to reduce negative impacts of these industries; for instance, WWF is especially good at building partnerships with extractive industries.

  Specific examples of the strengths of various NGOs:

- Although WCS, AWF and CI expertise may be more effective in conservation, WWF stands out as possessing more diversified expertise. WWF is one of the "masterminds" of ongoing "isolated" experiments of CBNRM in Cameroon with community forests and community hunting zones (Sangha Tri National and TRIDOM landscapes) and in support to decision-making (Cameroon and Gabon). In Cameroon, for example, WWF is significantly committed to the *Plateforme des Partenaires du Ministère des Forêts*.
- In Gabon, WWF is engaged in a project aimed at establishing and testing institutional arrangements in two community forests at the periphery of the Minkébé National Park, and it is leading the technical and administrative component of this project[44], which is, ultimately, a kind of community forestry "laboratory" in Gabon. This case underscores NGO efforts to push forward at the field level despite relatively weak policy conditions, so success will be predicated in part on creating an improved policy setting.
- Examples of innovative partnership approaches that have been developed include: (1) WCS and the logging company CIB in the Congolese part of TNS; (2) WWF and *Société d'Exploitation Forestière et Agricole du Cameroun* (SEFAC – Society of Agricultural and Forestry Development in Cameroon) or *Le groupe Alpi Cameroun* (ALPICAM) in the Cameroonian side of TNS; (3) WWF and *Société de Développement Forestier* (SODEFOR – Forest Development Corporation) in Salonga.

Weaknesses

- Are not usually strong in management and administration and thus, the large conservation NGOs were not well-equipped to manage the complex structures of CARPE II as its scale increased at the outset of the second phase. WCS took several years to build up the systems to meet USAID requirements. WWF's systems were complex since funds involved in CARPE implementation were not only from the US-based organization but were also from its international pool, thereby involving several offices of WWF. Also, for landscape leads in

[44] That is the project called *Développement d'Alternatives Communautaires à l'Exploitation Forestière Illégale – Phase 2* (DACEFI-2).

general, the coordination of non-lead consortia members over whom they held no formal administrative authority rendered management and administrative limitations even more evident.

- Often unable to retain qualified staff, and this has made establishing responsive management systems even more difficult. For many reasons, environmental NGOs' teams were instable and in some cases – like with WCS in the Congolese side of the TNS – project coordinators have rarely been in place for more than 12 months. As a result, there is a cyclical loss of project institutional, technical and methodological "memory" and social lessons.
- Have tended to be sole operators in their field sites and did not have natural management models geared towards being team players or even team leaders. During CARPE, the landscape leaders have shown much improvement in this regard.
- Often overestimate their capacities to deliver results due to multiple commitments to donors. This may have a negative impact on their agendas relating to CARPE goals and its strategic objective.
- Have not always provided adequate institutional capacity development as needed to their local partners (for instance, both the program near Moukalaba Doudou in Gamba/Conkouati in Gabon and also REFADD at Lingunda in MLW in DRC suffer from inadequate institutional capacity).
- NGO field teams sorely lack expertise in social science. Very few landscape teams have a sociologist or an anthropologist on staff (although sometimes this expertise is brought in on a part-time basis or through partnerships). Sometimes agronomists or jurists are asked to play social and institutional engineering roles for which they are not qualified. The few sociologists encountered are junior persons with bachelor's degrees. Conservation and the whole landscape approach are at the intersection of biophysical and social science, which should be put together in a balanced way in the development of intervention models.
- Lack of expertise in CBNRM, alternative livelihoods, sustainable agriculture, and land use planning. Generally, field staff does not have a good understanding of "alternative livelihoods", and there is confusion between categories – such as "alternative livelihoods" and agriculture. Very often alternative livelihoods components of landscape-level projects are viewed as CBNRM activities. Moreover, as discussed in the section on CBNRM, conservation NGOs are not particularly strong in implementing CBNRM. WWF has had some success, especially in building on Cameroon's policies to distribute revenue. In Gabon, WCS had some success with oyster management at Mayumba, but it is a small intervention with little potential for replication. WCS expressed some predilection to focus its activities around the core strength in protected areas, the core of its "living landscapes." The WCS Cameroon Director suggested hypothetically that were WCS to undertake CARPE field activities in the country, he would absolutely seek a specialized CBNRM partner such as the Dutch SNV for CBNRM development. CI, in working with communities in Tayna area of Eastern DRC, worked to classify the community reserves as protected areas rather than CBNRM macro-zones.

DEVELOPMENT NGOS

Following the mid-term evaluation, the submissions for the present cooperative agreements all included attention to partnering with development-oriented NGOs to better tailor field programs to the needs of communities living in proximity to – and depending on – the areas' forest resources. A diverse set of institutions including CARE, Pact, SNV and others were included in the revised 2006-2009 consortia. The Evaluation Team was not able to contact all field programs but generally felt that thus far the performance of development NGOs in the consortia has, in some landscapes, progressed sufficiently to validate the model (see below for examples). While the resources available were modest, most of the original development NGOs have since withdrawn or been replaced within the landscape teams suggesting that an optimal mix has not yet been reached.

Overall, there remains a paucity of local development NGOs established in the region with skills needed and a willingness to integrate into conservation projects. In countries like Gabon, which is really a middle-income country, development organizations may not be very active and/or do not include Gabon in their portfolios. A couple of local development NGOs that have participated in CARPE are INADES, a regional NGO that has worked with CARPE partners, and BRGDRN, a partner in Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru. However, these and others that have worked with the landscape consortia have generally played minor roles in the program. Some notable exceptions exist, such as the key role played by UGADEC in the Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega landscape. Most participation to date has been through smaller sub-grants from landscape leads and not as direct partners in the cooperative agreements with USAID.

Strengths

- (Some of the international development NGOs) Have demonstrated a particular ability to build local capacity (like the Dutch organization SNV with local NGOs and local governments) and to develop institutional and organizational arrangements relating to community participation. WCS brought Pact on as a partner in the ROC portion of the Lac Tele-Lac Tumba Landscape, although this was unsuccessful. However, Pact is reported to have performed well in DRC.
- International research centers such as ICRAF are bringing their expertise to bear in the identification and implementation of livelihood strategies in DRC. In all the nine countries, local NGOs were very active in service delivery on "alternative activities", eco-tourism and environmental education in various landscapes.[45]

Weaknesses

- Still have weak development expertise, given the number of landscapes and their geographic scope.
- Demonstrate very little willingness to integrate into conservation projects.
- Possess a poor understanding of CBNRM and strategic thinking and expertise on the matter. Altogether, development NGOs showed very weak capacities in CBNRM design, implementation and monitoring. This is a big challenge for successful landscape management and conservation.
- NGOs working with CBOs on alternative activities strongly believe that they are doing CBNRM.
- The Dutch SNV has shown strengths in the design and launching of community forestry in Cameroon (TRIDOM landscape). By and large, this NGO is well-equipped with some technical expertise and institutional/organizational mechanisms in place for CBNRM. Unfortunately, their partnership with AWF in the MLW landscape failed, and this failure remains unexplained by both parties.

CROSSCUTTING ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES

The original effort to have an ensemble of federal agencies on-call and ready to provide services in those areas where the landscape partner lacked appropriate skills or expertise had largely failed by the time of the mid-term evaluation. In CARPE II (b), USAID responded by first identifying those critical functions where external organizations could provide needed services and then structuring those services into the program. The 2006-2009 model consists of a reduced set of crosscutting agencies with more tightly prescribed mandates. As discussed below, the results of these changes have improved performance and usefulness to field teams of the crosscutting agencies. These benefits are summarized below and discussed throughout the evaluation. It is important to note that although the USFWS was dropped from the CARPE-managed suite of partners after they received direct earmarked funding from Congress, the Service continues to provide support through a grants program to landscape partners and

[45] This is the case of a cortège of local NGOs in each country.

others in the CARPE region. USAID/Washington participates in the review and selection of proposals for funding but does not actively manage the grant funds. A recent evaluation of the USFWS grants found that CARPE partners were able to distinguish and use these USG funds in a largely complementary fashion to achieve stronger overall conservation results. Many of the grants support activities such as scientific surveys, communication and outreach, ecotourism and enforcement in the landscapes (that depend on USAID-funded landscape programs to be operative) but cover activities not usually funded by USAID directly.

NASA/UMD/SDSU

NASA, UMD, and SDSU have been performing well in the areas of responsibilities. They are technically very competent and open to collaboration with research institutes at the national level in information sharing. Their partnership with OSFAC and their support for its institutional development is an illustration of their competence.

WRI

WRI has demonstrated strong performance in developing forest information systems, and the organization is proud to work directly with and build capacity in government forest services. WRI is a crosscutting partner that monitors illegal logging and interacts with landscape partners. It has been present in Central Africa since 1991,[46] before CARPE began. The WRI Institutions and Governance Program has directed quality policy research on forest governance/devolution and environmental legislative representation in Cameroon through the CIFOR and the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development – Central Africa (NESDA, a local NGO). Lessons drawn from this research are currently used in legal reforms and in decision-making innovation.[47] WRI has delivered very good results in the development of a forest information system (e.g., the interactive forest atlases). WRI is one of the stronger institutions supported by CARPE's presence in Central Africa and has shown a good ability to work directly with governmental structures.

USFS

The US Forest Service International Programs provides technical assistance to develop the capacity of host country government natural resource management agencies. In contrast to restrictions on USAID, USFS can directly engage these government agencies. USFS also works with CARPE partner NGOs to create and implement effective land use plans for large landscapes and to develop management plans for the three categories of macro-zones. In Phase II (a), USFS involvement was restricted primarily to single missions to various landscapes; in Phase II (b), participation is more continuous and strategic.

The Service's efforts still complement other partners' activities by providing technical assistance to projects and programs that transfer USFS expertise in multiple-use forest management. The specific areas of intervention can be grouped under two general categories: 1) CARPE program support, and 2) government-to-government technical assistance.

CARPE program support

CARPE Program support consists of the development of LUP and natural resource management guides, training and direct support to landscape consortia, and other direct behind-the-scenes technical interactions with CARPE and other USG in CBFP.

LAND USE PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GUIDES

The most visible contribution is in the form of planning manuals that adapt the expertise gained by the agency's multiple-use landscape experience in the United States, which include, for example, wilderness

[46] This organization has long worked to establish strong collaborative linkages with Ministries of Forests in Cameroon and Gabon.

[47] It is the case for the following: (1) the signature of the revised version of the Joint Ministerial Order on the utilization of forestry and wildlife revenue intended for the local communities; (2) the development of the final version of the Manual of Procedures for the Attribution and Management of community forests; (3) the strengthening of the national branch of the *Réseau des Parlementaires d'Afrique Centrale* (REPAR - Network of Parliamentarians of Central Africa).

areas (complete protection zones), extractive use areas, and recreation areas. The guides include: (1) a Landscape-Level Planning Guide; (2) a Protected Area Management Guide; (3) a Community-Based Natural Resources Management Land Use Planning Guide; and (4) a draft Extractive Resources Guide. The merits of the landscape-level planning guide were judged adequate but the PA and CBNRM manuals are judged unsatisfactory (see previous chapters of this report). The Evaluation Team was informed by USFS while finalizing this report that new versions of all of these manuals were published in November 2010 and that many of the shortcomings of the first versions have already been addressed.

LAND USE MACRO-ZONE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

USFS has conducted numerous studies, assessments, scoping missions. Based on the guides, the USFS is working with CARPE partners (in conjunction with host country natural resource management agencies) to develop planning processes for comprehensive landscape-level planning by providing planning tools and standards to support the promotion of sustainable natural resource management in the landscapes. For example, USFS technical assistance in the MLW landscape assisted AWF in their methodologies and approaches to landscape planning. AWF is now revising its Heartland planning model organization-wide based on improvements resulting from this assistance. USFS has provided direct support in other landscapes such as the Ituri in conjunction with WCS.

Similarly, planning at Salonga National Park in DRC was undertaken in collaboration with WWF and ICCN. The 2006 technical assistance team supporting the management plan for Salonga National Park has called attention to the substantial threat from commercial-scale bushmeat hunting in Salonga, despite its remote location and inaccessibility.

USFS worked in Lac Tumba early in Phase II on community participatory planning and continues to work in the basin on various aspects of community land use planning and implementation including involving communities in REDD readiness.

GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The 2nd part of USFS technical assistance through CARPE has been strategically developed in light of improving government-to-government technical exchange. Gabon provides a case of direct USFS work with the host country government to realize its goal of developing effective management of its new 13-unit national park system by assisting in the creation of national park management plans and developing professional capacities. Support has been provided first to CNPN in the Ministry of Environment and then ANPN. Some plans are in place (Loango and Lope National Parks); others are in development. A number of Gabonese park wardens received training on the development of work plans for park management activities.

The USFS works at the national level on a government-to-government basis in an advisory capacity at the behest of the central DRC government in Kinshasa. Specifically, USFS assists the Ministry of Environment Conservation of Nature and Tourism through the *Direction Inventaire et de l'Aménagement Forestier* in the development of procedures and processes that will further zone the forest estate into forests of permanent production, *forêt classée, forêt protégée* and community forests (macro-zoning). The underlying expectation is that if well-developed and funded, the zoning process should result in: (a) additional *forêt classées* that serve a variety of purposes; (b) timber concessions with viable management plans; and (c) community forests and better land tenure and guaranteed explicit rights for the Congolese who live in these forests.

Recently, USFS has begun to provide direct technical assistance to COMIFAC and is testing the placement of a technical assistant on an ongoing, intermittent basis.

USFWS

USFWS is mentioned here, but under the current transfer of funds from USAID's CARPE biodiversity earmark to the USFWS, USAID has no control over the use of these funds.[48] Our discussions with key informants show that USFWS is acknowledged for the following: (1) effective interventions in areas of species conservation and investigations; (2) good working relationships with NGOs; (3) open recognition that the core USAID funding for landscapes is an essential pre-condition for them to operate effectively; (4) good collaboration with USFS. However, USFWS could improve by working even more closely across all NGOs and also strengthening its relationship with USAID.

IUCN

Under CARPE II, IUCN was mandated to cover IR2 – Natural Resource Governance. IUCN took over this responsibility because governance issues under CARPE initially had been dispersed across a number of organizations. Only WRI's applied research program had a clear governance mandate, and this activity was concentrated in a localized area of a single country, Cameroon. Entrusting IUCN with CARPE's governance IR was a substantial commitment, since IUCN regional presence and field activities were limited in 2006 when the cooperative agreement was established. To some extent, CARPE took on a challenge of simultaneously increasing both the implementing partner's capacity and the governance results and capacity among CARPE stakeholders. This dual role is not without precedent and was managed, for example, with some success by USAID in its Sustainable Uses for Biological Resources (SUBIR) project in Ecuador. To assess the adequacy of IUCN participation, the Evaluation Team thus needed to make some judgments about the IUCN expansion of capacity in the region. The team found that IUCN had staffed up, opened country offices in some countries, structured management and administration of the CARPE focal points and was carrying out and reporting on the tasks specified in its cooperative agreement. The performance in this respect is summarized below.

The team found that the IUCN Cooperative Agreement emphasized the stimulation of national policy reform, support to decision-making innovation, and dissemination of lessons learned. To a large extent – and considering the lack of law stimulation under CARPE I and II (a) – IUCN is responding adequately to expectations. Ultimately, IUCN Focal Points have performed as the interface between CARPE, its field programs, and IUCN generally. A key role of IUCN is to support CARPE's governance IR. It does this through small grants, through a process of convening CARPE country teams, and by working with CSOs and networks.

Strengths

- IUCN has been a key facilitator for improved collaboration and efficient program delivery. By and large, IUCN Focal Points have demonstrated good skills in interactions interacting with decision-makers, parliamentarians, landscape lead partners, international development NGOs, national and local NGOs, and the Focal Points have thus been able to set up Country Teams in all the countries.
- The small grants program managed by IUCN/CARPE Focal Points has reinforced partnerships with local NGOs and community based platforms. In each country, Focal Points have set up networks of partners, which vary from seven to ten NGOs.

[48] Initially, USFWS was a collaborating Federal Agency. In Phase II (a), USFWS supported bushmeat monitoring initiatives, species conservation and other topical areas. USAID funding was stopped concurrently with the decision by Congress to use CARPE funds to support USFWS Great Ape Conservation Fund. An annual $2.5 million transfer occurred under the Foreign Assistance Act provision 632 (a), which reduces USAID management role to simple verification that the funds are used for the intended purpose. Recently, this transfer has increased and, if continued, this trend could have significant repercussions for the remainder of CARPE II and its follow-on. A separate evaluation was undertaken of the USFWS grant program funded by this transfer (FWS Consulting 2010); thus, detailed assessment of this effort is not included in this evaluation.

- Numerous laws and ministerial orders have been promulgated and signed since 2003 under IUCN initiation or support.[49] A volume of "Lessons Learned" in the CARPE Program was prepared by IUCN and was published early this year.
- Through its CARPE/IUCN Regional Coordinator and the Cameroon Focal Point, CARPE has been a key actor in the implementation of the COMIFAC Forest Convergence Plan for the Congo Basin and has provided strategic support to the regional network of parliamentarians (REPAR) and its country branches.
- Small grants have been managed appropriately. About 60 small grants projects to civil society organizations have been funded since 2006, for a total of $1,058,671. Activities funded include capacity building at the grassroots level[50], strategic studies, advocacy[51], alternative livelihoods, etc.

Weaknesses

- CARPE/IUCN approach to policy influence is not grounded in an appropriate analysis of the legal constraints to achieving the CARPE strategic objective and IRs. Issues impacting CARPE goals and strategic objective at the landscape level are not injected in policy and law stimulation discussions at the national level.
- There exists a lack of clarity between the role of CARPE/IUCN as "initiator" and its role as "contributor" of legal change and decision-making innovation. According to the PMP, CARPE/IUCN – as the key facilitator of IR2 – should be the initiator of change in policy and laws, not a simple contributor among others, as it is more often the case.
- Complaints have been made that some focal points have been weak and not responsive to priorities identified in landscapes.
- Although the small grants program has had some success (as mentioned above), it has also not been afforded the flexibility to readjust its funding levels so as to align with the absorptive capacity of local NGOs.

CONCLUSIONS

Recorded strengths and weaknesses of the suite of implementing partners are also, to a large extent, the strengths and the weaknesses of CARPE. The partners together have displayed good capacities for participatory, multi-stakeholder land use planning, good capacities for PA management and for the support of more sustainable forest management capacities. There have been weaknesses in the capacities for developing CBNRM, for sustainable productive agriculture and for livelihood activities with clear linkages to biodiversity conservation. The environmental NGOs are exemplary in terms of their dedication, long-term presence and ability to attract large amounts of co-financing. In some countries, implementing partners seem to have strengthened collaboration with governmental institutions and in others there is no tangible evidence of improved collaboration.[52]

A good division of labor and tasks has been established within the consortia, based on a clear demarcation and understanding of the "field of expertise" of each partner (conservation, LUP, remote sensing, ecological monitoring, support to law development and decision making, advocacy, information generation and sharing, etc.).

[49] For details, see the evaluation of IR2 below.
[50] Details are provided in the "Capacity Building" section.
[51] See details in an upcoming section.
[52] Like in DRC (see Box 1).

4.6 CARPE AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

One issue that comes up repeatedly is the level of involvement of national government institutions in CARPE. The launch of CBFP and the expansion of CARPE in Phase II raised expectations of direct and immediate support among local governments and their technical agencies. After seven years, these government institutions have adjusted to a model of indirect support but still express concern at being too much on the margin of a program that depends upon their administrative/technical support and input.

USAID is quite limited in the ways in which it can officially involve individual host country government administrations. First, USAID's policy is not to directly channel its development assistance through government ministries and protected area agencies but rather to engage with governments through dialog, policy and planning, as well as clearly negotiated objectives and expected outcomes. Second, of the original CBFP countries, only DRC had a USAID presence; and travel, logistics, and budget limitations minimized the extent to which USAID's small management unit could directly engage the multitude of government actors affected by the CARPE design. Third, even if USAID had not operated with these restrictions, local governments' capacities and human resources were not adequate counterparts. During the early years of Phase II, concerned government offices did not exist or were poorly organized, and when they did interact with USAID, information was generally not shared internally or across agencies. The result was an initial operating environment in which governments felt left out of the program even if they recognized their own management limitations.

The program itself was largely conceptualized by the mainly US-based conservation NGOs, who – along with the State Department – mandated through CBFP the essential structure of CARPE. Additionally, USAID's role centered on coordination and providing funding to these NGOs and to other USG federal agencies – not directly to governments, as mentioned above. These intermediary implementing actors have direct relationships with governments, usually with signed agreements. Because the "face" of CARPE shown to governments comes in the form of these implementing partners, many CARPE-funded activities have not been recognized and identified with USAID.

Keeping in mind the general constraints just outlined, it's true that the perception of government representatives towards CARPE varies considerably from country to country and – despite its limitations – the USAID program has incrementally gained recognition. At the time of the mid-term evaluation, host country governments were vocal and unified in their complaints about not knowing what the program was or did and in expressing that they viewed CARPE as a US program funding US-based NGOs whose conservation activities were associated with closing off large areas to economic exploitation. Also, the NGO partners did little to link their efforts to the USAID funding as they built and implemented programs identified with their own organizations. The mid-term recommended greater effort by NGOs and suggested USAID require at least the minimal branding that was appropriate to cooperative agreements that were in effect at the time.

The current evaluation encountered a much more nuanced institutional environment. Countries, ministries and protected area agencies are better organized, share far more information internally, have invested in trans-boundary cooperation, are members of COMIFAC, have come to better know and appreciate the NGO partners, and mostly recognize that although USAID funds the program, it is prevented from providing them direct support. Nonetheless, there is still a lingering perception that USAID does not appropriately involve them in the planning, that they are secondary rather than primary recipients of program information, and that these qualities make it difficult for them to assume ownership, even when they recognize the important role of NGOs in carrying out program activities. Involvement of local government authorities depends almost entirely on how the various landscape consortia carry out their responsibilities.

In this context, it is useful to examine some of the input to the evaluation provided by key informants, experts and well-placed officials with whom the team met. In ROC, the acting director of the forest

service was well-informed about CARPE and supportive of the program. He receives work plans and activity reports. Also, land use plans for the landscapes are approved by the Council of Ministers and thus have legal status in ROC. Government representatives in Cameroon held generally positive views towards CARPE. In Gabon, an advisor to the Minister of the Environment told the team that the Gabonese government understands that the US government prefers to work through American environmental NGOs and that they have no problem with that. On the other hand, this advisor reported that the Gabonese government complains that they have very little information on what the NGOs are doing, as they do not receive annual work plans and do not receive activity reports. The Director of ANPN in Gabon shared the same concerns and deplored the lack of information on the CARPE partners' budgets. He said that when they work with USFS, USFWS or the US National Park Service, ANPN is always consulted on their activities; and he said this is often not the case for the NGOs funded by CARPE. The most negative opinions were encountered in DRC, where government officials expressed the desire to have a much stronger level of control over CARPE activities in the field. One ICCN official stated, however, that were the government given responsibility for choosing the NGO partners, for instance, in most cases they would select the same partners who are already CARPE implementing partners.

Of course, there are limitations to the extent to which counterparts in the government play the roles they would ideally like to play. Human resources capacity, while improving, still inhibits full government participation. Rotation of personnel and upheaval in ministerial organizational structures also limit consistent government support and administration. Recently, for example, there were two parallel agencies for national parks administration in Gabon; the one that prevailed is under direct presidential authority, itself an arrangement prompting constitutional challenge. Protected area and forest administration are often in different ministries, making intergovernmental communication and coordination an important challenge even before other technical and administrative agencies are brought into the diverse assemblage implied by the landscape approach. Revenues from resource extraction all too often are subject to corruption, mismanagement, and a general lack of transparency. The team found no basis for abandoning the model of channeling funds through NGO consortia, but a middle ground that redefines government involvement and roles under this model would be an indicated change. Already, in DRC for example, PA activities in CARPE work plans are from annual *Comite de Coordination du Site* (COCOSI) planning sessions – led by ICCN. This also includes peripheral areas to PA.

> "We have the clear impression that the governmental structures were not fully involved in the whole process of program design and establishment at the beginning. Currently, they continue to feel marginalized, and this is likely to impact negatively on program performance. It is not excessive to say that we don't know what they are doing. They say that documents and reports are on the website, but the website is in English and the majority of decision-makers here don't read English very well. We believe that in the future, CARPE and its partners should really sit down with ministries and national governance structures."
>
> Source: Mr José Ilanga, *Directeur/Coordinateur, Direction des Etudes et Planification, Ministère de l'Environnement, Conservation de la Nature et Tourisme*, Kinshasa, August 18, 2010

The CARPE Team maintains that government counterparts can find all the information they need on the Web. However, the two types of documents that government officials most commonly cited – annual work plans and activity reports – are not available for public access on the CARPE web site. There is also the question as to whether government officials should have to go to the web for information about NRM activities in their countries that are financed by a foreign government and implemented by US-based NGOs. The CARPE Team maintains that they have tried to identify ways to develop direct relationships with CARPE government agencies, but – without bilateral agreements with each country – there seem to be no readily available mechanisms for doing this. Theoretically, the governments should

be able to require that the NGOs keep them better informed as a condition to continued presence in their countries. In practical terms, however, this would probably not work well. The ministry with which an NGO obtains their authorization to operate in a country will often be different from the ministry that seeks to be better informed and/or involved in the NGOs activities.

Nevertheless, several trends bode well for future efforts to institutionalize the program, including:

- Collaboration between USAID and other federal agencies;
- The growing role of COMIFAC and regional institutions;
- The increasing capacity of conservation NGOs such as WWF, OSFAC and IUCN to act systemically and not just in geographically-isolated local circumstances; and
- The ever-increasing cumulative experience and development of human resources in the region.

These all suggest that USAID can achieve substantial progress if it explicitly defines its role as facilitator and catalyst rather than direct manager. To a large extent, USAID takes this role already with respect to the implementing partners that it directly funds; however, in order for the larger circle of stakeholders to take on necessary roles to achieve institutionalization of the program, CARPE planning processes will require more explicit engagement of stakeholders at multiple levels and the fostering of social and institutional networks that increasingly shift ownership and responsibility away from USAID as a single donor agency.

4.7 VALIDITY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

VALIDITY OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION

Most of the findings and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation were found to be sound. One of the key weaknesses was the failure to give adequate attention to the two major constraints to the development of CBNRM (which are the same two constraints that were not recognized in the original CARPE Strategic Plan): (1) the lack of a legal framework (except in Cameroon) for the empowerment of communities to control and manage their lands and resources; and (2) the lack of tested proven models of CBNRM in most of the CARPE countries, and the amount of time needed to develop such models, which would be a major constraint to CBNRM development.

The mid-term also advocated a considerable increase in the resources devoted to alternative livelihoods but without strong strategic guidance on how to link this to conservation. How to best establish the linkage between development and conservation is one of the major eternal questions in conservation programs. Major reviews of the integrated conservation and development experiences around the world have shown that there is no systematic linkage between the two. Sometimes development activities lead to decreased pressures on biodiversity and natural resources. And sometimes, people use their increased incomes to invest in guns and snares or to hire people to clear the forest for slash-and-burn agriculture as a means of establishing land ownership rights under traditional land tenure systems.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

There is every indication that the CARPE management team took the CARPE mid-term recommendations to heart, disputed few and implemented – or attempted to implement – a large number of them. This brief section documents the major actions taken and provides evidence of CARPE managers using monitoring and evaluation data to adaptively manage the complex program.

The recommendations and follow-on actions are summarized below. The report set forward six major programmatic recommendations and then provided additional recommendations for the resolution of significant CARPE II issues.

Programmatic Recommendations

IMPROVE PROGRAM BALANCE BY FOCUSING MORE ATTENTION AND RESOURCES ON IRS 2 AND 3 AND ON PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

CARPE was constrained by Congressional guidance from initially shifting financial resources "away" from landscapes so it attempted to act on this recommendation without substantial cost implications to the division of funds. Of approximately $15 million per year in the annual budget at the time of the evaluation, $12 million were dedicated to landscape consortia and $3 million for all other activities, including the program-funded CARPE management unit.

With the experience of the first three years of CARPE II, evaluators felt that CARPE funding could be allocated much more efficiently than by using the artificial proportional limitations established when CARPE II was initiated. At this time, CARPE management has been able to shift resources to more of a 50/50 split between crosscutting and landscape program budgets. This has enabled expanded programs by a number of institutions including NASA/UMD, USFS and IUCN.

For IR3, the WRI Global Forest Watch program was expanded to enable wider coverage beyond the initial efforts in Cameroon and Republic of Congo.

To give more focus to the policy function of IR2, this was shifted mainly to a new cooperative agreement with IUCN. Since October 2006, IUCN has taken on the majority of CARPE support for IR2, "natural resources governance strengthened" component. USAID and IUCN used the small grants program support to build the capacities of CSOs to advocate for policy and legislative actions, and increase communication between various stakeholders. This has resulted in Country Team involvement in setting the policy agenda, in legislative and policy reviews in each country, in reporting, and in proposed new laws and regulations that in some cases have been adopted. The performance of IUCN is assessed elsewhere in the evaluation.

STRIVE TO LINK LANDSCAPE PROGRAMS MORE CLOSELY TO EXISTING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES AND TO INCREASE HOST COUNTRY PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM DECISION MAKING.

The weakness of host government and even local citizen involvement and support for the landscape programs remains a weakness of CARPE that still needs to be addressed.

DIVERSIFY THE SKILL BASE OF CARPE PARTNERS WORKING IN LANDSCAPES TO ENSURE THAT LIVELIHOOD NEEDS, AS WELL AS CONSERVATION THREATS, ARE ADDRESSED IN A WAY THAT BUILDS A LOCAL CONSTITUENCY FOR CONSERVATION.

CARPE management dedicated substantial resources to preparing an entirely new set of guidelines and requests for proposals under the CARPE II (b) solicitation. Eleven cooperative agreements were awarded that replaced the Leader With Associates set-asides. The new consortia partnerships included both conservation and development partners in an effort to engage local communities, CSOs and government in overall landscape management implementation. This engagement and diversification process is ongoing and to date the results have been mixed.

GRADUALLY FOCUS LESS ATTENTION ON PROTECTED AREAS IN LANDSCAPES, AND FOCUS INCREASED ATTENTION ON ADDRESSING THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN FOREST CONCESSIONS AND WITH COMMUNITIES.

The land use planning guidelines place equal weight on PA, ERZ and CBNRM macro-zones and have become the foundation for landscape consortia strategy papers. The model has shifted to completely respond to this concern. The impact of this further effort to shift the program focus away from protected areas toward more balanced coverage across the landscapes is assessed throughout this evaluation.

REINVIGORATE THE USG FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO CBFP AND BACK THAT COMMITMENT WITH INCREASED STAFF ATTENTION TO BASIN-WIDE AND NATIONAL POLICY ISSUES.

This has been partially accomplished. The USG provides leadership for this program, and CARPE management has maintained multiple USG agencies' participation by engaging USFS in an expanded role, by continuing to work with the Department of State to keep attention focused on the strategic importance of the region to US interests, and by working closely with USAID/Kinshasa to strengthen livelihood activities. Passively, the program has also benefited from an expanded complementary role played by the USFWS through a mandated 632(a) transfer.

INCREASE EMPHASIS ON COUNTRY-LEVEL AND BASIN-WIDE COORDINATION (COUNTRY TEAMS, PRIORITIZATION OF NON-LANDSCAPE ACTIVITIES), WHILE AT THE SAME TIME REDUCING THE ISOLATION OF LANDSCAPE PROGRAMS AND IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTRA-LANDSCAPE LEARNING FROM SUCCESSFUL MODELS.

A new CARPE support contract was recommended to sustain this effort, but CARPE management stated at the time that a contract was logistically too complex for lead time to CARPE II (b) and instead opted to use the new IUCN cooperative agreement to accomplish this purpose. One substantial outcome of CARPE attention to this recommendation is the extensive set of lessons learned in a recently published volume.

The editors state the following:

> The initial impetus for this initiative was an observation by an external evaluation of CARPE that there was relatively little sharing of information within the programme between numerous actors and sites concerning the conservation strategies undertaken and the results achieved (Weidemann Consortium, 2006). The evaluation concluded that this lack of information exchange was a threat to the success of CARPE as a large-scale regional programme, a view that was confirmed by programme partners during the CARPE Phase II (b) Inception Workshop that was held in Yaoundé in February 2007.

Other Recommendations

TIGHTEN PROGRAM FOCUS

Focus CARPE activities on those programmatic or spatial landscape activities that will most directly reduce identified threats.

CARPE cut out federal agencies and crosscutting functions that were not judged to be directly or effectively focused on threat reduction and maintained those that have a demonstrated comparative advantage.

IMPROVE LANDSCAPE PERFORMANCE

Continue to use and promote a landscape approach but place less emphasis on the concept of "landscapes" as territorial units. Landscape programs need to move beyond first-stage targets (largely protected areas) and should deal with broader and difficult landscape issues, including livelihoods issues.

The new awards continued much of what had started under CARPE II (a) but did shift consortia to better integrate strengths of a wider range of partners. Teaming arrangements included livelihood, forestry, local governance and – sometimes – conflict resolution or other specialized contractors/sub-grantees, but these arrangements did not do so sufficiently as per findings in this evaluation. Conservation NGOs sought partners that provide the needed expertise in CBNRM, governance and other functions, but these arrangements have not counterbalanced the focus on large international conservation NGOs with their strengths and weaknesses.

PRIORITIZE AND MAKE BETTER USE OF CROSSCUTTING PROGRAM COMPONENTS

CARPE should continue to support a small grants program in each country focused on strengthening the institutional capacity of NGOs and CBOs at both the national and landscape levels.

CARPE effectively shifted management of the small grants fund to an impartial third party with positive results.

IMPROVE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

CARPE successfully integrated a Deputy Director into the management structure to balance the landscape program with overall program elements. The IUCN grant supports CARPE by shifting management functions of the Focal Points away from the CARPE unit. This grant also supports the CARPE country teams, increases capacity to manage the focal point and small grant programs, and provides venues for country and regional exchange of lessons learned. It promotes successful models and learning, coordinates CARPE's non-landscape capacity building and policy activities, and provides broad technical support to IR 2. USAID has at least partially made the Focal Points more effective elements of the USAID management team.

IMPROVE CARPE'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS, OF WHICH MANY DO NOT APPRECIATE CARPE AND COULD LIMIT ITS FUTURE SUCCESS

CARPE continues to work on this element of the program. Recent adoption of the CARPE land use planning model by provincial and ministerial authorities in DRC is an example of the movement in COMIFAC to adopt the model. Authorities in many CARPE countries are more nuanced and informed in their efforts to lobby for more central roles in CARPE's future.

WORK CLOSELY WITH THE WASHINGTON CARPE TEAM TO IDENTIFY AND HELP CHANNEL OTHER RESOURCES TO THE CARPE (AND CBFP) EFFORT

This is largely beyond the managerial capacity of the field; however, CARPE managers have attempted to attract additional support. The main US success is the growing interest of channeling funds to GCC activities. Also, CARPE management has succeeded in attracting substantial funding from other sources such as the ADB and GEF.

4.8 ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP ROLE OF CARPE IN CBFP

DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND USAID

The Department of State played a key role in establishing and initiating the CBFP and in channeling resources to and in the initial facilitation of the CBFP. In recent years, and after Colin Powell's period of leadership, interest in the State Department has declined with the exception that it has employed a surprising series of diplomatic staff with backgrounds in Central African conservation. Colin Powell's remark that we "are in this for the long term" has thus far proven true. State has provided continuing support to USAID and has played a number of other roles to reinforce the USG's institutional commitment to CBFP. Over time, State has assumed a generally lower profile that leaves USAID to carry on day to day implementation.

The US undertook initial facilitation of the CBFP and was followed in turn by the French, Germans and now the Canadians. USAID CARPE helped smooth an uneven start of US facilitation and its transition to French leadership. As a Type II voluntary partnership, CBFP had no formal structure. Initial US facilitation at the beginning of CARPE II focused on information sharing and donor coordination. At the outset, only France and the US had committed funds. With neither structure nor budget and employing only part time staff, the US facilitation effort had little impact. The development of USAID CARPE eased this uneven beginning and paved the way for solid collaboration during the second rotation, in 2004-2006, under the French Government. France financed a technical advisor in the region and more directly aligned CBFP support with COMIFAC's "*Plan de Convergence*."

With day to day facilitation of the CBFP, USAID continues to take the lead in coordinating with donors and operational activities of the partnership in the field. State Department, through the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES), continues to exert leadership in terms of channeling funding for sustainable landscapes and biodiversity. State engages in international efforts to set the stage for US climate change policy including for the CBFP and also takes the lead when

diplomacy is involved, such as when Heads of State and Ministers were in Washington recently. At these meetings, the Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs reaffirmed US recognition of the global significance of the Congo Basin forests and of US commitment to support CBFP objectives. State also considers its network of Ambassadors and Embassy staffs to be a support. US Ambassadors and Embassy staff in the region, however, are subject to high levels of turnover and to short-term policy, diplomatic and economic concerns in the region. Since 2005, the State Department Regional Environment Officer is no longer based in Gabon, and that post had helped link State and USAID. Also, USAID CARPE staff is continually briefing new embassy staff. However, the State Department OES point of contact for CBFP – as reported to the Evaluation Team – feels that the collaboration with USAID remained solid, citing the recently published State of the Forest report as attesting to the results accruing in the field.

USAID CBFP LEADERSHIP IN THE FIELD

CARPE's landscape-based field activities have catalyzed a larger community of donors and activities that are working in the CARPE landscapes with the program's NGO partners under the common framework of the landscape strategies. USAID has encouraged creative thinking through the process of dividing all landscapes under separately funded cooperative agreements. CARPE management uses its substantial involvement authority for agreements, staff, work plans, etc. Responding to a mid-term evaluation finding that partners were not sharing information, CARPE – through IUCN – launched a major effort to document and now disseminate lessons and best practices across the region.

CARPE has made efforts to engage individual national governments. The CARPE Deputy Director worked with IUCN and country teams and took a strong role in the production of the lessons learned volume. The focus on bringing landscape programs into compliance with USAID MOV (USFS) standards did not contribute to engagement of national governments, and such engagement remains inadequate. Greater focus on the relationship between landscape leaders and national governments by the CARPE Deputy may have yielded more progress toward sustainable institutional transfer of the CARPE LUP model.

CONCLUSIONS

- USAID CARPE successfully met its leadership role under COMIFAC's *Plan de Convergence* axis of sustainable management of natural and artificial forests by developing a commonly accepted model or framework under which to pursue this objective. The greatly increased flow of donor funds into CBFP landscapes indicates that the land use planning model developed by USAID's landscape program is starting to be institutionalized.
- The existence of a permanent secretariat for COMIFAC has clarified its more prominent role as an intra-regional institution and underscores COMIFAC's readiness to more actively harmonize and institutionalize best practices across member states.
- USAID's CBFP leadership role for USG support would be enhanced if it took more direct technical support and indirect financial support to COMIFAC and were to house some CARPE functions within COMIFAC in an effort to reinforce and harmonize the region's conservation policies.
- The rotating facilitation role of CBFP continues to interject new energy and thoughtfulness into the partnership, which continues to attract new members. USAID CARPE has played a quiet role encouraging this expansion in both membership and in resource commitments.

5.0 LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF CARPE

5.1 LESSONS LEARNED

After two phases and 15 years of applying flexible, adaptive approaches under wide ranging and challenging conditions, CARPE II's implementation successes and failures provide a foundation from which to draw going forward. CARPE recently completed and published an extensive internal stocktaking and documenting of lessons learned, and to this effort, we add or reinforce the following:

(1) The landscape concept provides a sound basis for conservation planning, and participatory, multi-stakeholder, landscape-level land use planning has been developed and functions well as an encompassing framework and strategic tool. It is constrained, however, in that some of the sustainable natural resource management systems needed for the macro-zones have yet to be fully developed.

(2) It is possible to reduce the negative impacts of logging in the Congo Basin. The recent CARPE-supported development of natural forest management systems, the certification of forest management and of timber products, and European and American restrictions on the import of wood products from illegal logging have all combined to present an exceptional opportunity for the rapid expansion of lower impact, more sustainable forest management in Central Africa. In addition, this has the potential to be adapted to domestic, regional and Asian markets.

(3) Support for the protected areas in the landscapes needs to shift increasingly to greater emphasis on management effectiveness (including capacity-building) and sustainable financing.

(4) There is considerable risk in pushing CBNRM management planning without first identifying legal instruments for the empowerment of community managers. These same risks may be present as REDD programs are developed and implemented.

(5) A single organization cannot possess and bring to bear the entire range of expertise needed to meet the multiple challenges in the landscapes. Effective teaming and cross-organizational learning have lead to nascent models – community reserves in Tayna, revenue sharing in Southeast Cameroon, large mammal survey methodologies in Lope, Gabon, conservation finance in TNS – that are beginning to spread from one landscape and partner to others. These models also reveal that implementers benefit from continually seeking new responsive links with other organizations. Each partner has comparative strengths that need to be complemented to achieve optimal results.

5.2 MODIFICATION TO CONSERVATION STRATEGIES: SHOULD THERE BE A CARPE III?

The Evaluation Team feels strongly that support for CARPE should be continued. A third phase as originally planned back in 1995 is justified for several reasons. First, the resources of the Congo Basin are of global importance and the region remains of strategic importance to the US. Evidenced by great apes, forest elephants and other wildlife, the extensive humid forests of Central Africa are of critical global importance for biodiversity, the stability of the earth's climate and for other ecosystem services – not to mention that the forests together are second in size only to those of the Amazon. The United Nations has recently estimated that without conservation programs (like CARPE), 40% of remaining Congo Basin forests will be gone by 2040. Second, countries and institutions have become much more stable and now have improved capacity compared to the conditions at the outset of CARPE, and these conditions are now much better for capitalizing on investments and lessons learned from CARPE's

experience to date. Third, CARPE's approach is innovative and pioneering. The program has built on its success and has identified its failures, which are inevitable for a program of this size and complexity, not to mention the great challenges of working in a region of such instability and weak institutions/governance. Although CARPE has made considerable headway, progress is fragile and time is needed to bring CARPE's various initiatives to fruition. If the USG were to pull out now, it would undermine its credibility and that of CBFP partners. While other donors might step in – since they recognize the importance of the issues at stake – this US departure would substantially weaken the conservation efforts in Central Africa. In addition, the substantial and diverse co-financing that has been mobilized for the landscapes is still dependent on core CARPE funding for basic infrastructure, transport and communications.

CARPE has made significant progress in managing protected areas and production forests, but the new threats – combined with the changing magnitude of existing threats that the Evaluation Team has identified – will create a whole host of new pressures on forests and biodiversity. CARPE has created a foundation that will help institutions in the region become more capable of completing the job and sustaining accomplishments. The increased stability of governments in the region is leading to high levels of investment, new movement of populations, re-establishment of local and global markets, rapid population growth, and increased pressures on coastal & marine resources. The institutionalization of CARPE under Phase III represents the best hope that this accelerating development will be balanced with essential conservation functions.

In the landscapes, the program is now positioned to move more strongly from the land use planning and management planning phase into operational land/natural resource management. Thus, the major impacts of CARPE are to be achieved as this transition unfolds in the coming years. This is not to say that planning should be abandoned, since land use will continue to change – led, for example, by the huge new mines and associated infrastructure that are planned or under development – and will need to be addressed with implementing partners. Plans can re-done or amended wherever conditions warrant it. Additionally, the third phase will be critical for the institutionalization of the landscape approach and the management of the macro-zones, and this third phase presents a critical opportunity to make up for Phase II weaknesses, such as in the CBNRM area. Furthermore, the expectations of communities in the landscapes have been raised, and the development of profitable, market-oriented CBNRM systems is critical to meeting those expectations and for transforming local communities into partners for conservation. Finally, most of what has been done in Phase II is already supportive of climate change mitigation. Phase III should integrate the growing focus on climate change mitigation while building on the strengths of Phase II.

To achieve all this, CARPE III should be extended at least through 2017, and extending through 2020 would be preferable when one considers: (1) how long, in such a challenging context, it has taken to get this far; (2) the amount of time needed to develop viable CBNRM systems before one can begin to adapt and replicate them on a large scale; (3) the inadequate level of involvement of host country governments in CARPE planning and implementation, to date; (4) the need to develop and implement a strategic approach to policy modification and development; (5) the relatively modest amounts of money invested compared to the enormous area and its importance to the US; and (6) the need to incorporate a climate change component into the region's forest and environment conservation and development strategies.

OVERALL FRAMEWORK FOR CARPE III

The team recommends continuing the current CARPE structure with some important modifications.

During CARPE III, the CARPE partners should continue to strengthen and complete their focus on field-level strategies for forest and biodiversity conservation in the existing landscapes. However, USAID should analyze the opportunity for the development of a parallel Feed the Future regional program for

Central Africa that would complement the CARPE program and would make important investments in productive sustainable agriculture.

Resources permitting, field programs could incorporate additional landscapes that harbor important and threatened biodiversity. Specifically, CARPE III should expand its coastal biodiversity conservation initiative, preferably to a full "seascape" component. Also, three new terrestrial landscapes would benefit from inclusion in the CARPE program (see below for details).

At the same time, CARPE III should add a carbon objective and take on a major new focus on climate mitigation concentrating on (1) the testing of field-level systems for avoided deforestation, and (2) complementing other donor efforts to build national and regional REDD+ readiness and capacity that is consistent with social equity and biodiversity conservation objectives.

CARPE III should be designed to achieve both biodiversity and climate change objectives. As nearly all CARPE-funded activities in the landscapes contribute to both of these objectives, programmatic requirements for tracking activities that would be funded by biodiversity monies versus climate change funding can be kept to a minimum and integrated into the current monitoring and evaluation reporting structure. Creating separate programs and categories would also serve to weaken the effective coordination and integration of activities at the landscape level.

Expanded scope and better integration of crosscutting or transversal regional support activities are needed. This support to policy, governance and monitoring of both biodiversity/forest conservation and climate change mitigation would better define and raise the program's profile as a support to COMIFAC and national administrations. The IUCN grant should be continued but in a context of much greater integration with other national-level, non-landscape program support through USG agencies, WRI, and through national programs of the landscape implementing partners.

The CARPE management team should continue to lead the CBFP/CARPE effort. Washington-based support to CARPE, which the CARPE II mid-term evaluation encouraged, should be given a still higher-profile role. An inter-agency coordination panel representing the State Department, USAID, USFWS, USFS, and NASA could be established not only as a steering committee but to provide input, support and oversight to the Kinshasa-based management structure.

Congress should increase funding to CARPE. Absorptive capacity of the landscape consortia has increased dramatically over the course of CARPE Phases I and II. They could now handle greatly increased levels of funding should the US government and match-funding sources decide to increase their investments to accelerate completion of the development of management systems and their transfer to national and local institutions. Despite some increases in funding, non-landscape components also remain underfunded even without a sustainable landscape component.

5.3 LANDSCAPE COMPONENT: RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

This section provides detailed recommendations for the general program outlined above.

MAINTAIN LANDSCAPE PROGRAM AS THE CORE OF CARPE III

Forest and biodiversity conservation CARPE III should continue to target the 12 CARPE/CBFP landscapes, with the new emphasis on effective, sustainable resource management systems in the priority macro-zones defined in CARPE II. A strong effort should be placed on making up for past delays in the development of CBNRM with a strong emphasis on the necessary legal reforms and the development of widely-replicable pilot management systems covering as many NRM sectors and countries as possible. CARPE III should further emphasize PA management effectiveness and sustainable financing for PA, and it should also be used to make a major push to generalize successes in the development of forest management and forest certification in logging concessions while strengthening

their biodiversity conservation aspects. CARPE III should also focus on the institutionalization and sustainability of CARPE's forest and biodiversity conservation initiatives.

Furthermore, the program can be strengthened by maintaining the basic framework of the existing system of one landscape lead as the head of a consortium for each landscape, as well as refining consortia requirements based on detailed recommendations of this report and subsequent refinement by a design team. CARPE III should expand the use of more local NGOs and the integration of the local administrators and government services, and the program should reinforce efforts to identify and attract non-CARPE funding to meet overall landscape land use plan requirements.

General recommendations to improve landscape program implementation:

(1) Expand institutional/stakeholder commitment and engagement through inception events and follow-through (by landscape partners).

(2) Reassess threats in light of changing macro trends affecting them and revise priority intervention areas (critical habitat threatened) accordingly – that is, focus on specific macro- or micro-zone plans rather than trying to formalize landscape-level government administrative bodies (which may not be indicated – Adirondack Model).

(3) Focus on consolidating PA management advances.

(4) Focus CBNRM models and minimum governance conditions/establish checklist for minimum conditions based on evaluation team inputs.

(5) Expand information and lesson sharing, and harness institutional strengths of respective conservation NGO.

NEW SEASCAPES OPTIONAL SUB-COMPONENT

The pressures and rate of degradation of Central African marine and coastal ecosystems is so acute that the addition of a seascapes component is recommended, financial resources permitting. Legal restrictions on entry of industrial fishing boats into coastal waters are routinely ignored, estuaries and nursery grounds are severely degraded, and mangroves are being clear-cut for Nigerian and other distant energy markets. Furthermore, the ocean provides presently uncontrolled access for traffic in ivory and bushmeat and illegal timber from terrestrial ecosystems. The CARPE III design team should assess the advantages and disadvantages of a stand-alone seascape component versus an expanded, reinvigorated coastal component for Congo and Gabon.

NEW LANDSCAPES OPTION

Resources permitting, CARPE should add new landscapes to insure more complete coverage of critical biodiversity in the Central African forests. The original selection of core areas and landscapes has withstood the test of time, but some key areas do not have CARPE coverage. Both the program and these landscapes would be strengthened by their inclusion. The evaluation team did not complete a full assessment but from our work, we would recommend the TL2, the Campo M'an, and the Cameroon Western Highlands be added to CARPE III. For the Western Highlands (including Mt. Cameroon, Korup and Cross River, and the greater Takamanda-Mane sub-areas), the team recommends close collaboration with USFWS and exploration with USAID/Nigeria regarding a potential transnational landscape.

FOR PROTECTED AREAS MACRO-ZONES

For protected areas, CARPE's focus should largely shift from identifying and establishing protected areas to increasing the effectiveness of PA management. There are a number of tools that could be used for this purpose. The WWF/World Bank Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (the METT) would be a good tool for both PA managers and for USAID monitoring of this component, and it could be modified

to better fit Central African conditions and could be complemented by continuing system-wide management strengthening. This effort could also draw on such tools as the Nature Conservancy's Conservation Action Planning, data and information tools such as the management information system (MIST), and other tools that may be used for enhancing management effectiveness.

The development of strategies for sustainable financing should be given high priority. This may include the development of PA business plans, strategies for enhanced cost effectiveness (e.g., increased effectiveness of anti-poaching to minimize the number/costs of eco-guards) and new public/private partnerships for PA management. PA management should be fully institutionalized by the end of CARPE III.

FOR EXTRACTIVE RESOURCE MACRO-ZONES

CARPE partners should aggressively push to expand and strengthen the program of natural forest management in logging concessions and certification of well managed forests. CARPE partners may recognize one or more of them as providing leadership in this area and seek to extend this capacity across landscapes and partners. They should seek to strengthen the biodiversity conservation requirements of certification, including the biodiversity of the forest canopy, and ensure that allowable cut is calculated on the growth/yield of commercial species (as opposed to the total yield of all species in the forest). Close attention should be paid to documenting the impact of anti-poaching measures/wildlife management inside of forest concessions.

CARPE partners and USAID should work through COMIFAC, the European Union and the US to increase pressures on countries for requiring that all industrial-scale logging concessions be brought under sustainable management and that the traffic in wood products from illegal logging be reduced to a minimum. USFWS and USFS should potentially be engaged in investigative work and in the development of strategic partnerships. CARPE should seek to make the satellite-based illegal logging monitoring developed by WRI operational in all CARPE countries with logging concessions in natural forests where it is needed.[53]

USAID and CARPE partners should use FSC certification criteria, or a modified form of them, for monitoring management effectiveness of forest concession macro-zones. To the extent that FSC criteria are weak on social equity and biodiversity, they should be complemented by additional standards for use in USAID's performance monitoring.

FOR CBNRM MACROZONES AND THE MANAGEMENT OF VILLAGE LANDS

Analytical clarity for the CBNRM macrozone is needed. As a first step, the CBNRM macro-zones should be renamed "Village Lands" or something similar, which would provide an umbrella for CBNRM, sustainable agriculture, conservation-friendly enterprises, as well as settlements and other developed areas.

High priority should be given to completing the legal and regulatory reforms needed for the empowerment of communities for CBNRM. Community managers need to have exclusive access rights to lands and resources, management rights and the rights to harvest and market natural resource-based products. Regulations should specify these rights at the highest possible level and be recognized by appropriate local administration.

CARPE should initiate CBNRM pilot projects in as many countries as possible but only where the legal framework, or an exceptional arrangement, makes it possible to empower community managers at the pilot sites. Exceptional arrangements should be based on written commitments from appropriate authorities and not just verbal support from authorities who may be replaced with little warming. IUCN

[53] There are no forestry concessions to speak of in Burundi or Rwanda, and Chad is outside the current focus of US assistance to CBFP and COMIFAC.

should immediately be given the task of determining which countries either already have the necessary legal framework in place for each natural resource sector or are willing to take exceptional measures to empower communities in as many pilot sites as possible. For example, the latter might be done by ministerial decree. The legal framework should be analyzed separately for CBFM, wildlife management, fisheries management and reserve management, as separate laws frequently govern each sector.

The siting of pilot projects should be done to give them the maximum probability of success. Developing the first successful pilot initiatives is always difficult because they have to achieve social, economic, ecological and technical objectives. A set of criteria for the selection of pilot sites should be developed and applied.

An assessment of CBNRM potential should be done for each of the landscapes and for each of the Village Lands macro-zones, placing a strong emphasis on economic potential. Possibly, CARPE III should have access to an Indefinite Quantity Contract such as Prosperity, Livelihoods and Conserving Ecosystems (PLACE) for ongoing assessments and studies or for stocktaking exercises, which were undertaken for CBNRM elsewhere under an earlier Indefinite Quantity Contract. This additional assessment is essential for USAID to proceed optimally with implementation and institutionalization of CBNRM under CARPE III.

CARPE should give priority to forms of CBNRM that generate substantial revenues for communities and for community members. The empowerment of communities for CBNRM should be based on conditional contracts. The conditions specified should include measures that are important for biodiversity conservation, such as no hunting of protected species and no slash-and-burn agriculture except in micro-zones that are zoned for it. Sustainable natural resource management systems should be favored over economic alternatives to resource use. Forms of CBNRM that generate substantial amounts of employment and cash revenues for community members and revenues for communities should be favored over those that primarily generate benefits only for the community as a whole. A major emphasis should be placed on developing economic incentives for conservation on CBNRM lands and for the development of sustainable financing systems whereby a portion of revenues are reinvested to cover management costs.

Participatory mapping of traditional tenure and resource access rights should be done systematically in all Village Lands macro-zones including those where it has not been undertaken or is insufficient. These rights should typically form the basis for the voluntary definition of the communities that will be empowered for CBNRM. Where overlapping tenure systems exist (as between semi-nomadic forest dwellers and settled agricultural groups), equitable compromises will need to be developed.

Landscape leads should assess or reassess the role of customary authorities and local institutions in natural resource management and should seek to integrate them wherever principles of good governance and the equitable sharing of costs and benefits can be ensured. Traditional community rules over resource access and use should be integrated wherever such rules are compatible with sustainable NRM. CARPE partners should also make it standard practice to seek to identify local individuals who are natural leaders for conservation, to integrate them into governance structures and to give them support and capacity building.

Both the landscape partners and, where possible, the IUCN small grants program should provide capacity building support to CSOs, advocacy networks and their spokespeople in natural resource management, good governance and equitable management carbon credits and other forms of revenue sharing. Local NGO partners should be identified and given the capacity to implement training in a cost-effective manner.

USAID should identify a suitable contracting mechanism for supplying one (or more) senior level CBNRM specialists to support development of and legal reforms for CBNRM in the CARPE countries. This should be someone who feels comfortable interacting with ministers and who also has strong

practical field experience with the testing and development of CBNRM initiatives. The CARPE landscape partners will also need to recruit CBNRM specialists and to reassess the CBNRM expertise of their existing partners.

The process of inter-landscape learning should be intensified in support of the CBNRM pilot initiatives. Yearly CBNRM field-site adaptive management reviews feeding into yearly exchanges of experiences, lessons learned and best practices should be developed. In essence, this could be a CBNRM working group evolving from the IUCN lessons learned effort.

Agriculture

CARPE partners need to distinguish general agricultural support that might still meet biodiversity funding criteria from agricultural livelihood activities that are directly related to high priority threats to biodiversity in the CBFP landscapes. In critical areas, CARPE should develop strategies and criteria for agricultural interventions in support of biodiversity and forest conservation. The program should focus on minimizing the areas under agriculture. The following elements should be considered for inclusion is such a strategy:

- Micro-zoning for agriculture;
- Improved soil fertility maintenance;
- Minimizing area under annual crops and maximizing areas under perennial crops;
- Improved fallows that increase the restoration of soil fertility and/or that shorten the period of fallow needed to restore soil fertility;
- Increasing yields and productivity; and
- Collective measures for elephant/animal/pest controls.

The development of more sustainable agriculture would be an excellent use of climate mitigation funds, although the Team understands that current trends would exclude the use of climate mitigation funding for agriculture. When one looks at CARPE-generated maps of deforestation in Central Africa, one sees that it is concentrated primarily around the margins of the humid forests. Deforestation caused by the expansion of agriculture has not yet been a major cause of forest fragmentation – fragmentation triggers unavoidable loss of biodiversity over time. But deforestation of the humid forest is a major cause of increased CO_2 emissions whether it occurs at the margins or at the center of the forest.

Livelihoods

Livelihoods development under CARPE must always be tied directly to enhanced biodiversity and forest conservation. Improved livelihood strategies should be components of conservation strategies based on PA, ERZ, CBNRM and agriculture rather than stand-alone livelihood strategies for conservation. Priority should always be given to the development of livelihoods that create incentives for conservation as opposed to livelihoods that simply provide alternatives to destructive or unsustainable practices. This will generally mean giving preference to CBNRM-based livelihoods. These livelihoods should be made conditional upon the communities respect for their obligations.

5.4 SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES COMPONENT: GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

CARPE III should have a second, new objective or major intermediate result for climate change mitigation. The associated activities should include both field- and policy-level interventions. The following are general concepts to integrate into specific Phase III design proposals:

- Climate change in CARPE III should be directed at mitigation efforts.
- Climate mitigation field activities should be developed in the existing landscapes.

- Climate change and biodiversity should be linked, as nearly all CARPE field activities for biodiversity have secondary positive effects for climate change mitigation.
- Biodiversity and social criteria should be integrated into climate mitigation strategies.
- CARPE should support capacity building and legal/policy reforms at the national and regional levels.
- Coordination with other donors is critical to success and efficiency and should therefore be prioritized.

Although international initiatives for climate change mitigation do not focus on field-level interventions at present, tested and proven field-level systems for maintenance of carbon sinks will become absolutely essential as these programs evolve. The development of field-level systems will necessarily require a considerable period of time. The US government's major comparative advantage in climate mitigation in Central Africa is in the area of field-level land management systems for avoided deforestation, and CARPE III should build on this comparative advantage.

CLIMATE CHANGE IN LANDSCAPES

Climate change in CARPE III should be directed at mitigation efforts. To the extent that USAID Sustainable Landscape program funds are available, these should be integrated with other activities in CARPE but tracked separately from a budgetary standpoint. An effective program of climate mitigation will target the areas of highest actual and potential deforestation rates.

CARPE III should develop field-based sustainable landscape demonstration projects in existing landscapes. Local demonstration project design documents should be developed for areas that fall within CBFP landscapes.

This third phase of CARPE should engage qualified partners that can build the capacities of national and regional stakeholders to estimate and monitor levels of carbon stocks in the forests of the Congo basin. One cannot do a field demonstration without monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV), and at present, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is so focused on national level carbon accounts that they are doing little on field-level MRV.

CARPE field partners should continue to develop strategies and management capabilities that help maintain carbon stocks through protection and sustainable use of forests or new strategies that can increase carbon sequestration through plantations, assisted natural regeneration or other techniques.

Landscape partners should integrate landscape structures with carbon management units and MRV related to local REDD+ implementation. Criteria for selecting land units for carbon projects will at times be different from other purposes.

Field projects should be located in landscapes where implementing partners can quickly integrate a carbon finance project into the overall landscape by building on the existing base of investment in nature conservation, governance and creation of economic opportunities. Ample areas within landscapes offer the potential to monetize carbon assets; all three major categories of land use should be targeted. These initial demonstration projects should be confined to a limited number of selected locations, at least over the next several years as REDD+ standards and readiness strategies are put into place.

These field-based carbon projects should focus on standards for forest carbon payments. Develop and test field technical methodologies to meet Clean Development Mechanism, Voluntary Carbon Standard, and evolving REDD+ standards for forest carbon validation and verification. Identify and pursue on-the-ground REDD+ demonstration projects within existing landscapes to develop and establish approved methodologies to validate, measure, monitor and report on forest emissions, leakage and carbon sequestration over time. CARPE III should field-test these programs and supply relevant field-based

information to national carbon accounting programs. It should explore new teaming arrangements in landscape consortia that bring in these new skill sets.

Sustainable landscape funding in the landscapes should also meet biodiversity and social thresholds. To work in new field sites would require large additional investments and should only take place if CARPE overall expands into new areas. There are priority areas outside landscapes, of course, but it would not be within USAID's comparative advantage to pursue sustainable landscape programs outside the existing CBFP landscapes. Since the spatial units for carbon projects will not necessarily correspond to existing CARPE macro-zones, new zoning should take place that looks for appropriate units in which to develop carbon projects. CARPE landscape partners should support stronger, more transparent forest tenure rights for women and indigenous groups so that they may benefit fully from carbon-related payments for ecological services.

FOR NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

CARPE support to regional policy and crosscutting issues should include climate change. The following initiatives should be undertaken at the national and regional levels:

- Provide funding (in complement to the United Nations, World Bank and other REDD-readiness donors) to establish effective accountability systems and help overcome financial barriers to participation.
- Strengthen the national implementation of REDD+ through: (1) formulation of guidelines to be included in land use plans that promote participation in REDD+ (e.g., participation in monitoring, reporting, and verification systems); and (2) development of an improved enabling context such as support for land and resource tenure reform, strengthening civil society organizations and involvement of local governments.
- Establish international review systems, possibly through COMIFAC/CBFP that give non-State actors the opportunity of recourse to an appeals body if carbon funding excludes them or is found to be substantially inequitable.
- Provide for civil society – especially indigenous peoples and women's groups – in the governing body of a regional (probably COMIFAC) REDD finance facility.
- Promote the development and adoption of policies and standards for the participation of indigenous and local peoples in an international REDD+ mechanism through explicit standards and through negotiated revenue-sharing that are based on an acknowledgement of rights that require consultation/participation.
- Provide policy support to COMIFAC and national governments to articulate the Congo Basin perspectives and their integration into the global framework for REDD+. This would include recognition of the value of avoided deforestation in the REDD+ process.

During CARPE III, USAID should continue to work with implementing partners and their organizations on these issues. Some of this work could be through landscape-funded activities, but a new CARPE III can also seek ways to link directly to partner organizations such as WWF and WCS who already have regional GCC staff positions. CARPE III should also support forest monitoring and modeling related to climate change in the basin, which would build on existing remote sensing based mapping and monitoring efforts but modify terms to include climate change concerns.

A key challenge will be to integrate biodiversity and social criteria into policies and standards for sustainable landscape-funded field activities. Reasonable allocation of forest carbon revenues should provide benefits for indigenous peoples and local communities and at the same time generate significant positive social and biodiversity outcomes. This undertaking must rely on a wide range of civil society and government organizations, integrating existing partners and expanding to include new partners as appropriate. For example, the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance has already drafted

standards that are being tested in carbon projects elsewhere through non-CARPE funding in the Congo Basin.

Entrepreneurial partnerships
REDD+ preparation should establish conditions and a framework for long-term carbon payments, and this should occur early enough in CARPE III for the design to include a role for the private sector. Private sector partners and brokering organizations can initiate field activities that build on the CARPE investments. Already, CARPE can foster the development of entrepreneurial partnerships to help monetize and maintain payments for forest carbon by involving private sector partners who can attract capital and mediate between communities and investors. As sustainable landscape programs expand, these carbon trading and service firms can spread investor risk by combining carbon credits from a number of sources (and thus increase the attractiveness of such investments) and bundle them for sale and trading in dedicated carbon markets. Many of these same firms provide multiple services in all aspects of carbon project development and monitoring. USAID may want to consider involving private sector partners or carbon finance organizations and banks in CARPE III to assist in this activity.

OTHER GCC-RELATED POSSIBILITIES
CARPE cannot cover all climate related activities. Other options that were considered but not endorsed by the Evaluation Team are presented in Appendix I.

5.5 REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SUPPORT COMPONENT

CARPE SUPPORT AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS
General CARPE III design considerations include the following:

- CARPE III should include a regional institutional support component for those institutions that can be effective in advancing CARPE objectives and programs. Institutional support should be reviewed annually and funding should be based on performance. Regional institutions that may be supported would include COMIFAC, OSFAC, *Observatoire des Forêts d'Afrique* (OFAC), RAPAC and others.
- Seek a strong involvement and buy-in of regional and national institutions during CARPE III design and inception workshop.
- Develop various mechanisms for regional and national technical support for CBNRM, tenure/social issues and climate change.
- Develop regional/COMIFAC involvement in legal/policy reforms and harmonization.
- Incorporate/integrate the program with climate change mitigation.

Specific CARPE III design recommendations:

(1) Maintain a core governance support grant through IUCN or other similar implementing mechanism:

   a. Continue the grants program for capacity building and advocacy; also expand their scope if possible and improve decision making process for greater transparency.

   b. Reinforce country team approach by shifting it from CARPE agenda setting to a national agenda setting exercise that defines how CARPE can support it. Work towards much greater participation of professional staffs of USG and conservation NGOs. Ensure that the agendas include measures that are needed for CARPE objectives and IRs.

   c. Strengthen civil society (including gender and indigenous peoples) participation in conservation governance through capacity building, information sharing, and communications programs.

(2) Establish formal policy analysis and policy change agenda at national and regional levels.

(3) Identify an appropriate contracting mechanism to provide a senior CBNRM advisor in support of CARPE III. This could be done under the USFS PASA, or the advisor could come from WRI or the Rights and Resources Initiative. The advisor could be placed with COMIFAC and/or associated Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) regional structures.

(4) Identify an appropriate contracting mechanism to provide social science expertise with tenure specialization at the regional mechanism level. This specialist could and should also contribute to other revenue-sharing equity challenges in Payments for Environmental Services and forest carbon. Additionally, this person will be the CARPE high point for indigenous peoples and gender. The specialist would be complemented by other partners – such as local NGOs, development partners, and CARPE partners – beefing up their skills.

(5) The deforestation monitoring and associated remote sensing services should be institutionalized with OSFAC. Support to OSFAC should be continued under CARPE III and integrated with the *Observatoire des Forêts d'Afrique* (OFAC).

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE GOVERNANCE

Through the CARPE III focus on institutionalization (see 5.6 below), transform the IUCN/CARPE country matrix into a government-endorsed and government-driven agenda document within the regional context of COMIFAC's program of harmonization of legal frameworks. These national agendas will come out of the series of inception workshops presented in 5.6. This will raise the profile of the governance matrix, making it into a national platform for needed reforms. CARPE would work through COMIFAC and other regional institutions to help individual national governments set their agendas, and then each stakeholder would agree to their part for the year. CARPE should support governance reforms and other measures that are the most strategically critical to CARPE objectives. IUCN should lead the implementation of CARPE's commitments and will continue to coordinate country teams and the advancement of the overall national agendas wherever national governments are in agreement with this strategy.

All landscape partners should report periodically on policy, legal and regulatory constraints that they encounter. These issues should be taken up by the IUCN Regional and National Focal Points and Country Teams' support at the regional and national levels. The IUCN Regional Focal Point should harmonize efforts with other actors such as that of the ADB's PACEBCo (Congo Basin Ecosystems Conservation Support Program) project to develop collaborative efforts for legal reforms and improved governance. The roles of the CARPE Focal Points should be refined by the CARPE Team in line with the SO and IRs, and rigorous performance indicators should be established. In addition, the CARPE Focal Point Regional Coordinator should be given strong responsibilities for the monitoring and annual assessment of the advocacy mandate, country Focal Points and country teams.

Support for legal reforms needed for CBNRM should be a high priority for the CARPE governance component in CARPE III. CARPE should support the adoption of clear, straightforward legal instruments for the empowerment of communities to control and manage resources and to harvest and market natural resource-based products (these instruments are needed in each CARPE country).

Refocus emphasis on clarifying resource tenure

Open access to lands and resources negates any possibility of their sustainable management. To reverse the growing trend towards open access to lands and resources outside of PA and ERZ, CARPE should work for policy, legal and regulatory reforms that would empower communities with exclusive rights to control access to their traditional lands. Such a law would make it possible for communities to be so empowered without developing full-fledged NRM systems. Such empowerment could be made conditional on the community's commitment to stop hunting of fully protected species. The conditions that communities would need to meet for such empowerment should be made simple enough for such empowerment to be done quickly on a large scale. CBNRM systems can be developed later as models

are tested and proven and as resources and funding for replication/adaptation permit. CARPE partners should explore avenues of collaboration with new potential partners such as the Rights and Resources Initiative, which also advocates for the recognition of community forest tenure rights in some countries of the Congo Basin. The development of a pro-CBNRM legal framework should take advantage of the Rights and Resources Initiative's expertise in this area.

GENDER AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

CARPE should seek to develop partnerships with indigenous peoples as stewards and partners in the management of PA and ERZ. Participatory mapping of traditional land tenure should be a standard tool used in the development of the management systems of all land use categories. The sharing of revenues from ERZ and PA and the involvement of local populations in the management of ERZ and PA should be strongly guided by traditional tenure and access rights. Engage REPALAC on a trial basis for the development of initiatives for integrating indigenous people into landscape conservation strategies and natural resource management systems and expand their involvement if the results are positive.

The CARPE Team and the CARPE/IUCN Regional Focal Point should advocate for the creation of a position of "indigenous peoples and forest conservation" within COMIFAC. This expert should develop programmatic perspectives on the indigenous peoples and their contribution to forest and biodiversity conservation. He/she should work closely with REPALAC, CARPE Focal Points, landscape leaders and strong national and local NGOs.

Program-wide support for gender issues needs to be integrated across the suite of implementing partners. IUCN could take a first step in the final year of CARPE II by funding short term positions to determine how gender equity can best be integrated into CBNRM development. All CBNRM pilot initiatives and all CBNRM planning should include an analysis of the equitability of the sharing of the costs and benefits of existing natural resource use systems and should develop specific measures for improving the equitability of the sharing of costs and benefits of the new community-based management systems under development with specific emphasis on women and indigenous people.

CARPE should work with logging companies and other extractive use companies to develop sound gender and indigenous peoples' approaches in terms of employment and access to social services in company towns. As new arrangements are put into place for the sharing of revenues and responsibilities for REDD+ field projects, CARPE should endeavor to include social standards such as those advocated by the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance into carbon project requirements.

5.6 STRENGTHENING OF USAID MANAGEMENT OF CARPE

In CARPE III, USAID should build on the management success of the regionally-based management unit. CARPE has benefited from the relocation of day-to-day program management from Washington to the regional management unit in Kinshasa. New leadership will be taking over direction under CARPE III and could benefit from some adjustments, such as:

- Develop a new strategy document for the 2011 – 2017/20 period that takes into account changes and lessons of the past decade and focuses on "how" forest biodiversity will be conserved and "how" climate change will be mitigated.
- Establish a USG steering/coordination committee to ensure the development of a strategically-integrated program for CARPE III with effective, collaborative, working relationships amongst the State Department, USAID, USFS, USFWS and NASA, and management coordination with USDA/FAS (Foreign Agriculture Service). It is suggested that the State Department could chair this committee.
- Focus on improving indicators for program tracking. Maintain the powerful project tracking system developed under CARPE II but focus on improving MOV and identifying more powerful indicators of

resource management effectiveness (integrating PA management effectiveness criteria, CBNRM principles, FSC criteria, etc.) into the system.

- Eliminate performance-based budgeting by providing foundation funds to landscapes and using available funds, if any, to respond to targets of opportunity as defined by USG panel and by improved country teams' program agendas.
- Develop a support role for USFS in the development of community-based natural forest management systems and a role for USFWS for the development of wildlife management systems and enhanced enforcement functions.

STRATEGIES FOR INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The CARPE III design effort should reassess the magnitude of threats to the forests and biodiversity in the region, as the evaluation points to evolving macro-trends that are not currently addressed adequately by the landscape model. New factors influencing CARPE III design include: 1) the expectation of large land concessions for productive activities such as oil palm plantations; 2) accelerating land use changes driven by demographic and stability changes; 3) expansion of foreign investment, including the growing participation of Chinese and other Asian actors in natural resource value chains in the sub-region; 4) REDD and climate finance governance; 5) other payments for ecosystem services; 6) expanding claims by communities for substantive forest tenure rights; and 7) huge new investments primarily in energy and mines planned or under development with the associated construction of new railroads, roads, hydroelectric facilities and transmission lines and the development of new urban centers in remote areas. The design effort should reassess the strength of these threats and drivers of forest degradation and deforestation to readjust priority illustrative activities in the third institutionalization phase of the program.

Recognizing the challenges of working regionally and without strong USAID country presence, the US government should consult and involve national government services, ministries, PA management agencies, local administrations, etc. in the design process for CARPE III. At the regional level, USFS, USFWS, and USAID (State, NASA, etc., as additional options) should be brought into the planning framework working closely with COMIFAC and its sub-institutions. This would include a joint review of the evaluation findings/recommendations and other lessons (IUCN) book, USFWS strategic planning process, evolving USFS guidance, etc. These institutions should work together on setting the parameters and defining the scope/components to be developed. This meeting should be used to plan a regional meeting with participation of (high-level) government and NGO representatives directly addressing how to better include governments within the limitations of USAID and other USG agencies. At this time, a methodology for inception workshops at the national level and at the landscape levels would be agreed upon.

CARPE III should be a phase in which to use innovative tools – inception workshops with formal engagement, Whole-System-in-the-Room (WSR) planning workshops, System-wide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods and the Environment (SCALE), social networking – at various levels to accelerate institutionalization of the landscape approach by empowering stakeholders to take ownership for their contributions. In addition, this phase should be initiated with a regional inception workshop followed by national and landscape-level inception workshops and a series of "WSR" workshops to accelerate scaling up and institutionalization of the LUP approach and related policy needs, securing commitment at the outset from all stakeholders as to what they will contribute.

Allocate resources across intervention areas based on commitments and needs. Intervention areas would include – but not be necessarily limited to – landscapes (seascapes, institutional support to COMIFAC and its institutions, more $$ for policy activities, REDD support and support for the crosscutting agencies). These inception workshops should result in the engagement of all stakeholder groups as to what they will contribute, accomplish, and take responsibility for over the life of CARPE III institutionalization.

USAID should require that landscape partners work with the relevant government agencies in the preparation and, as appropriate, the execution of annual work plans. This should include the national agency responsible for protected area management in the landscape, the national forest service for logging concessions and for community-managed forests, local government authorities and other agencies as appropriate.

By the end of the first year, each landscape consortium should produce an exit strategy, based on the inception workshop commitments, for the institutionalization of CARPE landscape functions by the end of CARPE III. The exit strategy will identify the mix of civil society and government agencies that will take over each function and the support measures that will be necessary for these institutions to be able to fulfill these functions by close of the project. Where organizations envision a continuing role beyond five years, they should develop clear strategies that define what remains to be done beyond the end of CARPE III, the types of other institutions that will need to be involved and the potential sources of funding.

For the operational monitoring of illegal logging as developed by WRI, the CARPE Team should analyze the potential for institutionalizing this function within an NGO or possibly in the private sector. Perhaps it could be an additional function that OSFAC could take on.

CAPACITY BUILDING

CARPE should continue the capacity building effort across the program. At or prior to the outset of CARPE III, USAID should identify specific institutions that will be strengthened in CARPE III, identify the key roles they will play in institutionalizing CARPE functions and then develop indices or benchmarks for measuring the capacity of these institutions to fulfill these roles during the final phase. Benchmarking processes for capacity are needed here to minimize subjectivity and to ensure comparability in the Congo Basin and elsewhere.

For protected areas, CARPE should focus on the development of the capacities of national PA management agencies for effective PA management and for the monitoring of management effectiveness. CARPE should also build civil society capacities to serve as watchdogs over the management of PA.

CBNRM should have a major capacity-building component for community managers in the following areas:

- Good governance including transparency, equity in the sharing of costs and benefits, safeguards, communications, enforcement of community rules/obligations, advocacy, etc.;
- Business management including accounting, safeguards and sustainable financing;
- NRM including monitoring of regeneration and off take; and
- Adaptive management.

One of the key forms of capacity building in CARPE III should be the development of the capacity of national and regional organizations to adapt and broadly replicate the CBNRM systems that will generally still need to be developed under CARPE III. Replication should begin well before the end of CARPE III as pilot initiatives are tested and found to be viable, but widespread replication will need to continue beyond the end of CARPE III.

The high-level expert in CBNRM recommended earlier in this report should play a strong role in capacity building as a trainer of trainers. This expert should assist capacity development in international and national environmental and development NGOs, site managers' regional organizations and government agencies. For the latter, it is critical that clear commitments be obtained from government and regional agencies during the inception workshops.

And finally, this phase of the program should expand the IUCN small grants program to further improve NGOs/CSOs/CBOs' capacity in policy influence, advocacy, claim tactics, campaigning and civic education.

CLOSING

CARPE I and II have been an audacious attempt to advance biodiversity and forest conservation in one of the most challenging regions of the world. CARPE Phase III presents the opportunity to capitalize on successes to date, to diversify into the climate change arena and to achieve substantial and critical positive environmental impacts.

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ANNEX B: INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS WHOM THE EVALUATION TEAM MET

WASHINGTON DC

NO.	ORGANIZATION	NAME OF CONTACT(S)	TITLE
1	African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)	Amy Wiedemann	Senior Programme Design Officer
2	Bonobo Conservation Initiative	Sally Coxe; Alden Almquist; Michael Hurley; John Scherlis;	President Board member and anthropologist; Director; Advisor
3	Conservation International	Frank Hawkins; Eric Coppenger; Monique Derfuss; Peter Jenkins	Vice President, Africa Division; Director of Resource Strategy, Africa & Madagascar at Conservation International; Director, Public Funding at Conservation International; Vice President, US Government Policy.
4	International Conservation Caucus Foundation	Dave Barron*	President
5	University of Maryland	Alice Altstatt; Diane Davies*; Matthew Hansen*; Minnie Wong; Giuseppe Molinario	Project Manager for the CARPE project; CARPE project team member; CARPE project team member; CARPE project team member; CARPE project team member
6	US Forest Service, International Programs	Matthew Edwardsen	Africa Program Coordinator
7	US Senate	Tim Reiser	Chief of Staff for Senator Patrick Leahy, Chairman of Foreign Operations Subcommittee
8	US State Department	Ellen Shaw	Forest Policy Advisor, Bureau of Oceans and International and Environmental Scientific Affairs' Office of Ecology and Natural Resource Conservation
9	US Agency for International Development (USAID)	Tim Resch; Chris Kosnik; Andrew Tobiason; Monica Sendor; David Yanggen	Bureau Environmental Advisor for Africa Bureau; Team Leader - EGAT/ Land Resources Management; Biodiversity Advisor; Intern, Office of east African Affairs CARPE Deputy team leader
10	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Richard Ruggiero	Chief, Branch of the Near East, South Asia and Africa
11	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	James Deutsch*; Kirstin S. Siex*; Kelly Keenan Aylward*	Executive Director, Africa Program; Assistant Director, Africa Program; Zanzibar Project Director; Head of Federal Affairs

12	World Resources Institute (WRI)	Pierre Methot*; Anne-Gaelle Javelle; Peter Mbile; Mattew Steil; Peter Veite	Senior Fellow, Central Africa Director, Forest Information and Governance; Associate, Institutions and Governance Program; Project Manager, Congo Basin Forests and Climate; Senior Associate, People and Ecosystems Program; Senior Fellow, Equity, Poverty & the Environment Team Leader
13	World Wildlife Fund (WWF)	Richard Carroll; Allard Blom; Paya de Marken; Lisa Steele; Gay Edwards Reinartz	Managing Director, Congo, Namibia and Madagascar; Deputy Director and Senior Program Officer; Technical Manager, Congo Basin Forest Partnership; Coordinator, WWF Salonga Landscape Programme; Director, Bonobo and Congo Biodiversity Initiative, and Conservation Coordinator, Zoological Society of Milwaukee

KINSHASA AND MLW LANDSCAPE

NO.	ORGANIZATION	NAME OF CONTACT(S)	TITLE
14		Vincent Kasulu	Director of Sustainable Development, Focal Point for Climate Change
15			Administrator of Basankusu
16	AWF-Maringa Lopori Wamba	Jef Dupain; Jules Mayifilua; Inoncent Ombeni; Alfred; Francis Lauginie; Rupert; A lady	Team leader; Conservator of Lomako Yokokala; REFADD Project Manager; Logistics Coordinator; AFD Consultant, Afrique Nature; AWF Consultant for Conflict Resolution; AWF Consultant for Conflict Resolution
17	Cadre de Concertation MLW Landscape	Jean Luc Lukolo; José Boluwa; Micky Boluwa; Joseph Hileko; Honoré Lomboto; Véronique Losuma; Jean Isungi	Village Chief, Plate-forme Lomako; Village Representative (VR), Plate-Forme Lomako; VR, Plate-Forme Lomako; VR, Plate-Forme Boyela; VR, Plate-Forme Boyela; VR, Plate-Forme Boyela; VR, Plate-Forme Boyela;
18	CARPE USAID-Kinshasa	John Flynn; Nicodeme Tchamou; Terah Dejong	COTR; Alternate COTR , Carpe Regional Coordinator; Assistant to the COTR
19	Conseil pour la Défense Environnementale pour la Légalité et la Traçabilité	Augustin Mpoyi	Coordinator
20	Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN)	Cosma Wilungula; Guy Mbayma; Dave Matomene; Godefroid Olwamba; Matonzi	Director General; Technical Director; Administrative Director; Assistant to the Director General;
21	Ministry of the Environment	Joseph Ilanga; Leonard Muamba; Ms. Francine;	Director of Studies and Planning
22	Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (OSFAC)	Patrick Lola	

23	Organisation Néerlandaise de Développement (SNV)	Yaouba Kaigama	Country Director
24	Peuples Autochtones	Kapupu Diwa	
25	Réseau des Femmes Africaines pour le Développement Durable (REFFAD)	Innocent Ombeni	MLW Project Coordinator
26	TransEm		Logging Manager
27	USAID	John Flynn	Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR)
28	WCS	Richard Tshombe; Robert Mwinyihali; Innoncent Liengola;	Country Director; Ituri Team Leader; Salonga Project
29	WCS	Florence Bwebwe	Mapping and GIS Specialist
30	WRI	Lyna Belanger	Coordonatrice Projets Forestiers
31	WWF	Omari Ilambu; Inogwabini Bila Isia; Valentin Mbenzo; Guy Tshimanga; Albert Bakanza; Bas Huijbregts;	Salonga Team Leader; Lake Tumba Leader; Bonobo Habituation LT WWF GIS Lake Tumba; Socio-Economy LT; Regional Field Manager;
32	WWF	Bruno Hugel; Flory Botamba	Eco Makala Project Coordinator; Adaptation Project Coordinator

BRAZZAVILLE, REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (ROC)

NO.	ORGANIZATION	NAME OF CONTACT(S)	TITLE
33	ADECOR	Philippe Nkounkou	Executive Director
34	Ministry of Waters and Forests	Mr. VHUYE Machosso	Interim General Director
35	WCS	Paul Telfer	Director, Director, WCS-Congo Program Wildlife Conservation Society
36	WRI	Marcel Ibara	National Coordinator
37	WWF	Gervais Ludovic	Global Forest and Trade Network

ROC PORTION OF THE SANGHA TRI NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

NO.	ORGANIZATION	NAME OF CONTACT(S)	TITLE
38	*Congolaise Industrielle des Bois* (CIB) at Pokola	Olivier Desmet; Jean Dominique; Mr. Paget; Besconde; Mbonia Pascal;	Chief of Forest Management Service Deputy; Head Forest Management and Certification;
39	Waters and Forests	Dengui Jean-Claude	Coordonateur of *Projet de Protection de la Périphérie du Parc* (PROGEP - Protection Project of the Periphery of the Park Project)
40	Waters and Forests Service	Mr. Dos Santos Dominique	Conservator of Nouabale Ndoki National Park
41	WCS	Mr. Tomo	Head of 3 WCS Projects

CAMEROON

NO.	ORGANIZATION	NAME OF CONTACT(S)	TITLE
42	CARPE	Kenneth Angu; Antoine Eyebe	Regional Program Manager; Cameroon Focal Point

43	Commission des Forets D'Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC)	Joseph Mbitikom	Executive Secretary
44	Community Forests Network	Jean Abbé	Coordinator
45	International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	Leonard Usongo; Cleto Ndikumagenge	IUCN Cameroon Program Coordinator; Forest Program Coordinator, IUCN/West & Central Africa Office
46	Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Protection de la Nature	Joseph Amougou	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) Focal Point
47	Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune (MINFOF)	Jeanne Balomog	Deputy Director, Community Forests
48	Projet Renforcement des Capacités de Gestion Communautaire (RIGC)	Denis Bene	National Coordinator
49	WCS	Roger Fotso	Country Director
50	WWF	Natasha Quist; André Kamdem; Louis Defo; Zacharie Nzooh; David Hoyle; David Greer; Stefan de Greling;	Regional Director, Central Africa Office; Director for Policy and Advocacy; Conservation Expert, SanghaTri-National; Landscape Coordinator , Tri-National; Director for Conservation; Coordinator, African Great Apes Programme; Director, Fund Raising & Partnership

GABON

NO.	ORGANIZATION	NAME OF CONTACT(S)	TITLE
51	Ibonga (Local NGO)	Gil Mougengui; Ariane Payen	Coordinator; Technical Assistant – AFVP
52	Ministry of Agriculture	Rachel Ikapimabika	Technician
53	Ministry of Forests	Martin Ombenotori	Technician
54	National Parks National Agency (ANPN)	Clotaire Houssavou	Eco-guard (ranger)
55	WWF	Stephane Yeno; Brice Manganga; Bas Verhage; Veronique Bovee;	Conservation Expert; Socio-economist; Program Manager; Private Sector Specialist

ANNEX C: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

Team Leader – Roy Hagen is a natural resource management specialist with almost forty years professional experience in natural resources conservation and management, biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management, development of national strategy and action plans, community-based natural resource management, project evaluation, and institution building. Mr. Hagen has taken on progressively increasing responsibility, usually as a Team Leader, for a wide range of bi-lateral and multi-lateral development and conservation organizations (e.g., UNDP/GEF, USAID, World Bank, IUCN, CARE and many others). Almost half of his professional experience has been in francophone African/western Indian Ocean countries including long term positions in Madagascar, Morocco and Burkina Faso. Mr. Hagen has been extolled for his exemplary leadership skills and is especially qualified to manage cross-cultural teams involving a multiplicity of implementing agencies. He also successfully completed a Biodiversity and Tropical Forest Assessment in 2008 for USAID/Morocco as Team Leader of the ECODIT team.

Social Scientist and Natural Resource Management Specialist - Dr. Fred Sowers is a social scientist with over 25 years of experience implementing, designing and evaluating natural resource conservation programs and biodiversity strategies. Mr. Sowers has extensive experience completing strategic assessments for environmental programs, performance monitoring and evaluation, conducting community-based natural resource management activities, and inclusion of relevant stakeholders for viable and sustainable natural resource management projects. He has implemented and conducted evaluations and/or performance monitoring for USAID environmental programs in Francophone Africa, Madagascar, Ecuador, Colombia, Zambia, Niger and Tanzania and gained an intimate understanding of USAID policies and procedures. Dr. Sowers is fluent in English, French and Spanish.

Wildlife Management and Global Climate Change Specialist - Dr. Trinto Mugangu is a respected Congolese ecologist with over 20 years of experience in wildlife ecology and management, land use planning, national park management, biodiversity and national environmental action planning. He has successfully completed numerous environmental capacity development assignments biodiversity projects for UNDP, GEF, and United National Office for Project Services (UNOPS) throughout the majority Central African countries. He is also an expert on the Democratic Republic of Congo's Climate Change Task Force and has served as a negotiator for the DRC in Bangkok, Barcelona, and Copenhagen, and Bonn from September 2009 to June 2010.

Community-Based Natural Resource Management Specialist - Mr. René Oyono is a Cameroonian rural sociologist with almost 18 years of experience in natural resource sociology, community-based natural resource management, land and forest tenure, community rights-based issues, forest peoples, environmental governance, decentralization and the social and economic dimensions of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change. As a country and regional team leader, Central and West Africa, for the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Mr. Oyono completed assignments on adaptive collaborative management of tropical forests, forest management, devolution and local peoples, decentralization, forest governance and equity (with the World Resources Institute), and environmental services and rural livelihoods in the forest margins of West and Central Africa. While leading the joint CIFOR/WRI project, Mr. Oyono produced the most complete intelligence and political economy of forest management decentralizations in Central Africa. From 2005 to 2000, he worked as a Research Associate with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), with HQ at Ibadan. He was part of a research program titled "Agro-ecosystem strategies". Mr. Oyono provided inputs on the social dimensions of the management of forested landscapes in the forest margins of Cameroon.

Gender Specialist - Ms. Cécile Ndjebet is a Cameroonian gender and development as well as natural resource management expert with over 22 years of professional experience. She has extensive technical experience in gender analysis, gender and community forestry, economic literacy with a gender perspective, and gender and community health for local NGOs such as Cameroon Ecology and international development groups such as SNV and DFID.

ANNEX D: SCHEDULE OF TASKS

We grouped the Scope of Work tasks into three phases:

A. Desk Study, Planning and Structured Interviews in Washington, DC
B. Key Informant Interviews, Field Site visits, and Report Writing in Africa
C. Preparation and Submittal of Final Reports and Presentations

A. Desk Study, Planning and Structured Interviews in Washington, DC

A.1 Desk study and review of the extensive documentation

The Evaluation Team conducted a review of CARPE documents on the CARPE website (http://carpe.umd.edu/resources/index_html), in addition to additional CBFP and program documents made available by USAID and other the other institutions that the Team met with during its week in Washington. The late date of signature of the Task Order was a constraint to the extent of the desk study that was conducted prior to mobilization of the Team for the week of meetings in Washington. The team continued to expand the range of documents reviewed, including reports and analyses of Congo Basin environmental issues prepared by other donors, national governments, regional groups, and evaluations and other documents related to successful approaches to NRM and CBNRM in other geographic regions. However, the Evaluation Team recognized from the beginning that, for a program as complex and long-running as CARPE, it would never be possible to come close to reviewing the full range of relevant documents available.

Due to the large quantity of documentation available, the team leader identified the key documents below to be read by all team members to ensure a mutual understanding of the purpose, design, and management structure of the program, as well as its performance reporting and current budget allocations. Additional reading was delegated to team members based on their professional and regional expertise. Upon arrival in Kinshasa, the USAID CARPE Team also provided the team with a large set of folders with background information regarding each of the cooperative agreements plus other subjects including data quality assessment and the 2007 mid-term evaluation. This included one folder for each of the landscapes. Document review continued in an intensive fashion in Kinshasa, DRC, and – in a less intensive fashion – during the rest of the evaluation.

Key documents included the following:

- The CARPE web site,
- CARPE Strategic Plan,
- CARPE Performance Management Plan,
- CARPE Monitoring and Evaluation and Work Planning "Matrix",
- Partner Semi-Annual and Annual Reports,
- USAID/CARPE Performance Reports,
- CARPE Management Tools such as Land Use Planning Guides, Annual Activity Category Budgets and Deforestation Maps, and State of the Forest Reports 2006 and 2008,
- Mid-Term CARPE II Evaluation Assessment,
- Partial Evaluation of the Immediate Result 2 (2009), and
- CARPE Lessons Learned.

A.2 Structured interviews with key informants in DC (the week of August 9th)

Prior to arriving in Washington DC and during the week of August 2nd, expat team members Roy Hagen and Fred Sowers conducted teleconferences or Skype interviews with key informants from WCS

and WRI who were not going to be available in Washington the following week. During the week of August 9th, the same two team members conducted an intensive series of interviews in Washington with people from the following institutions:

- USAID Africa Bureau/EGAT
- State Department
- US Forest Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- University of Maryland with South Dakota State University telephone link
- World Resources Institute
- World Wildlife Fund
- Conservation International
- African Wildlife Foundation
- Bonobo Conservation Initiative (BCI)
- Senator Leahy's Foreign Operations subcommittee staff
- International Conservation Caucus Foundation (associated with the House of Representatives)

Most of the interviews lasted about 1.5 to 2 hours (and sometimes longer). The vacation season was a constraint in scheduling interviews but not an overly serious one. The full list of interviews conducted is presented in Annex 1. The team discussed key questions derived from the document review and Scope of Work during these meetings. Feedback was used to revise the list of Key Questions. Meetings with USAID staff and other key informants was used to clarify USAID objectives for the evaluation, to better understand the different conservation approaches used, to prioritize site visits, to identify critical stakeholders, and to gain awareness of CARPE's history and developments since publication of the most recent evaluations and assessments. Interviews with key informants will continue in Kinshasa.

A.3 Communications with COTR to plan mission details and discuss site visits

The two US experts on the Evaluation Team worked out of the ECODIT office in Arlington, Virginia. Together with the ECODIT Home Office staff, they held a teleconference with the COTR to discuss/plan mission details and to discuss modifications needed due to the delays in startup.

A.4 Revised Detailed Work Plan to the COTR

The Statement of Work called for the preparation of a revised detailed work plan within three weeks of the Task Order award. As the Task Order was not awarded until the team was in Washington, this three week period had to be shortened considerably. This revised work plan was primarily prepared during the last two days in Washington and was submitted to the COTR on August 14th. These delays made it impossible to get feedback from the COTR before travel to Kinshasa.

B. Key Informant Interviews, Field Site visits, and Preparation of the full Draft Report

B.1 Meetings with USAID COTR in DRC

The team held a number of meetings with the USAID COTR and his team during their first week in Kinshasa starting on the morning of August 16th. The meetings covered introductions, project overview, interviews, feedback on the work plan, discussions of field visits and logistics, collection of CARPE documents and other matters. The team leader drafted the first version of the table of contents – a draft that would be revised and strengthened periodically until the report was completed.

B.2 First in-person team planning meetings in Kinshasa

The team met collectively the afternoon of August 16th and part of the 17th to develop a common understanding of the evaluation Terms of Reference, to better define priorities, to discuss evaluation

methodologies, to better define individual roles and responsibilities and to go over the overall work plan for the evaluation.

B.3 Additional Structured interviews in the Capital Cities Visited

The team visited the following capital cities: (a) Kinshasa, DRC, (b) Libreville, Gabon; (c) Yaoundé, Cameroon, and (d) Brazzaville, Republic of Congo (ROC). The full list of people met with is presented in Annex B. The schedule and institutions that were met with in the capital cities is as follows:

Kinshasa, DRC (August 15 to 20)

- CARPE Focal Point at IUCN
- Ministry of Environment
- *Institut Congolais pour la Conservation et de l'Environnement* (ICCN)
- DRC Focal Point for Climate Change
- Dutch Development Organization (SNV)
- AWF Landscape Lead Jef Dupain and staff
- WCS Kinshasa staff for Ituri and Salong
- WWF Kinshasa staff for Salonga and Lac Tumba and regional field manager
- *Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale* (OSFAC)
- *Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales d'Afrique Centrale* (REPALAC)
- *Conseil pour la Défense Environnementale pour la Légalité et la Traçabilité* (CODELT)

Libreville, Gabon (August 31 & September 6 & 7)

- *Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux* (ANPN)
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Forests
- WWF
- American Embassy
- Ibonga (Local NGO)

Yaoundé, Cameroon

- IUCN Regional Manager for CARPE and the CARPE Focal Point
- *Commission des Forets D'Afrique Centrale* (COMIFAC)
- Community Forests Network
- *Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Protection de la Nature*
- *Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune* (MINFOF)
- *Projet Renforcement des Capacités de Gestion Communautaire* (RIGC)
- WCS Country Director
- WWF including Central Africa Office staff and staff for TRIDOM and TNS

Brazzaville, ROC (September 13, 21 & 22)

- Ministry of Waters and Forests Interim General Director
- WCS Director and staff
- WRI Country Coordinator
- WWF Global Forest & Trade Network

- CARPE Focal Point at IUCN
- WCS staff
- Association for the Development of Rural Communities (ADECOR) Executive Director

B.4 Field site Visits

The Team made extensive site visits to three of the landscapes in order to: compare the reported performance results with the realities in the landscapes; interview additional key informants, stakeholders, and individuals from relevant institutions; and understand the mechanics of operating a regional program and garner local input. As stipulated by the RFTOP, the team visited landscape offices in three landscape project field sites.

The Team developed and applied the following criteria in making the selection of a representative sampling of the landscapes to be visited:

- Significant importance to CARPE staff and other CBFP stakeholders,
- Area of the Landscape,
- Density of participating institutions, NGOs, and CBOs,
- Budget allocation,
- Site of a significant government body or international coordinator,
- Diversity of implementing partners,
- At least two multi-national landscapes and one site wholly contained in the DRC,
- Types of biodiversity and forests,
- Adoption and implementation of a Land Use Plan,
- Landscapes with a mix of forest concessions, protected areas, sustainable forest management, sustainable agriculture, and other land uses,
- Specific implementation problems or conflicts,
- Governance of conservation and gender issues, and
- Practicality and accessibility.

Based on the above criteria, communications between ECODIT and COTR, and the Evaluation Team's document review and meetings in Washington, the Team selected Maringa-Lopori-Wamba (MLW), Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati and the Sangha Tri-National (TNS) Landscapes. The three visits are summarized below (the actual dates of the field visits have been added):

1. **Maringa-Lopori-Wamba Landscape** The team arrived in Basankusu on August 21st and left on the 27th. The team traveled by motorized dugout 250 kilometers upstream and spent the first night at Lomako-Yokokala protected area headquarters at Lingunda. After meeting with the PA site committee (COCOSI) in Lingunda, the team split up with Hagen and Sowers visiting the bonobo research camp and the Lomako Conservation Science Center, both inside the PA. Oyono and Mugangu stayed in Lingunda and met with the PA conservator, REFADD, and the TransM logging company, and they visited field sites for agriculture and alternative livelihood activities. In Basankusu, the team met with the AWF staff and the local government administrator.
2. **Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati Landscape** The team arrived by air at landscape headquarters in Tchibanga on September 1st and left Thcibanga on September 6th. They met with WWF staff in Tchibanga, the Moukalaba Doudou National Park conservator and the local Waters and Forests inspector. On September 2nd, the team split up with Hagen and Oyono traveling overland to Gamba where they met with WWF staff and collaborators from the local NGO, IBONGA, and the curator of Smithsonian Institution's project there. They made an overnight field visit to the far end

of the large lagoon and spent the night at the village of Sette Cama. They visited a fishing village, the mouth of the lagoon and other sites. Sowers and Mugangu first went to Mayumba where they met with WCS staff and collaborators and visited the oyster CBNRM. They then traveled to Moukalaba Doudou National Park where they visited, among other things, community-managed tourism services.

3. **Sangha Tri-National TNS Landscape** (the week of Sept 20th) Hagen, Oyono and Mugangu visited the ROC portion of the TNS from Sept 15th to 20th with Kabo as their base. In Kabo, they met with WCS staff, the Waters and Forest Service director of the PROGEP project and visited the bushmeat market. The team traveled to Pokola where they spent a half day with the foresters of *Congolaise Industrielle du Bois* (CIB) and they traveled to Bomassa where they met with the conservator of the Nouabalé Ndoki National Park.

Communications, logistics and organization of the field trips were major challenges, but the schedule set out at the beginning was largely adhered to. The team hired a local administrative assistant in Kinshasa to assist with logistics and record keeping. The team attempted to hold debriefing sessions at the end of the day whenever possible to compare major impressions and to identify issues that required further follow-up.

B.5 Debriefing of USAID Mission in Kinshasa and completion of the Draft Report

Just before Sowers left for the States, the team conducted a joint review of the work to date and began the identification of preliminary findings and recommendations. The remaining three members spent about half of their time in Kabo/TNS working on the first draft of the report. After returning to Kinshasa on September 23rd, the team gave an extended briefing to the CARPE Team on Sept 24 and then continued working together on the first draft until the team split up on Sept 28. The completion of the first draft, including an intensive in-house review by ECODIT home office staff, took much longer than anticipated and the full Draft Report was submitted to the COTR on October 28.

C. Preparation and Submittal of Final Reports and Presentations

C.1 Report Revision and Submittal

Detailed review comments on the Draft Report were received back from the COTR on November 8th and the first round of major revisions began immediately. A two-column table was prepared to accompany the revisions with the major COTR comments in the left-hand column and details on where and how ECODIT had responded in the right-hand column. The revised Draft Report was resubmitted to the COTR on November 28th.

In the meantime, ECODIT had organized the Participatory Review Panel (PRP) as proposed in the work plan for the external review (external to USAID) of the evaluation report. The institutions represented as part of the PRP are:

- USFS
- USFWS
- WRI
- WWF
- WCS

The Evaluation Team prepared an issues table (see Annex J) to ensure that the PRP would provide strong inputs on the key issues identified by the COTR. The table had the following three columns:

- Presentation of the Issue,

- Evaluation Team's Analysis and Recommendations, and
- Requested Inputs from PRP.

On November 30, ECODIT sent the following to each of the PRP members:

- The Draft Report,
- The Issues Table, and
- A template for comments.

Work on the PRP review comments began as they were received. In general, the PRP panel members took their task very seriously. A number of them not only prepared general comments but also provided very detailed in-text comments and/or track changes in the body of the report. The PRP process has proved to be a very valuable exercise for improving the final product, although one that once again required a substantial amount of time. Revisions based on the PRP comments were completed by Hagen and Sowers with significant support from the ECODIT home office and were submitted to the COTR on December 29th. The report was quickly approved by the COTR on December 30th subject to some minor final changes.

The main findings and recommendations of the report will be presented by Hagen and Sowers in Washington on January 11th, 2011, with a morning presentation to USG agencies and an afternoon presentation to NGO partners. A summary of the evaluation will be distributed in advance.

ANNEX E: STATEMENT OF WORK FROM THE REQUEST FOR TASK ORDER PROPOSALS

C.I BACKGROUND

Context: Central Africa contains the second largest contiguous moist tropical forest in the world, representing nearly 20% of the world's remaining biome of this type. More than 60 million people live in the forested region, and these people depend on these rich forests and other biotic resources for their livelihoods and economic development. The Congo forests form the catchment of the Congo River, a basin of local, regional and global significance. They provide valuable ecological services by controlling and buffering climate at a regional scale and by absorbing and storing excess carbon dioxide released from the burning of fossil fuels, thereby helping to slow the rate of global climate warming. The forests also provide food, shelter and livelihoods for many of the regions people. A large area of the Central Africa forested region targeted by CARPE is allocated to forestry concessions, making forest use central to the region's economy. Deforestation trends and other threats to the forest are increasing in the region that, if continued at current trends, will ultimately negatively impact the development potential of the region.

The countries in the region remain fragile, many having suffered from war with large displacements of their population since the CARPE program began in 1995. However the governments of the Congo Basin have recognized the threat to the forests, and through the signing of the Yaounde Declaration and the subsequent COMIF AC Treaty in 2006, they have indicated a desire to act. Several governments have begun to put appropriate legislative and policy frameworks in place, though implementation is lagging due to inadequately trained personnel and other deficiencies in capacity to implement these commitments. Official recognition of the need for regional cooperation in tackling these challenges is high, and has already led to cooperative work and the formation of channels and structures for collaboration.

CARPE II corresponded with the initiation of an international agreement reached at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) where governments, NGOs and the private sector recognized the importance of conserving the Congo Basin forests, the world's second largest remaining tropical forest, by creating the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP). The USG chose to use the CARPE II as an instrument for many of the activities that the US is undertaking in support of the CBFP.

The USG commitment to CBFP was to provide $53 million support to the CBFP over the period 2002 to 2005. The majority of that funding was channeled via CARPE. The objectives of CBFP and CARPE overlap significantly and an interagency "board" was established to provide advice and recommendations related to CBFP activities under CARPE. While CARPE programs encompass all of the II CFBP-designated landscapes, CARPE also works in an additional area, the Greater Virunga landscape, thus encompassing nine countries (Burundi, Congo/Brazzaville, Central Africa Republic, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo Gabon, Rwanda, and Sao Tome-Principe). Additionally, the CBFP includes partners other than CARPE partners.

The CARPE Long-term Concept: Recognizing the importance and difficulty of conservation in the Congo Basin, USAID began a 20-year program in 1995 aimed at reducing the threats of deforestation and biodiversity loss. The current strategic phase of the initiative, CARPE II, began in 2003 and is authorized by USAID to operate until the end of US FY 2011. CARPE II works in nine countries within

the Congo Basin with the strategic objective of reducing the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national and regional natural resource management capacity. CARPE II is using the knowledge and capacity built under CARPE I and a mid-term Assessment of CARPE II conducted in 2005 to implement sustainable natural resource management practices in the field, improve environmental governance in the region and strengthen monitoring capacity.

Although CARPE I was viewed as highly successful, an external evaluation of the program in 2002 revealed several issues that needed to be considered in moving forward. In its initial phase, CARPE focused on two main issues, building an information base for the region on natural resources, and building local capacity through a small grants program according to three themes that included forestry, protected area management, and environmental governance. The program had suffered from a shifting focus which had resulted from a combination of its broad mandate and small budget. In the forestry sector, CARPE I strengthened monitoring and worked on national level policy with some small projects that attempted to improve forest management regimes. The Phase I evaluation found that this latter element lacked a systematic approach. The focus on protected areas, although the largest investment, was weak in proportion to the challenge and had not really been designed to be able to systematize the findings, particularly in the area of financing and capacity building. The work on environmental governance was found to be lacking in good coordination and integration of local governments and people into resource management, and was insufficient to truly understand how local resource management affected and could effect change.

In general, the review of the first phase of CARPE found that it had been successful given the limitations of its budget and the constraint of being managed from Washington. It was recommended that the profile of CARPE in the region would be raised if the program was moved to the field. In general, the reviewers suggested that CARPE Phase II focus more on how land and resource uses can be zoned and regulated to support the conservation needs for forests and biodiversity. The work in monitoring was praised, but it was noted that socio-economic information was inadequate for the objectives. The small grants program was praised because of its ability to involve local people and build local capacity and it was recommended that this element be continued. Further, there was a strong recommendation that the program conduct frequent self-examination to ensure better central focus of its efforts. Given the limited budget, it was recommended that the program limit itself to a few landscapes to work on a more integrated approach within those landscapes. The follow-on strategy design considered these suggestions in full.

CARPE Phase II (a) (2003-2006): The current phase of the initiative, CARPE II, began in January, 2003, and will operate until September, 2011. It was divided into two "subphases" based on some mid-term adjustments made after an external assessment was done in 2005. CARPE continues to work in nine countries with the strategic objective of reducing the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national and regional natural resource management. The design of CARPE II corresponded with the initiation of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), an international agreement between governments, NGOs and the private sector reached at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), with the leadership of US Secretary of State, Colin Powell and the Government of South Africa. The United States Government (USG) commitment to the CBFP was to support forest conservation in eleven large forested landscapes in the region.

The USG chose to use the CARPE II as the program umbrella for most of the activities that it would finance as part of the CBFP, with a commitment to provide $53 million over three years (FY s 2002 to 2005). An Interagency Advisory Board was established in Washington to provide advice and recommendations related to CBFP activities. CARPE also works in the Virunga landscape that includes territory in Rwanda and Uganda (though CARPE was never authorized to work in Uganda) which are not CBFP members. For the first three years, $12 million/year was dedicated to the landscape program.

Only activities in support of conservation of the II CBFP landscapes were designated for the "additional" USG contribution of $12 M/year. USAID management costs, crosscutting non-CBFP activities and Virunga landscape funding all were funded from the original $3 million "base" funding, and USAID management costs were capped at $ 1 million/year. In order to move quickly into an implementation phase, USAID issued Requests for Assistance for work across the landscapes. They were issued to each of the four nongovernment organizations (Implementing NGOs) that had initiated the concept of the CBFP, that had major programs in the region and that had pre-competed Leader with Associate (LWA) cooperative agreements with USAID. The implementing NGOs, in response to the USAID solicitation, divided up the II landscapes and agreed on partnering arrangements within the landscapes. USAID accepted this division of responsibilities. USAID also negotiated PASA agreements with six USG federal agencies and with two other organizations to provide various complementary "crosscutting" services to the CARPE program, on demand. CARPE agreements with the Implementing NGOs required "substantial" matching funds from the landscape leaders amounting in aggregate to more than 50% of the USAID contribution.

CARPE II was operational for almost three years when the first External Assessment was conducted in late 2005. The CARPE SO team felt at this mid-term point, which corresponded to the stated USG CBFP financial commitment, that it was necessary to verify the validity of the strategic approach, based on expected and actual results, and to use the answers to these questions to guide mid-term decisions concerning program content, funding and management in accordance with the obligation of FY 2006 funds and beyond. Thus, a four person team was fielded in October, 2005 by Weidemann Associates to provide an independent assessment of CARPE II. This assessment addressed three major issues: performance of the program elements toward achieving their results; the management structure and how this affected the program performance; and the overall strategic design and how well it moved the program to results that will ensure long-term natural resource conservation in the Congo Basin.

CARPE Program Performance through 2005: the CARPE Performance Plan comprises three Intermediate Results (IRs) embodied in the Results Framework of its Strategic Plan:

IR 1: Natural resources managed sustainably;
IR 2: Natural resources governance (institutions, policies, laws) strengthened;
IR 3: Natural resources monitoring institutionalized.

<u>Landscape activities (IR I):</u>

The vast majority of program resources (approximately 80%) were dedicated to achievement of IR I landscape objectives during Phase II (a) by design. Although most field activities were operational for less than three years as the time of the Assessment, the report nevertheless determined that with appropriate adjustments, CARPE 11 was and should stay on track to achieve its goals of reducing the rate of forest degradation and protecting biodiversity by 20 IS (the end of 20 years as originally envisaged). The Assessment Report noted that the move from Phase I to Phase II successfully built on limited CARPE I and on other NGO programs to leverage the established advantages of the implementing NGOs. Much of the progress during Phase I was focused on protected areas, especially national parks, within landscapes, where implementing NGOs had the most experience.

By 2005, the assessment concluded that in most of the landscape programs, significant progress had been made in regard to biological and socio-economic surveys and in regard to the initial zoning of landscape units, especially within protected areas; the program was deemed to be on track towards meeting indicator targets to create baselines and to convene the land use planning process by September 2006. However, the implementing NGOs had limited relationships with government agencies

with the legal authority to work in the landscape areas that are not protected areas (PA), such as forest concessions.

Progress in working with forest concessions and in establishing community based natural resource management (CBNRM) reserves was limited. The variety of conservation strategies being used to address threat-based challenges was field-testing a wide range of innovative models. These models pushed the limits of recent national implementing enabling legislation and, with continued refinement, were on track to provide a sound basis for conservation management. Little progress was noted in addressing conservation threats, such as bush meat hunting, that occur in non-protected and non-concession forests.

Factors that were viewed to have the greatest influence on the achievement of goals at the landscape level included: a long-term NGO presence, previous investments in conservation infrastructure and local partner capacity, an existing information base for planning/management, NGOs' success at leveraging additional funding, and commitment by the lead NGOs to convening the land use planning process. The main constraints to progress at the landscape scale were; remoteness, difficult access to the sites, lack of an information base for planning/management, lack of physical infrastructure, lack of agreements in place to work with government agencies mandated to manage lands outside of PA, low tourism potential, and (paradoxically) low local partner capacity. In several landscapes, insecurity made access impossible or dangerous in parts of the landscape.

Landscape partners or teams in perhaps half of the landscapes were not working well together to achieve landscape-wide objectives. This was attributed to competitiveness between the partners, poor management skills or lack of interest in management by landscapes leaders, and USAID's practice of segmenting landscape funding, rather than channeling all funds through the landscape lead organization. The extent of the authority of landscape leaders was not clearly defined. The partnerships that were most effective were those where the respective capacities of the NGOs were the determining factor in assigning functions and responsibilities. At sites where long-term collaboration was already ongoing, the appropriate roles were clear. At newer sites, some partnerships were formed without a good mutual understanding of comparative strengths as the basis for organizations' roles. Collaboration across the program's landscapes was also less than desirable. Although many useful models were being built, there had been insufficient progress in exchanging and replicating models or in sharing information, ideas and lessons learned across landscapes.

Crosscutting activities and objectives (IR2 and IR3):

Four major crosscutting issues that were seen to have the most potential to contribute to the strategic objective and program results and which are within the comparative advantage of CARPE partners were given as: a) Capacity Building, b) Policy and Governance; c) Bush meat, d) Remote Sensing Technology. Very limited funding was provided to address these objectives; the funding was dispersed across a confusing array of USG and NGO organizations whose efforts were unevenly implemented in scope, scale, and geographic focus. The roles of the federal agencies were not clearly understood by the partners as a whole. The "market approach" with implementing NGOs encouraged to "buy" agency services had failed. Only the US Forest Service (USFS), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration/University of Maryland (NASA/UMD), World Resources Institute/Global Forest Watch (WRI/GFW) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) had a proven track record that was considered by the Assessment as likely to lead to a continuing demand for their presence in CARPE.

Capacity Building:
The mix of NGOs and federal agency service providers had not effectively addressed the capacity building objective. NGOs had strengthened park management and surveillance capacity, but impact on

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and local NGOs had been much less effective. Federal agency capacity-building efforts were too sporadic (lacking continued follow-up), and too limited in scope to have made broad program impact.

Policy:
One major success of the CBFP by 2005 was seen as the stimulation of donor participation in forestry and conservation policies. The Commission on the Forests of Central Africa (COMIF AC) *Plan de Convergence* provides a vehicle for encouraging the countries of the region to come together on policy issues. At the national level (and sometimes at the Basin level), several major policy issues have been identified and most are being addressed by donors. CARPE partners appeared to have been influencing national policies by taking the lead in: a) establishing community management reserves and concession agreements and (b) developing landscape tourism plans.

Bush meat:
CARPE participation in the Bush meat Task Force underscored the need to integrate bush meat strategies with other programs such as poverty reduction, livelihoods improvement, mining, and health. Much of CARPE's focus through 2005 was on monitoring the severity of the bush meat problem. CARPE natural resources management (NRM) activities outside of protected areas (forest and oil concession enforcement, local control) showed promise for reducing small scale bush meat hunting.

Remote Sensing Technology:
The natural resources monitoring supported by NASA/UMD, despite remaining gaps, was viewed as providing objective assessments on the status of forest cover. This work was valued, not just for the quality of the data provided, but also for its political neutrality. Monitoring was seen to require additional CARPE resources and greater total availability of funds was proposed to accelerate the establishment of necessary baselines across the landscapes. The Assessment noted that COMIF AC demands and the related State of the Forest Report monitoring require increasingly precise information that could be systematically collected at the field level using comparable methodologies.
Progress in meeting USG objectives for the CBFP: The CBFP was viewed by the assessment to already have been extraordinarily successful in bringing the conservation needs of the Congo Basin to a broader audience and in increasing donor funding ($150 million additional "leveraged funds" generated). Active French "mediation" of the CBFP and COMIFAC was welcomed and supported by CARPE and by the USG.

CARPE Management Structure
CARPE's management structure, operating in 9 countries, II landscapes and I 5 landscape segments, and having 12 principal partners, was considered to be under-funded and with a "cap" of $1.0 M annual budget, over-performing. Transfer of CARPE management responsibilities to the field had effectively and appropriately focused USAID's attention on the field. The CARPE Team Leader, who was serving also as Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) for most of the Agreements, had been extremely active and available to all parties, but was hampered by a small fluctuating staff and with problems relating to CARPE's field-based focal points. Despite the presence of the CARPE office in Kinshasa, the overall USG presence and attention to environmental issues in the region was deemed insufficient, with very limited US Embassy capacity to support the program in non-USAID presence countries (all but DRC and Rwanda).

Program roles and responsibilities had been clearly established with the major exception of the relationship between national governments and NGO landscape leaders (see above). Host government expectations of involvement had not been met; even as they eventually had accepted that no CARPE funding would be provided directly to government agencies. Indirect support to government administrations provided via partners was not well documented or acknowledged by governments.

CARPE's annual planning process essentially ignored national governments, although it typically involved locally-based government officials in the landscapes.

The most significant problems in agreement execution related to: a) long delays in the approvals of sub-contracts and sub-grants during periods of short staffing in the regional contract officer's headquarters RCO/Nairobi; b) absence of Regional Legal Advisor support and c) continuing revisions in work plans and in the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) reporting requirements. The degree of US AID's substantial involvement as defined in the cooperative agreements appeared to be normal, but was exercise aggressively by requiring great detail in the work plan and in the monitoring requirements. Most partners had accepted or had seen value in USAID's insistence on planning and monitoring at this level of detail.

The structure of the cooperative agreement awards encouraged a strong landscape focus. Budgeting and monitoring by "landscape segment" - the "unbundled funding approach where funds were granted to each NGO separately for a "segment" of the landscape- put a very heavy management and administrative load on the CARPE team, with the team involved with annual budget decisions on landscape segments that would be described elsewhere as mini-projects (funding as low as $JSO,OOO/year).

CARPE Assessment of Strategic Design:
Essentially, CARPE II had three major design elements:

I. Grants to large international conservation NGOs (Implementing NGOs), leveraging their country and regional presence to implement field "landscape" level activities
II. A set of mostly US-based organizations that work across landscapes in common thematic areas such as multiple-use planning, forest monitoring, policy and governance and uncontrolled hunting;
III. A regional program management structure based in USAID Kinshasa, with country-specific focal points as program antennae and with modest backstop and coordination functions in Washington.

The assessment concluded that the rapid scale up and five-fold increase in CARPE funding led to a number of the following design compromises:

- Too strong of a linking of funds to geographic areas, without adequately linking them to existing governance regimes.
- Insufficient USAID management structure for the scope of the undertaking.
- A design that did not facilitate important crosscutting, transversal functions such as monitoring, policy coordination, and determining best practices that were dispersed across a confusing array of USG and NGO organizations.
- Disproportionate support to one of three intermediate results (IRI) via a strong weighting of funding and through emphasis on local, mostly protected area-level implementation and capacity building.

The lack of a USAID presence was insufficiently bolstered by other *CARPE/CBFP* resources such as the State Department Regional Environment Officer, the CARPE national focal points and Washington based partners. However, where it had received adequate attention, the basic design for working in non-presence countries appeared sound to the assessment team. But the assessment report strongly recommended that CARPE increase resources to cross-landscape, system-wide, and regional concerns, especially as other donor funds became more available at the field level and within landscapes.

The "landscape" approach had succeeded as a concept by shifting attention from a nearly exclusive focus on parks (and protected areas), but it had built limited local buy-in. In spatial terms, landscapes are project units and do not correspond to existing administrative planning units. Landscape leaders and partners were urged to develop suitable mandates and links with institutions beyond the parks and forest departments to appropriately support local governance. This was proposed by balancing landscape activities with other elements of a broader conservation program.

Major Recommendations for the remainder of CARPE II (2006-2011):

The report set forward six major programmatic recommendations and then provided additional recommendations for the resolution of significant CARPE II issues. In some cases several program options were presented in order to encourage further discussion and more in-depth analysis by USAID and the partners, since the assessment team was not able to review in depth all of the elements of this complex program. It was anticipated that these recommendations would prove useful to a subsequent team that was planned to assist the CARPE team in designing the CARPE II (b) program. Finally, no specific procurement-sensitive recommendations were included in the report document, due to USAID regulations.

Programmatic Recommendations:

- Improve program balance by focusing more attention and resources on IRs 2 and 3 and on program management. With the experience of the past three years, funding can be allocated much more efficiently than by using the artificial proportional limitations established when CARPE II was initiated
- Strive to link landscape programs more closely to existing governance structures and to increase host country participation in program decision making. The weakness of host government and even local citizen support for the landscape programs is CARPE II's "Achilles heel" that needs to be addressed.
- Diversify the skill base of CARPE partners working in landscapes to ensure that livelihood needs, as well as conservation threats, are addressed in a way that builds a local constituency for conservation. The teaming agreements for the landscapes need to provide a greater diversity of talents during the remainder of CARPE II.
- Gradually focus less attention on PA in landscapes, and focus increased attention on addressing threats and opportunities in forest concessions and with communities. Placing priority attention on PA was an appropriate strategy for the initial phase of CARPE II, but cannot remain the center of attention in the next phase, if CARPE's landscape goals are to be attained.
- Reinvigorate the USG financial commitment to CBFP and back that commitment with increased staff attention to basin-wide and national policy issues. The USG should continue to provide leadership for this program by announcing a continued USG commitment to CBFP of at least $15 million/year through 2015. Just as importantly, the State Department and USAID can build on the initial success of the CBFP with some modest increases in staffing and with active involvement in key policy issues.
- Increase emphasis on country-level and basin-wide coordination (country teams, prioritization of non-landscape activities), while at the same time reducing the isolation of landscape programs and improving opportunities for intra-landscape learning from successful models. A new CARPE support contract is recommended to sustain this effort.

Other Recommendations

a. <u>Tighten program focus:</u> Focus CARPE activities on those programmatic or spatial landscape activities that will most directly reduce identified threats. Leverage recent CBFP partner contributions

to selectively and efficiently limit unnecessary use of US AID funds. Limit "crosscutting" federal agency involvement in the follow-on design to areas where they have a demonstrated comparative advantage.

b. Improve landscape performance: Continue to use and promote a landscape approach, but place less emphasis on the concept of "landscapes" as territorial units. Landscape programs need to move beyond first-stage targets (largely protected areas) and should deal with broader and difficult landscape issues, including livelihoods issues.

Adjust designs to explicitly account for inevitable variability in conditions of stability/security.

Continue working through Implementing NGOs as the primary means to anchor the CARPE program, but adjust grant mechanisms to encourage more synergistic consortia that better integrate strengths of a wider range of partners. Insist that, where appropriate, teaming arrangements include improving livelihoods, forestry, local governance and sometimes, conflict resolution or other specialized contractors/sub-grantees. Conservation NGOs should seek partners that can provide the needed expertise.

Allocation of landscape funds:
Option 1: Normally, all landscape funding should be funneled through the landscape leader. To eliminate double overheads, implementing NGOs would need to accept that these funds would be subcontracted or sub-granted to other Implementing NGOs, with no or low overhead charges. Exceptions would be made on a case-by-case basis, primarily when Trans-boundary landscapes do not lend themselves to joint planning and when threats can be isolated and addressed without unnecessary administrative and management overhead.
Option 2: Maintain the present system of unbundled funding for segment leads, but increase the formal authority of landscape leads to approve/disapprove annual plans and budgets.

c. Prioritize and make better use of Crosscutting program components: Four major crosscutting issues that have the most potential to contribute to the strategic objective and program results and which are within the comparative advantage of CARPE partners are: a) Capacity Building b) Policy and Governance c) Bush meat, and d) Remote Sensing Technology for natural resource monitoring. Lead partners should be clearly identified for each of these issues in the next phase of CARPE procurement. The crosscutting leads would be primarily responsible for recommending and sometimes executing CARPE-funded activities outside of landscapes, providing guidance but not funding within landscapes, and coordinating CARPE reporting. In each case, a CARPE II agenda (e.g. policy agenda, capacity building agenda) should be developed and clearly communicated to all CARPE partners.

CARPE should continue to support a small grant program in each country focused on strengthening the institutional capacity of NGOs and CBOs at both the national and landscape levels. Management of the small grants fund should be one of the tasks implemented through the proposed CARPE support contract.

d. Improve Program Management: Reduce and better distribute the Program's management burden. The CARPE management burden is unusually heavy and the CARPE SO team's capacity is limited and too dependent on one person. Bolster the USAID/CARPE staff in Kinshasa. Strive to reduce the number of management decisions that must be made by the CARPE SO team: e.g. approval of small grants, reduction in the number of landscape segments. Establish a CARPE support contract (new mechanism) that will: support the CARPE country teams, increase capacity to manage the focal point and small grant programs, provide venues for country and regional exchange of lessons learned and successful models, coordinate non-landscape capacity building and policy activities, provide broad

technical support to IRs 2 and 3, and perhaps assist the CARPE SO in program reporting. Make the Focal Points more effective elements of the USAID management team.

e. Continue program funding and reinvigorate USG support:

Reinvigorate the USG's commitment and level of support to CBFP and CARPE objectives. Support to CBFP and CARPE is harmonious with broader USG and European goals of democratization and development in the region. Announce a continued USG commitment to CBFP through 2015. CARPE is an extraordinarily broad and ambitious program that could absorb much more than the funding presently available for it. A minimum of$ 15 million/year (ideally more) will be needed through 20 11 if CARPE is to have an opportunity to meet its Phase II objectives.
Increase USG staff and program support for the region. Establish a new International Environment and Scientific Affairs (OES) position for Central Africa (only). Revitalize and broaden support for *CBFP/CARPE* by creating a new Washington-based coordination body that includes all CARPE partners and reaches out to other potential partners. Establish a more visible USG/USAID identification (branding) that will normally be used for CARPE-funded activities and commodities.

f. Improve CARPE's relationships with national governments, of which many do not appreciate CARPE and could limit its future success:

For the remainder of CARPE 11, a) establish a clearly defined role for local government officials in annual activity planning in landscapes and b) establish a clearly defined role for national government officials in approving an annual set of CARPE activities within each country. Make communication and coordination with national governments the primary task of re-invigorated Focal Points.

g. Develop a more precise approach to balancing conservation and development activities in landscapes:

Possible options:

- Require landscape leaders in the Request for Applications response to: a) analyze development needs in their landscape; b) identify development partners; and c) indicate a level of funding and a development approach needed to address the most critical needs and to alleviate threats to long-term conservation. A floor of 5% or 10% funding for development might be required by USAID.
- Announce the establishment of a second "development window" in the CBFP. Encourage donors to provide and implementing NGOs to search for development funding (matching funds or co-financing agreements with donors), to complement conservation funding in landscapes. This approach leaves development to the development specialists, and follows the approach of the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF's) partnering with the Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) in Cameroon and the Central African Republic (CAR) and USAID/Kinshasa's funding for Lac Tumba.
- USAID/DRC and US AID/Rwanda, as well as the CARPE SO team leader should explore opportunities to access central and regionally-funded USAID programs (e.g. the Population-Health-Environment initiative; Office of Conflict Mitigation resources, FFP resources, Office of Energy resources), to supplement mission bilaterally-funded development activities in CARPE landscapes.
- Work closely with the Washington CARPE team to identify and help channel other resources to the CARPE (and CBFP) effort. For example, the USFWS has resources independent of those deriving from former CARPE monies that could be tapped by Congo Basin conservation entities.

CARPE II (b) **(2006-2011):**

USAID CARPE Management took the following principal actions to address recommendations and concerns in the Assessment Report:

1. The Landscape Program was reorganized and a full and open competition was held to solicit proposals for 12 separate landscape management consortia, one for each of the 12 CARPE Landscape programs. Specific criteria were established to respond to the recommendations, i.e.

    a. The consortia were to include members that had expertise in linking livelihoods to conservation activities.
    b. The funding was limited to a maximum of 50% per landscape for Protected Areas.
    c. Matching fund requirements were not specified but were expected to maximize NGO financial contributions to the USG funding.
    d. All landscape teaming/consortium arrangements and changes theretofore, had to have prior USAID approval.
    e. The Agreements were structured in a "performance-based" model, with the annual budgeting, work planning and associated performance monitoring built into each cooperative agreement as part of the USAID "substantial involvement" requirement.
    f. The USG portion of the Landscape Program funding was reduced from approximately $12 million/year to about $10 million while the matching funds of the implementing NGO partners was expected to increase to at least fill or exceed the reduced USG funding.

2. The Natural Resources Governance IR-2 was completely reorganized under one implementing partner (IUCN) with the mandate to establish individual CARPE country offices, employ country focal points, manage the CARPE small grant program, focus on national policy reform and create a system for dissemination of conservation lessons learned and general coordination of CARPE activities and partners. Increased funding was allocated to IR-2 from about $.75 M to approximately $1.5 M year.

3. The Monitoring of Natural Resources (IR-3) was consolidated into two related but separate implementing partners. The World Resources Institute was mandated to monitor logging concessions across all of the forested Central African countries and the NASA consortium was charged with developing and deploying a "wall-to-wall" deforestation monitoring system across Central Africa. The Landscape Consortia were charged with monitoring keystone species in their individual landscape programs and they were also mandated to provide monitoring information on biodiversity for the "State of the Forest Report" as well as provide ground-truth information for remote sensing deforestation monitoring.

4. The CARPE Management Unit was increased to three full-time expatriate staff and the Administrative Assistant position was upgraded to a Program Assistant with a corresponding increase in financial management and program administration responsibilities. Recently (the FY 10 Congressional Budget Justification), a fourth expatriate staff position was requested along with a new Administrative Assistant position.

5. The CARPE Performance Management Plan was amended to reflect this new organization of responsibilities with more precise and reorganized IR result indicators.

6. The "crosscutting" service provider concept was dropped, the USO partners were reduced to three agencies; NASA, USFS, and the USDA (which continues to provide the core management team personnel.) The terms of reference for the NASA consortium was narrowed with a new P ASA to build monitoring technology and capacity for deforestation monitoring, and the budget was

increased to produce specific outputs for regional monitoring capacity building through a regional NOO based in Kinshasa *(Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d 'Afrique Centrale,* OSFAC). The USFS expanded its scope from targeted technical assistance to Landscape implementing partners to a more comprehensive "government-to-government" assistance to the COMIF AC member states forest ministries as well as to COMIF AC more directly. The Agreement with the US Fish and Wildlife Service was dropped as that Agency was funded directly and separately from CARPE, the Smithsonian Institution and National Parks Service agreements also were not renewed.

C.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this external evaluation are to:

(1) provide a comprehensive analysis of the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) Phase II; the achievements, shortcomings, weaknesses and strengths and lessons learned in the management, administration and execution of this large-scale tropical forest and biodiversity conservation program;
(2) document the achievements in the context of the stated objectives and desired results of the Strategic Plan;
(3) assess the effectiveness of the USAID structure and execution of the management and administrative systems employed to manage the program;
(4) evaluate the, the adequacy of the suite of implementing partners selected by USAID to execute the program relative to the objectives and expected results as established in the CARPE Strategic Framework;
(5) assess the role leadership role that CARPE has played within US Government for the Congo Basin Forest Partnership;
(6) determinate the progress and contribution that CARPE has made to increasing regional, national and local capacity to implement conservation programs, with a special analysis of the role and effectiveness of gender integration into the Program;
(7) analyze the current contribution that CARPE makes toward the USG policy of global climate change mitigation, and recommend changes in program design and modifications in the monitoring system that would increase climate change impact;
(8) provide general technical, administrative and management recommendations for a third CARPE phase.

C.3 SCOPE OF WORK

I. Scope of the Evaluation and Methodology

Further to the three objectives set forth in paragraph one above, the scope is broad and encompasses an assessment that will lead to lessons learned for future programming. It will;

- Comprehensively review all of CARPE Phase II results from 2003 to the present, document and assess implementing partner ability to adapt to changing circumstances as set forth in the US AID biodiversity adaptive management policies as well as to assess the USAID management and monitoring system's design to accommodate sufficient adaptive management principals.
  - Assess actual results compared with expected results.
  - Determine the accuracy and validity of reported results from documentary evidence and compare with actual, verified field results.
- Validate the CARPE II design, the CARPE management structure and the management systems as refined and currently constituted, practiced and implemented by CARPE and its implementing partners.
  - Determine whether the scope, ambition and quality of the prescribed results for each IR, Implementing Mechanism and for the whole program are appropriate in relationship to the budget allocation for each IR, IM and overall program.

  - Examine and assess each of the 16 Implementing Mechanisms to determine their individual progress of accomplishing their respective IR results.
- Assess the validity of the Mid-term External Assessment recommendations and the progress of USAID in carrying out those recommendations.
- Determine lessons learned in executing the program to date, and based on those lessons; recommend principal design elements for a Phase III.
- Identify obstacles or conditions that will affect program outcome and determine what if any modifications in approach are needed for the balance of Phase II and for Phase III to address those identified conditions.

The evaluation will be carried out in close coordination with USAID, the Implementing Partners and the CARPE Team, and the approach should be designed for transparency and participation by CARPE's principal implementing partners and counterparts, including other participating USG agencies, in-region and DC based offices of principle implementing NGOs, USAID and State Department offices, other donors in the region and host country governments and institutions. The USAID AOTR must provide prior approval of all documents produced by the contractor before they can be distributed beyond USAID.

This process should result in two sets of final, approved documents:

I) an Evaluation Report which clearly documents the Contractor's findings related to CARPE's program performance. The report will conform to the requirements as stipulated in the Statement of Work, including "lessons learned and recommendations for Phase III, and

2) summary presentation materials, one PowerPoint and one-page summary hand-outs, in both English and French languages, that will be used to disseminate the findings of the evaluation to partners and other actors, to be submitted within two weeks of USAID acceptance of the final report.

The methodology prescribed for this evaluation/assessment includes:

1. **Desk study and review of the extensive documentation** generated by the program. This information is available for public review on the CARPE web site (http://carpe.umd.edulresources/index_html) and in the CARPE Program Files in the headquarters office at USAID/Kinshasa, DRC. It will include, but is not limited to; a) The CARPE Strategic Plan, b) the CARPE Performance Management Plan as amended, c) the CARPE monitoring and evaluation and work planning "matrix" d) Partner Semi-Annual and Annual Reports, e) USAID/CARPE Performance reports, e) Other CARPE Management Tools such as the Land Use Planning Guides series, Annual Activity Category Budgets and f) CARPE Products such as deforestation maps, Information Management Tool, State of the Forest Report 2006 and 2008, g) the Mid-term CARPE External Assessment and h) the partial evaluation of IR 2 (2009).

2. **Structured interviews with key informants** in Washington and Central Africa. Washington informants will include, but are not limited to; implementing partner headquarter officers, b) members of Congress and the International Conservation Caucus or staff, c) USAID Africa Bureau and EGAT Bureau staff d) State Department AF and OES Bureau staff d) USG Federal Agency Partner staff including the USFWS, USFS, USDAIF AS, NASA, e) World Bank HQ staff. Central Africa interviews will include, a) USAIDIDRC and CARPE staff, b) implementing partner field staff, c) cooperating country government staff, d) COMIFAC Executive Secretariat, e) CARPE Focal Points f) Local NGOs g) CBO or local community representatives, h) logging company and other private sector collaborators and their trade

association representatives, i) Principal Donor Members of the CBFP (France, Germany, UK, World Bank, Norway, African Development Bank, j) Other international NGOs active in the environmental sector such as Greenpeace, Rainforest Foundation, SNV, CARE etc.

3. **Field Visits**: The evaluation team members must conduct at least three Landscape project field visits in landscape offices, in at least three CARPE countries to verify and validate program documentation, local understanding of the program, field test and verify the conservation strategies underway and to interview local community representatives, local officials and local landscape consortia personnel. The Landscape Programs to be visited will be determined in consultation with the various stakeholders, but those Landscape programs with substantial mix of field activities such as the bi-national Gamba Conkouati (Gabon and ROC), Sangha Trinational (Cameroon, CAR,ROC) and Maringa Lopori Wamba (DRC) contain a wide variety of conservation challenges and approaches. It will be necessary to conclude the site visits in advance of finalizing the contract to ensure proper budgeting to accommodate this travel. In addition to landscape field visits, the team or team member(s) must conduct field work in not less than three country capitals in addition to Kinshasa, DRC Yaounde, Cameroon, Libreville, Gabon and Brazzaville, ROC are the primary candidates. Consideration should also be given to "smaller countries" such as Rwanda, Burundi or Bangui, CAR.

4. **Sequencing of Activities and Schedule:** Two initial weeks of desk study will be conducted in the contractor's home office or similar locale, using internet and web search. One week of Washington structured interviews and six weeks of field work in Central Africa will be required with follow-up interviews in Washington. Report-writing will be managed in sections and reviewed by USAID on a rolling basis. The entire evaluation process from initial preparation to a final draft report will be implemented over a total level of effort of twelve (12) weeks. The final report will be delivered in both electronic form and bound paper/hard copy. In addition, a PowerPoint presentation will be prepared which highlights significant findings and recommendations.

5. **Washington Briefings:** After the final report is accepted by USAID, the contractor will conduct debriefings and presentation of the findings and recommendations to USG, Congressional and other stakeholders.

II. Tasks, Deliverables and Schedules

Task 1: Prepare Detailed Work Plan

Under this task the consultant team will be provided a packet of basic material on CARPE to review (most documents are available on the CARPE web page but others will be provided in electronic of hard copy format) and will submit for approval a work plan which will describe the detailed approach, specific activities to be completed, and schedules for each of the following tasks. This plan should be prepared in consultation with the COTR and will be subject to modification during implementation by mutual consent.

Deliverable: Final written plan.

Due date: The initial work plan proposal should be submitted for approval within three weeks of signing of the Task Order.

Task 2: Analysis of performance, management and strategic design

The contractor will gather information and prepare an assessment of the performance of the current programs and partners, the management structure and the overall strategic design. This process should be participatory and include as many of the major actors influencing CARPE as is practical given time constraints.

Review of appropriate documents: The contractor will review a broad set of CARPE, CBFP and other pertinent documentation as provided by USAID and the CARPE team.

The contractor will identify and create additional documentation such as questionnaires to conduct key interviews and key contacts for participation in the evaluation. The contractor will identify and record further documentation discovered and noted as valuable during this review. After the documentation review, the contractor should present to the COTR a plan of who will be contacted and how they will seek consistent input from the key actors. The contractor will also identify not less than three Landscape field sites for visits and four regional capital cities for field work that will provide the contractor with an opportunity to confirm the information on performance, management and coordination.

Interview of a sample of key actors: Contractors should plan to contact/interview partners in Kinshasa as well as their home institutions in DC, key actors from the interagency process (performance, management and strategy), key USG contacts in the countries where CARPE operates (program strategy and management), members of cooperating country administrations and members of the Executive Secretariat of the Commission on Forests of Central Africa (COMIFAC) which is based in Yaounde, Cameroon. Although different actors have specialized views, the contractor should be seeking from each their view of CARPE's effectiveness, strengths and weaknesses in terms of their own institutions' points of view relative to the CARPE program framework and relative to the needs and opportunities in the region.

Site visits: The team will travel to no less than three landscape-site field sites. The visits will be designed to help the consultant team verify the results that are being reported in the CARPE reporting documents as well as to provide context and local input to the evaluation. The sites will be recommended by the Contractor after the desk review and work plan is developed, and agreed upon by the COTR after consultations with the Contractor. The visits will be conducted from Kinshasa to representative landscape sites in Central Africa. The contractor will arrange for and organize all logistical services such as air tickets, charter aircraft, vehicle rental etc.

Deliverable: Identify and create additional documentation and conduct no less than three landscape-site field visits.

Due date: After the Desk review and after the work plan is developed

Task 3: Draft report of the performance, management and strategic design assessment and options for optimization

The draft evaluation report will be prepared and submitted to the COTR for review and comment. After taking COTR comments into account and with COTR clearance, this report will be subjected to a participatory commentary process to be proposed by the Contractor. Comments will be reviewed and considered in the redrafting of the final document. A summary of the comments will be included as an annex.

Deliverable: Draft Evaluation report

Due date: After completion of site visits

Task 4: Final report

After incorporating the comments, the draft report will be resubmitted to the COTR for final review. Comments and corrections will be incorporated in preparing the final document and the Executive Summary will be translated to French. This final version should be received within 30 days of the COTR acceptance of the final draft version. The final document should be delivered to CARPE in electronic and hard copy. Distribution of the document will be by the USAID/CARPE team.

Deliverable: Final report

Due date: 30 days from the COTR's acceptance of the draft report.

Task 5: Presentation of the conclusions

The team leader of the project will develop a public presentation of the conclusions of this evaluation, including PowerPoint presentation and a one-page summary hand-out in both English and French language. The materials shall be developed with the target audience of USAID/Washington officials, the interagency committee and furthermore for regional use by US Embassy Public Diplomacy programs, host country actors and other donors. The materials will be approved by USAID before production.

Deliverable: Presentations

Due date: After submission of the final report

ANNEX F: THE METT

WWF/World Bank Protected Area (PA) Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) is a widely-used tool for monitoring the effectiveness of the following 30 different aspects of PA management. For each question, the use has a multiple choice selection of four different statements from which he/she chooses the one that best reflects the situation for the particular PA in question. The full METT can be found at http://assets.panda.org/downloads/mett2_final_version_july_2007.pdf.

(1) Legal status - Does the protected area have legal status (or in the case of private reserves is covered by a covenant or similar)?
(2) Protected area regulations - Are appropriate regulations in place to control land use and activities (e.g. hunting)?
(3) Law enforcement - Can staff (i.e. those with responsibility for managing the site) enforce protected area rules well enough?
(4) Protected area objectives - Is management undertaken according to agreed objectives?
(5) Protected area design - Is the protected area the right size and shape to protect species, habitats, ecological processes and water catchments of key conservation concern?
(6) Protected area boundary demarcation - Is the boundary known and demarcated?
(7) Management plan - Is there a management plan and is it being implemented?
(8) Regular work plan - Is there a regular work plan and is it being implemented
(9) Resource inventory - Do you have enough information to manage the area?
(10) Protection systems - Are systems in place to control access/resource use in the protected area?
(11) Research - Is there a program of management-orientated survey and research work?
(12) Resource management - Is active resource management being undertaken?
(13) Staff numbers - Are there enough people employed to manage the protected area?
(14) Staff training - Are staff adequately trained to fulfil management objectives?
(15) Current budget - Is the current budget sufficient?
(16) Security of budget - Is the budget secure?
(17) Management of budget - Is the budget managed to meet critical management needs?
(18) Equipment - Is equipment sufficient for management needs?
(19) Maintenance of equipment - Is equipment adequately maintained?
(20) Education and awareness - Is there a planned education programme linked to the objectives and needs?
(21) Planning for land and water use - Does land and water use planning recognize the protected area and aid the achievement of objectives?
(22) State and commercial neighbors - Is there co-operation with adjacent land and water users?
(23) Indigenous people - Do indigenous and traditional peoples resident or regularly using the protected area have input to management decisions?
(24) Local communities - Do local communities resident or near the protected area have input to management decisions?
(25) Economic benefit - Is the protected area providing economic benefits to local communities, e.g. income, employment, payment for environmental services?
(26) Monitoring and evaluation - Are management activities monitored against performance?
(27) Visitor facilities - Are visitor facilities adequate?

(28) Commercial tourism operators - Do commercial tour operators contribute to protected area management?

(29) Fees - If fees (i.e. entry fees or fines) are applied, do they help protected area management?

(30) Condition of values - What is the condition of the important values of the protected area as compared to when it was first designated?

ANNEX G: ANALYSIS OF THE USFS GUIDES

FOR THE PREPARATION OF PA MANAGEMENT PLANS

The CARPE office requires the landscape partners to use the USFS Guide for Protected Area Management Planning in Central Africa for the preparation of PA management plans. The draft guide was disseminated to NGO partners in December 2006 and the final guide was presented in a USFS workshop in November 2008. The USFS guide is also a basic tool for work planning, budgeting and CARPE performance-based monitoring – the completed PA management plans are systematically ranked against the key components called for in the guide.

The Evaluation Team has attempted to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this guide. In addition to the team's collective expertise on PA management, the team also used the PA Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (the METT) that was developed by WWF and the World Bank. The METT is a widely used tool for monitoring 30 basic aspects of PA management effectiveness. The METT was used as a reference to determine how thoroughly the USFS guide covers the different aspects of PA management. The 30 key questions in the METT are presented in Appendix F and the full METT can be found at http://assets.panda.org/downloads/mett2_final_version_july_2007.pdf.

STRENGTHS OF THE PA MANAGEMENT PLANNING GUIDE

(1) Emphasizes flexibility and adaptive management for PA management.
(2) Lays out a set of steps to follow in the planning process.
(3) Provides guidance on the composition and the roles of the planning team.
(4) Places a strong emphasis on stakeholder participation in PA management planning.
(5) Emphasizes priority-setting based on the funding available for preparation of the management plan.
(6) Calls for management plan sections on unique values of the PA, description of the PA and, especially, on management for achieving a set of desired conditions rather than managing to deal with identified threats.
(7) Calls for sections that define PA management objectives, for the development of rules and regulations governing access and use of resources in PA and for PA zoning (it calls them micro-zones).
(8) Calls for a section with a timetable for implementation and a section on monitoring.

WEAKNESSES OF PA MANAGEMENT PLANNING GUIDE

The PA Management Planning Guide does not cover many topics that are very important for effective PA management. Specifically, the guide does not call for sections addressing:

(1) PA staffing or of staff training needs.
(2) PA financing, budgeting, budget management or business plans.
(3) Tourist entrance fees or revenue sharing with local communities.
(4) Identification and analysis of threats to the PA and for strategies to counter them.
(5) Institutional mandates for PA management or for management partnerships with NGOs, private sector/tourism operators, zoological societies, etc. including the respective management mandates for the different partners.
(6) Enforcement or whether or not park staff will have legal policing powers.
(7) Management-oriented research and survey work.
(8) Infrastructure and equipment needs for PA management or on the maintenance of each.
(9) Development and maintenance of visitor facilities.

(10) Ongoing involvement of local communities and/or indigenous peoples in PA management and measures for conflict resolution.

(11) Programs for education and raising awareness in support of PA objectives (beyond the PA management planning stage).

In addition, the guide has the following shortcomings:

(12) The manual states that the quality of the PA management plan can be an important factor in determining whether or not the PA becomes officially recognized – whether or not the PA gets created. The development of a management plan would seem to be a highly impractical means of convincing governments to create a protected area.

(13) On page 6 of the French version: "It is important to remember that it is indispensable that local communities receive real benefits that are directly linked to the existence of the PA in order to increase the long term chances of success". This seems quite idealistic. It is not often that the benefits of a protected area outweigh the disadvantages to the local communities who are used to hunting, fishing, harvesting a wide variety of local products and maybe even raising crops from the area to be set aside as a protected area. It is not often that the revenues from employment in the park and the indirect benefits of tourism are as great as the opportunity costs foregone to the local populations. This is frequently the reality of the PA strategy for biodiversity conservation. It does not mean we should not create PA; we just need to be realistic about the real costs of this to local people. Also, one needs to ensure that some portion of whatever benefits are generated do provide benefits for local people.

(14) The manual puts a great emphasis on stakeholder participation, then says on page 9, "It is important to note that…in the end, most of the decisions on the management and conservation of the resources in the PA will rest entirely with the PA management authority". This is essentially a statement that the stakeholder participation is mostly just lip service. It would seem to be an encouragement to the PA management authority not to take stakeholders seriously. It goes on to state that stakeholder participation is only critical when the management authority is weak or when the management plan is being prepared by an NGO without the direct involvement of the state management authority.

(15) All but two of the CARPE countries are francophone. Francophones often break management planning down into two separate documents – "*le plan d'aménagement*" (development plan) and the "*le plan de gestion*" (management plan). There is no recognition or discussion of this in the USFS guide.

The Evaluation Team concludes that the USFS guide does not cover many of the essential aspects of PA management. In some ways, the shortcomings of the USFS guide for PA management may be less important than in other areas. The PA management authority in each country often has their own internally approved guidelines for the preparation of PA management plans. Also, PA management is something that can be improved incrementally over time – and that is fully compatible with CARPE strategies. What is most critical is to establish a physical presence on the ground with a minimum of patrolling and enforcement to reduce the immediate direct threats to the PA. Outreach with local stakeholders should be another short term priority, but it is assumed that basic awareness raising and a minimum of support from local populations and other stakeholders has already been established through the landscape-level LUP process.

FOR CBNRM PLANNING

The US Forest Service prepared a document entitled Guide to Land-Use Planning for Community Based Natural Resource Management Macro-zones in Central Africa that was disseminated to CARPE landscape partners in December 2008. The USAID CARPE office uses these guidelines for budgeting and monitoring. For monitoring, they use the guidelines as the standard against which they determine whether CBNRM management plans have been successfully completed by the landscape partners. The

CARPE landscape partners use them for CBNRM management planning. The Evaluation Team found that most of the CARPE landscape partners have a great need of high quality guidelines that represent the state-of-the-art of this subject. Given the importance placed on these guidelines, the Evaluation Team has analyzed them closely and identified several strengths and weaknesses of the guidelines:

Strengths:

(1) The emphasis on adaptive management is very good. CBFM for savanna forests in Burkina Faso did not use adaptive management and basically went on doing and replicating the same things for 15 to 20 years before they started modifying and diversifying their approaches.

(2) The participatory micro-zoning is also very good – it is critical to distinguish agricultural areas from production forests from community protected areas, etc.

Weaknesses:

(1) A North American base. The introduction to the guide states that the "USFS shares its expertise gained in managing large forested multiple-use landscapes in the United States". It states that the guide has been adapted to the conditions of Central Africa, but provides no indication as to how that was done. The guide is not based on a review of CBNRM in the Congo Basin nor is it based on a review of lessons learned and basic principles of CBNRM in Africa. There is not a great deal of CBNRM experience in Central Africa, but there is about 10 years of experience in Cameroon for community-based forest management. There are 15 years of experience in CAR and several years of experience in Cameroon for CB wildlife management for sport/safari hunting. Additionally, there exists a wealth of CBNRM experience across Africa and numerous reviews of best practices and lessons learned that can be drawn upon for developing a CBNRM guide. The ecological, social and economic context of North America is simply too far removed from that of Central Africa to be very useful.

(2) Simplistic approach. The CBNRM guide takes a very simplistic view of NRM, primarily reducing NRM down to a list of permissible and non-permissible activities. This is a quote from the CBNRM guide:

"PA, CBNRM and ERZ management plans are more detailed than the overall landscape plan as they outline a set of desired conditions for a discrete geographic region, the specific set of permissible and non-permissible activities within a macro-zone, and identify in the annual work plans the specific interventions needed on the ground."

It is relatively easy to incrementally develop improved PA management over time. Industrial scale natural forest management systems require a more radical change, but logging companies have exclusive rights, have very significant financial resources and now have established models and certification criteria to guide them. Community-based management presents an inherently more difficult challenge and the failure rate for pilot initiatives in a new geographic area can be quite high. A CBNRM initiative must function properly at the social, economic and technical/ecological levels – and they have to be made functional during the relatively short time that a donor program like CARPE can dedicate to this effort. Developing capacities and governance systems with impoverished, poorly educated rural populations is always a great challenge. It is extremely important to do the best job possible to study lessons learned and best practices and to adapt them to local conditions – right from the beginning.

(3) Limited awareness of major success stories. The guide states, "Community based forest management is still in its early stages of evolution in Africa and around the world. Several models have been attempted, with varying degrees of success." The authors give no recognition of the 25 years of CBNFM in the seven Sahelian countries and the several million hectares under community-based management there. The guide also makes no mention of the several million hectares of land under community-based wildlife management in Botswana and Namibia.

(4) The guide is generic in the extreme. The same guidelines must be applied to fisheries management and to forest management for sawtimber production and for community reserves for ecotourism development. The guide provides no natural-resource-sector-specific guidance.

(5) Confusion on nature of the guide. There is confusion as to whether this is a guide for land use planning or for community-based natural resource management planning. The title of the guide says it is a guide for land use planning in CBNRM macro-zones. But the key Chapter 4 of the guide is for producing CBNRM plans.

(6) Economic enterprise. CBNRM is fundamentally an economic enterprise. Communities must manage their resources as a profit making business – costs cannot exceed revenues – unless there is an assured source of supplemental income. CBNRM needs to be based on market and value chain analysis. There is little or no mention of the business management aspects of CBNRM in this guide.

(7) Community management structure. The guide talks about the CBNRM planning team and it talks about a stakeholder participation strategy, but it never addresses the critical question about how the community will be structured to manage its resources. It is not at all clear from the guide who should have management authority.

(8) Equitable sharing of costs and benefits. CBNRM will only work if the members of the community find that management costs and benefits are shared fairly (equitably) within the community. The guide is silent on this issue.

(9) Sustainable financing. Will the communities rely on volunteer labor or paid labor? Volunteer labor is rarely effective over time. If the labor is to be paid, then a mechanism must be set up for reinvesting some portion of revenues back into management. This is one of the most critical aspects of CBNRM sustainability, but the guide is silent as to how the costs of NRM will be covered.

(10) Community empowerment. The guide does not identify community empowerment with exclusive rights over the resources to be managed as an essential pre-condition for CBNRM. All NRM incurs costs and communities will not invest in the costs of CBNRM if other non-members/outsiders can come in and harvest the fruits of their efforts.

(11) Legal tools for empowerment of communities. The guide states: "most countries in the region have some legal framework in which to grant communities the rights over natural resources for various uses." This is a very inaccurate statement. In most of the CARPE countries, rural lands and natural resources belong to the state, and communities have no rights for commercial uses of local natural resources. Legal frameworks put in place in the 1930s allow for local usufruct rights to resource use. Usufruct rights are, by definition, for non-commercial uses. Very few countries have legal frameworks that are already operational for the empowerment of communities in the landscapes to have exclusive management rights over their resources. Legal frameworks are generally evolving in that direction, but only Cameroon clearly has an operational framework under which communities are empowered with forest and wildlife management rights. A number of countries have laws that allow for community managed resources, but the administrative regulations (*textes d'application*) needed to apply these laws are still lacking (DRC, Gabon, ROC…).

(12) Traditional land tenure and resource access rights. Under traditional tenure, virtually all land and resources in the Congo Basin already belongs to someone. Such traditional tenure systems are usually the best basis for the development of CBNRM. The guide is silent on this critical issue.

(13) Agriculture and CBNRM. The guide mixes agriculture in with CBNRM. Agriculture is not a community-based activity. Although farmland may remain under traditional communal tenure, farms are not managed by communities – agriculture is a family-level economic activity. Nearly

all attempts at communal agriculture in the 20th century failed. Also, USAID is one of the few organizations that include agriculture under the category of natural resource management. Generally, when a forest is converted to agriculture in Central Africa, the first thing the farmer does is slash-and-burn – he/she destroys all of the above ground natural resources on the site. Separate micro-zones should be created for agricultural lands (as is already being done in a number of the landscapes) and agricultural improvement initiatives should recognize and promote family-level management, if not ownership, of farmlands in these micro-zones.

(14) Sustainability. The guide does not call for an analysis of the baseline sustainability of the resource. IR1 is "Natural resources managed sustainably". CBNRM should specifically target the development of NRM systems for resources that are being used unsustainably. In some portions of the CBFP landscapes, population levels and pressures on the resource are so low that there is little need for the development of management systems. For example, there is probably little need for CBNRM development in most of the Maringa-Lopori-Wamba except for wildlife management.

(15) Conditionality. The guide is silent on this critical aspect of CBNRM. The conditional empowerment of communities subject to their respect for their obligations provides the means for establishing close direct links between the financial/economics aspects of CBNRM and the forest and biodiversity conservation aspects of CBNRM. It is probably the single most important element of biodiversity/forest conservation strategies on community lands.

(16) Scale. The guide says that each CBNRM macro-zone will require a management plan. The macro-zone would seem to be a highly inappropriate level for a CB natural resource management plan. It is generally far too large to be a workable management unit. The CBNRM macro-zones do not correspond to voluntary community groupings nor have they been defined as a function of traditional land/resource tenure. The CBNRM macro-zone may very well be an appropriate level to develop support services for local community managers.

(17) Definition of community. This is a fundamental aspect of CBNRM and one of the most crucial decisions to be made in CBNRM planning, and this section of the guidelines needs to be developed in much greater detail. The section of the guide titled "Definition of Community for CBNRM Zones" is very confusing. It never makes it clear if a CBNRM macro-zone should be managed by a single community entity or if it might be broken into several or many local CBNRM management units. It also ends up saying the community should be defined by social scientists. It never suggests that communities should be defined primarily by the voluntary grouping of local people themselves based on traditional land tenure/resource rights.

(18) Governance. Governance is critical to CBNRM and one of the lessons learned from southern Africa is that of subsidiary. Governance works best when the management unit is located at the lowest workable level – i.e., when each village has its own management body to oversee the management of the village's traditional village lands or "*terroir*". At the village level, everyone can participate in general assembly meetings to debate resource management and the sharing of costs and benefits. When the management structure includes a number of villages, only a small number of village representatives can be sent to participate in decision making, and thus problems of governance proliferate.

(19) Zoning. What may be needed for each CBNRM macro-zone is a second intermediate level of land use zoning. Participatory mapping of traditional land tenure and resource rights should be done within each CBNRM macro-zone and this should serve as the basis for planning who the communities are and who will manage natural resources. When a CBNRM zone is divided into village lands (*terroir*), then participatory mapping of each *terroir* can be used to define micro-zones for agriculture, different CBNRM zones for wildlife management, forest management for wood and non-woody resources, fisheries management or multiple resource management as well as sacred sites and community nature/ecotourism reserves. Also, there is no reason for an artificial distinction between extractive resource zones and CBNRM. Traditional

community land/resource rights cut across forest concessions. Some forms of CBNRM should be fully compatible with logging concessions. Communities could be empowered to manage fisheries, wildlife and non-woody resources within forest concessions. Communities could co-manage forests with logging companies for the production of wood products with communities harvesting and producing sawn wood products for local/regional markets from species that are non-commercial for international markets.

(20) Management techniques. Quote from guidelines: "planning teams should be effective in facilitating a process whereby local communities and other local stakeholders take the lead in defining the content of the management plan." This is an idealistic point of view that is relevant in some situations and not in others. It has little applicability for CBNFM. There is little tradition of community management of forests for wood products in Africa, and it should not be assumed that communities will come up with a sustainable forest management system on their own. Modern forest management expertise is needed for the development of CBNFM. Raising awareness of modern natural resource management expertise should be done for all types of NRM, with the community managers testing and ultimately choosing the mix of traditional and modern management techniques that work best for them.

ANNEX H: CBNRM IN THE LANDSCAPES

The Team's review of CBNRM in both the landscapes visited and the landscapes not visited are based, in general, on the principles for successful CBNRM presented above. Time did not permit, however, a systematic review against each principle for any of the CBNRM sites.

In the three landscapes visited, the team encountered one functioning example of CBNRM, a community-based oyster management initiative supported by WCS at Mayumba in the Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati Landscape. The community is structured and legally empowered to control access to the lagoon with the oyster fishery (see Figure 1 below). They have a basic system for monitoring oyster reproduction and for adjusting oyster harvesting/off take in correlation with their reproduction. They have a set of community rules over access and harvesting and they enforce those rules. The management plan is not available on the CARPE web site.

At Maringa-Lopori-Wamba, AWF is working towards the development of community-based wildlife management and has completed two consultant studies towards this end. Wildlife is overharvested in most of this remote landscape, but pressures on other natural resources are so low in most of MLW, that community-based wildlife management (CBWM) is probably the only appropriate form of CBNRM that could/should be developed there. However, the AWF landscape leader for MLW estimates that, under their planning, it will be at least two years before they could have a CBWM pilot system functioning there.

WWF hopes to develop community-based fisheries management in the large Ndougou Lagoon north of Gamba. The WWF staff at Gamba did not inform the Evaluation Team that WWF has worked in the past 15 years to assist the government and fishermen with the management of fisheries in this lagoon and the lower Nyanga waters. WWF claims that, largely because of their presence and collaboration with communities and local leaders, foreigners (professional West African fishermen) have not been able to gain access to the rich fishing grounds around the Gamba lagoon, unlike the rest of Gabon. This support has helped to assure that these waters have remained some of the richest fresh and brackish water fishing grounds left in Gabon.

The Ndougou lagoon waters vary from saline to fresh and provide critical nursery habitat for an important range of marine fish species. The lagoon supports a modest sports fishery. All of the marine fish must enter the lagoon through a tidal stream inside of Loanga National Park. When the team visited this stream at low tide near the end of the dry season, it was only about 50 meters wide. The Evaluation Team was told by the local WWF staff that local fishermen would be authorized to fish with nets in this critical entrance to the lagoon and that WWF planned to construct a permanent fishing camp a short distance from the lagoon entrance. These two points were later contradicted by review comments made by WWF headquarters in Washington.

WWF is conducting socio-economic studies of the local communities and is mapping traditional tenure limits to the fishing waters of the lagoon. The Team visited one small village where nearly all the able-bodied men had left to find jobs in Gamba or elsewhere and most of the once well-constructed homes were in an extreme state of disrepair. The remaining villagers seemed to have a strong "handout mentality", probably the result of 50 years of oil exploration and development around Gamba and the many free services that have accompanied it. An elephant had ravaged their manioc field and they claimed that the project and the local authorities had done nothing. The context clearly represents a difficult challenge for CBNRM development and the local WWF team had few concrete ideas on how to proceed.

One thing is very clear. The lagoon represents an environmentally critical site for the reproduction of very important marine species. The development of management systems here must be based on the

best understanding of the biology and ecological requirements of the species concerned. The proposal to allow net fishing at the mouth of the lagoon seems to be highly questionable.

Figure 1. Monitoring the regeneration of oysters at community-based oyster management initiative at Mayoumba in Gamba-Conkouati Landscape

INFORMATION ON PROGRESS IN LANDSCAPES NOT VISITED

In an attempt to provide a more complete review of CARPE CBNRM experience, the following information has been gleaned from a variety of sources, primarily from CBNRM management plans found on the CARPE web site. We have attempted to capture some of the diversity of approaches sampled from most of the landscapes while commenting on key strengths and weaknesses.

Cameroon has been a pioneer in CBNRM in Central Africa. Progress has been based on a legal framework for the empowerment of communities for natural forest management (community-based natural forest management – CBNFM) that was developed at least ten years ago, as well as a more recent law for CBWM for sport hunting called *zones d'intérêt cynégétique de gestion communautaire* (ZICGC – Community-Managed Hunting Zones). They have about 10 years of experience in CBNFM and more recent experience in CBWM for sport hunting. In the beginning, there were many problems and setbacks with the CBNFM but most of them seem to have been resolved over time. Both forms of CBNRM are based on principles of sustainable NRM. CBNRM management plans for CBNRM macro-zones in Cameroon were not found on the CARPE web site. This is unfortunate because this is reputedly the CARPE country with the greatest operational CBNRM experience.

Under CARPE, IUCN/Cameroon has contributed to the production of a preliminary version of a Manual of Procedures for the Attribution and Norms for the Management of Community Forests. This manual defines a set of standards for the management of community forests. The law stipulates that community

managers must develop a simple management plan with technical assistance from the Forestry Administration. Communities may harvest and process forest products themselves, or they may sell stumpage. In most cases communities sell the "stumpage" or cutting rights to commercial loggers. Empowerment of communities for CBNFM in Cameroon is conditional. If communities do not respect the norms for CBNFM or the conditions of their forest management plan, their management and harvest rights can be suspended. Similar tools for the management of ZICGC are under development.

The WWF-supported management plan for the Oua River CBNRM southeast of Minkebe is found on the web site. The plan allows only for subsistence use of resources (which don't generate any revenues) and does not define how the communities will be organized and empowered to manage this CBNRM macro-zone. The plan seems to be heavy on what communities cannot do with few evident incentives for communities Neither management plan indicates what legal instruments will be used for empowerment. WWF informed the Team that it is planned to formalize community (commercial) fishing rights and zone the river in three sectors. The advantage for the local communities is that their fishing rights are being recognized. In the LUP and in the signed MOU on Oua River management, it is proposed that Oua fishermen organize themselves in a local association that will represent their interests towards Ministry of Forests, ANPN, and local authorities.

Fisheries are frequently governed by a different set of laws from forests and wildlife. Community control of fishing waters is being developed in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea.

Community reserves are managed by traditional leaders that have been empowered by the provincial government in the Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega landscape with the assistance of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International. The provincial government did this in the absence of a national legal framework for authorizing the creation of this type of reserve, and in the absence of a significant presence of the central government in this area at the time the reserves were created. These reserves were later approved by the national park management agency ICCN.

An analysis of the draft December 1, 2009 Abanga River CBNRM management plan in the Gabonese portion of the Mont Alen-Mont de Cristal Landscape indicates a lack of basic understanding of CBNRM. First, there is a chapter on the capacity of the government to implement the CBNRM management plan. Second, the plan indicates that various actors will manage different portions of the landscape:

- Extractive use zones will be managed by the logging company BSG;
- Village lands (*terroirs*) will be managed by the village chiefs not as community representatives but as the "auxillary" representatives of the governor;
- Sites of interest (*Sites d'intèrêt*) will be managed by communities – with nothing said about how communities would be structured or organized for this.

In addition, use of natural resources by local populations will be limited to usufruct (non-commercial) uses. Furthermore, the management plan calls for specialized personnel to be employed and equipment to be purchased (including a vehicle) but no indication that management would generate any revenues or how the personnel and equipment would be paid for.

Twenty-four management plans are presented for the Lac Tele portion of the Lac Tele/Lac Toumba Landscape on the CARPE Landscape. Nearly all of them are for individual villages. They are titled as management plans for village lands and are not CBNRM plans *per se*. Of the two plans that were reviewed, most of the activities identified are socio-economic activities that are not based on NRM. Village lands are zoned for a) sustainable use, and; b) total protection. There are nice summaries of traditional management practices for each village, but there are no natural resource management plans for the sustainable use zones for each village in the two documents reviewed.

CAR has ten community-based wildlife management areas in its northern savanna zone that have operated for 15 years (pre-CARPE). They exist even though there is no legal framework for their

creation. Although the area has numerous security problems, the community-managed areas now have the highest density of large ungulates in all of CAR. This example shows that CBNRM can sometimes operate successfully without a legal framework as long as it continues to enjoy the appropriate political support. It also shows that CBNRM can operate over time under conditions of very significant insecurity. Under CARPE, the creation of small community hunting areas is underway in CAR in the TNS landscape – also apparently without a legal basis.

Tested, proven, and/or promising CBNRM systems/models for forest and/or wildlife management are not known to exist in the humid forests of CAR, ROC, DRC, Sao-Tome, Rwanda, Burundi, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. CARPE partners seem to have done little to inventory, capitalize and build upon local knowledge of the traditional CBNRM systems for wildlife, fisheries or other resources.

The Ituri-Epulu-Aru draft CBNRM management plans

Probably the most interesting and promising CBNRM initiatives found by exploring the CARPE web site are those developed by WSC in the Ituri-Epulu-Aru Landscape. The management plan for the large Andikau CBNRM was looked at in some detail. The forests there were under heavy pressure from uncontrolled, open access, illegal log cutting. The landscape lead is WCS and Pact developed the management plan. The participatory planning process in each village begins with the participatory mapping of the condition of the village lands as hey were in the past, as they exist in the present, and then the future conditions if present trends continue, then a final map of future conditions if the land and resources were brought under community-based management. This is the same process as has been implemented by WWF in partnership with PACT in Salonga. This is generally a powerful planning tool for CBNRM and a highly effective way of building local awareness of the need for resource management.

The section of the plan called the "strategic axis" of the plan is more like an integrated rural development plan. It has health services and agriculture and livestock and infrastructure (roads, bridges, markets, rural electrification, anti-alcoholism program…) all included in the CBNRM plan. Most of this macro-zone would be made into a protected area covering 565,700 hectares. Ten thousand hectares are zoned for agriculture and 58,000 hectares for forest management for the production of sawtimber and other products.

The Banana CBNRM management plan is designed for a much smaller area with agricultural zones (called agroforestry) and forest management zones. A range of agricultural practices are proposed for trial, most of them good, but there is no explicit strategy for making the transformation from slash-and-burn to permanent agriculture – a most difficult challenge. Alley cropping is one of the techniques proposed, but the Evaluation Team does not know of any cases where this technique (developed in the 1970s) has been successfully extended to farmers at any significant scale. It is proposed that each six-hectare agricultural unit will be farmed by six households; however, it is not clear if this is to be done as six separate sub-units or if the six-hectare parcel is to be farmed collectively. An estimated annual farm budget of costs and revenues has been prepared, and some of the yields would appear quite optimistic – 6000 kg per hectare for maize and 30,000 kg per hectare for manioc. It is not clear if the system has already been tested, however. What is presented is a positive mix of techniques, but putting them together into functional, productive, sustainable agricultural systems will take a good deal of time, trial and error, and adaptive management.

For community-based natural resource management, the draft management plan calls for the commercial production of an ambitious range of products that runs from of sawtimber and other wood and non-woody forest products to bushmeat and fish. The draft Ituri CBNRM management plans are the only ones found by the Team that would generate significant revenue flows for communities. For the Banana CBNRM (that is its name), 42,500 ha are zoned for forest management and mining in the draft management plan. Estimates of costs and revenues are once again put forward and the revenues are very substantial. The annual production of sawtimber is valued at $2.7 million. It is not clear if sawlogs would be sold or if the logs would be processed into sawn wood products before sale. Wood fuels

would bring in $78,000 and small construction wood products would also be marketed. The technical details on the sustainability of forest management are very sketchy. Bushmeat would be marketed in local villages only and would bring in $21,600 per year. The draft management plan also says little about how wildlife and fisheries would be managed sustainably.

The draft Banana plan is also one of the few examples that goes into some level of detail on community management structures and on financial management. For each local community, there would be a village natural resource management committee (*comité villageoise de gestion des ressources naturelles*). This committee would be federated at the macro-zone level into an inter-village natural resource management committee. Above this inter-village committee, there would be some sort of executive group. There is also a community-based natural resource management platform at the macro-zone level with 10 different sub-groups. It all seems rather complex. Revenues would cover operating costs, taxes, payments to traditional authorities, forest management funds and village development funds. The two latter funds would be managed at the macro-zone level rather than at the community level. The governance structures and the financial management systems look relatively thorough and quite complex.

The CBNRM management plans for Ituri are only drafts, but they display a far greater understanding of CBNRM and much more detail on governance structures and financial management than most of the other CBNRM plans available on the CARPE web site. Clearly, the landscape partners propose to develop CBNRM in Ituri as an economic enterprise that would generate very significant benefits and incentives for local populations. This economic emphasis is missing in most of the other CBNRM initiatives.

In one way, the Ituri CBNRM proposals are very, very ambitious compared to the other major CBNRM success stories in Africa. They propose to start out right from the beginning with the management, harvest and marketing of sawtimber, wood-based fuels, other wood construction materials, bushmeat and fish. They propose to start out from the beginning with a complex, multi-tiered governance and financial structure. All this complexity may be very difficult to manage right from the beginning if the institutional capacities of the local populations are at all typical of rural populations in Africa. The CARPE field partners will need to provide very intensive support at the beginning as these systems become operational. Especially close attention will need to be paid to financial safeguards. It is very important that a sustained commitment be made over a period of years (generally at least five) to the development of the first pilot CBNRM systems in each new geographic area.

One of the most interesting models for such a multi-tiered system is the community-based natural forest management system put in place in Burkina Faso by an UNDP/Food and Agriculture Organization project on 225,000 hectares of wooded savanna southwest of Ouagadougou in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The 225,000 hectares are divided into six autonomous management blocks. Each large management block is composed of perhaps six to 10 community-based management units. Each community-based unit has its own governance structure and it pays a portion of its revenues to a federated structure (union) at the level of the large management block. Each "union" employs a university graduate forester and about five other support staff that provide services to the community-level managers. This model presents very interesting opportunities for CARPE, because the CBNRM macro-zones are generally way too large for a single community governance structure to manage. But the macro-zones may be an appropriate scale for a second tiered management structure of professional staff that can provide needed services to the community-level managers.

As with the Tayna Landscape, the lack of national level legal tools for community-empowerment does not seem to be a problem at Ituri. As a result of the recent history of instability in the zone, the provincial government is relatively autonomous. The WCS staff in Kinshasa told us that the provincial government is willing to empower the community-managers at Ituri. This case shows that CBNRM can begin, under exceptional circumstances, in anticipation of an enabling legal framework.

ANNEX I: OTHER OPTIONS FOR THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE SECTOR

Other options for field-based climate mitigation activities exist, but were considered less preferable by the evaluation team. These included: 1) expand the existing CARPE program into completely new areas focusing on areas with the highest rates of deforestation, the most severe problems of forest degradation; 2) begin a completely new and separate Central African Climate Change Program for carbon sequestration in Central Africa; 3) address climate change adaptation on the margins of the Congo Basin's dense tropical forests.

CARPE cannot cover all climate related activities, and the team reiterates its recommendation that sustainable landscape funds be directed to appropriate subzones within existing landscapes; however, if additional funds or sources of funding become available, a number of complementary climate-related activities could be undertaken.

ASSESS THE NEED FOR COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

Climate change is putting pressure on the belts immediately north and south of the Congo Basin. Such assessment should identify the climate change adaptation measures that may be needed in these surrounding zones of increasing aridity where forest and savanna cover is being lost and populations are turning to the Basin's resources to compensate. Fuelwood and land demands from these pressured areas pose a direct threat to the Congo Basin forests. Already, demand for charcoal in Burundi, for example, is contributing to deforestation of parts of the DRC forest. If not directly funded, CARPE may be able to catalyze or mobilize other funding for this type of activity.

Integrate climate change with livelihoods activities

Options that could be developed include:

(1) A serious, applied research program to develop permanent, productive cropping systems as alternatives to slash-and-burn agriculture. One must recognize that such alternatives would represent a radical change from the present system under which the biomass and the biodiversity of the tropical forest are mined for the mineral content of its ash.

(2) Development of economic alternatives on the extensive areas of savannas and secondary systems where forests were cleared that are interspersed in many areas with humid tropical forests. Many of the savannas have low biodiversity value. The idea would be to draw populations away from the unsustainable land uses in the humid forests into productive economic alternatives in the savanna areas. Possible economic alternatives that might be developed would include:
   - A focus on soil carbon and the development and extension of sustainable, productive agricultural and livestock systems on the extensive areas of savannas/grasslands.
   - Reforestation/afforestation schemes accompanied by the development of economically viable forest management systems. This could include fuel wood plantations near urban centers, forest plantations for tropical timbers/pulpwood where the conditions are suitable.
   - Development of wildlife reserves for tourism development. The main advantage of the savannas is the ease of viewing compared to the humid forests – for those species like elephants and buffalo that frequent the savannas;
   - Possible development of oil palm plantations for biofuels on the savannas. This would sequester a certain amount of carbon while producing alternative renewable fuels.

(3) Conduct a literature review to determine if some of the savannas in Central Africa can be converted to forestland simply through fire exclusion or through a program of controlled early

burning. If the results are positive, identify suitable areas and develop pilot initiatives to test this on an operational basis.

(4) Develop community-based or private sector forest management systems in forests that are being severely degraded by fuel wood cutting for urban fuel wood supplies or uncontrolled cutting of tropical timbers in humid forests for either national, regional or international markets.

(5) Undertake and implement national level land use plans that favor conservation of existing forests, reversal of degradation on forests being degraded and afforestation/reforestation.

(6) Develop national programs of empowerment of communities over their traditional lands in return for their commitment to undertake land practices that increase carbon sequestration. The details of these conditions and practices would be defined during CARPE III.

ANNEX J: ISSUES TABLE SENT TO PRP

As described in Annex D, the Evaluation Team sent the following table to PRP members to solicit feedback and ideas on several key issues.

Presentation of the Issue	Evaluation Team's Analysis	Requested Inputs from PRP
Community Based Natural Resource Management and CBNRM Zones		
How can one best make up for the delays in CBNRM development during Phase II?	The team found CBNRM to be the least advanced of the three macro zones in terms of both planning and implementation.	Reasons for slow progress and ways to accelerate meaningful activity.
Under what conditions can or should work on CBNRN in the landscapes take place in the absence of legal tools for the empowerment of communities to manage resources and to harvest and market products from them?	The team found only Cameroon had a reasonably sufficient legal basis for widespread CBNRM. The team also found that some promising field activities had been initiated in other countries. The team concluded without adequate resource tenure and policy implementation that CBNRM field activities and opportunities were limited and at risk.	Definition of the conditions under which it makes sense to proceed with CBNRM development in the landscapes. Actions that CARPE could be taking to improve the enabling environment for widespread CBNRM implementation in the forest habitats of the Congo Basin.
How can one best develop CBNRM as a biodiversity/forest conservation strategy in its own right?	The team found existing models for CBNRM in the zone to be limited. The lessons learned document focused on what had been learned about planning not implementation.	What forms of CBNRM present the strongest incentives for forest and biodiversity conservation? Are there promising models that can be scaled up?
Mix of CBNRM, agriculture and livelihoods	The team found that one of three macro-zones was termed CBNRM but embodied a wider range of activity than CBNRM such as village economic activity, productive areas mostly for agriculture and livestock production, and community held forest areas. This conceptual issue encouraged confusion about what field activities were appropriate for "CBNRM" zones. USAID kept implementing partners focused on reducing threats/biodiversity earmark criteria.	How do CARPE partners distinguish between agricultural activities, livelihood activities, alternative livelihood activities, CBNRM activities? Which are priorities and how are priorities set? Given the difficulty and expense in developing sustainable agricultural systems for the humid tropics, what role should CARPE take? As currently being implemented does CARPE adequately address priority threats to the region's forests and biodiversity? If not, what can be done to refine and update the analysis of threats and adjust the program accordingly? Does a threats based approach adequately identify the best

		opportunities? What is CARPE doing to address the conversion of forest to agricultural uses? What more should be done?
Institutionalization: Achieving better integration with regional, national and local governments		
Institutionalization is in its early stages across the region.	The team found no clear blueprint for institutionalizing the land use planning and macro-zoning approach, yet some adoption and diffusion of the approach was underway. COMIFAC and regional organizations have evolved significantly over the last several years. CARPE, mainly through IUCN and through USFS has begun to work with COMIFAC.	Has COMIFAC progressed to a point where a more direct relationship with CARPE program management would help institutionalize the landscape approach to planning and program implementation? What obstacles exist to coordinating and working directly with COMIFAC?
Host country governments are not integrated into the CARPE planning process.	Host country officials and agencies still feel marginal to the CARPE effort. Working with agencies of limited capacity, human resources, communications and continuity of field presence makes collaboration at all levels challenging. CARPE consortia have no institutionalization or exit strategies.	How can the program achieve more policy leverage and stature with host country policy makers? What additional roles could USAID, given restrictions on its direct support to governments, and other CARPE partners play in achieving better integration of CARPE and national governments? Where the limit to how much involvement of government participation is desirable?
Poor governance, transparency and accountability.	There is a general lack of enforcement in the face of major illicit activity. Political will to follow through on conservation commitments is conditioned by poor governance at multiple levels. Risk of destruction before landscape planning is sufficiently implemented.	How can CARPE address illicit long distance trade in bushmeat and wildlife products, and timber when the landscape interventions are more local in character. How can CARPE partners involve government stakeholders when they are still weak after years of upheaval and where they continue to be plagued by poor governance?
CARPE Program Organization and Management		
USAID management of CARPE?	The team found USAID adaptive management approaches and the landscape model of NGO consortia continued to be valid. However, efforts to address non-landscape based issues were only partially	Under what conditions, if any, should USAID CARPE directly address conservation challenges in the field but outside of CBFP landscapes? What are CARPE's untapped comparative

	accomplished. Some issues of balance between landscape implementation and cross-cutting themes brought out in the mid-term evaluation remain.	advantages in this regard? What are the important Issues related to contracting, administration, and results reporting to USAID and suggestions for improvement.
How to develop effective partnerships amongst USAID/USFS/USFWS for CARPE III.	USFS became a technical standard bearer in Phase 2b vs. its intermittent role of providing on-demand services to certain landscapes. USFWS, under Phase 2a had provided cross-cutting support services such as for bushmeat monitoring, but continued autonomously through a funds transfer under CARPE II (b) to provide support to NGOs mainly for large mammals and habitat. Coordination of these USG organizations is insufficient.	Observations on current state of coordination. Proposals for more effective results.
Changing program parameters: Climate mitigation, Feed the Future,	The team found CARPE and its partners actively addressing planning and human resources issues surrounding REDD and climate mitigation in the region. The team found preparations underway to support future CARPE efforts with a combination of biodiversity and "sustainable landscape" funds.	As biodiversity, climate change and other funding become more integrated, how should CARPE's strategy be modified or is it sufficient with modest updates from the 2003-2010 framework What activities can easily be co-funded? Are there new climate change activities that should be undertaken independently of the current framework? Observations on the relevance of other government initiatives that could affect CARPE in the future such as "Feed the Future".

ANNEX K: PARTICIPATORY REVIEW PANEL (PRP) COMMENTS, UNEDITED

ECODIT solicited comments from a panel of reviewers regarding the CARPE II Evaluation Draft Report in order to strengthen the report, as well as fact-check the information included. The reviewers were very patient in waiting to receive the Draft Report, and they spent a substantial amount of time reading the report and providing general and detailed comments to the Evaluation Team. All of the extensive comments provided by the PRP were reviewed by the Evaluation Team, and many modifications to the Report were subsequently undertaken. The *general* PRP comments are included in this annex.

1. WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY (WCS)
Comments by James Deutsch

We have listed our comments and recommendations under four categories: 1) general comments and recommendations, 2) inputs in response to the specific queries sent to us in the table of issues raised by the evaluation team, 3) other more detailed comments and recommendations, 4) corrections and additions referring to the text of the evaluation. All of these represent the considered views of the Wildlife Conservation Society as a whole.

1) General Comments and Recommendations

1. WCS strongly supports the main findings of the evaluation, which are: a) the land-use planning approach of CARPE IIb has provided a strong foundation for conservation implementation in Central Africa, indeed far stronger than any other aid or conservation program in the subregion; b) considerable progress has been made towards improving protected area management; c) progress has also been substantial towards improving the management of production forests, especially through FSC certification; d) CBNRM and agricultural intensification pilot projects need to continue to be developed and could benefit from external expertise and enabling legislation in Central African nations; and e) a third phase of CARPE is vital to build on the progress made thus far, to implement landscape land-use plans and improved plans for the management of PA, production forests, and community areas, to safeguard the Congo Basin's globally important biodiversity, and to reduce carbon emissions by reducing rates of deforestation and degradation in the world's second largest contiguous expanse of tropical forest.

2. An expanded, third, implementation phase of CARPE represents both the US's and Central Africa's best opportunity to conserve the Congo Basin's biodiversity and to reduce carbon emissions from tropical deforestation. Such a third phase should be extended through 2020 and should be funded at a minimum of $25 million per year given the success of CARPE II, the vast land area involved, and the global importance for both biodiversity conservation and emissions reduction. CARPE III should be funded from both biodiversity and Sustainable Landscapes (carbon mitigation) sources. Biodiversity conservation efforts should focus on the sectors of the CARPE-CBFP Landscapes that have greatest biodiversity value, as originally proposed by WWF and WCS and agreed by CBFP. In most cases, these are protected areas and their immediate buffer zones with large remaining wildlife populations. Climate mitigation efforts should focus on developing those projects within the CARPE-CBFP Landscapes that have the greatest demonstrable ability or potential to reduce or prevent deforestation and/or forest degradation. CARPE III should be complemented by substantial additional Feed the Future programming, separate from but synergistic with CARPE, directed at agricultural intensification and alternative protein and livelihood programs within the CARPE-CBFP Landscapes. Efforts should be made to ensure that conserving biodiversity, reducing emissions, and improving food security and livelihoods are addressed synergistically. Involvement of USAID, USFWS, and USFS in CARPE III should be well coordinated. If total CARPE III funding can be

increased to substantially more than $25 million per year (plus complementary Feed the Future funding), then three additional high priority geographical areas for biodiversity conservation should be added to the existing 12 landscapes: 1) Gulf of Guinea Seascape; 2) Takamanda-Mone in western Cameroon; 3) Lomami-Tshoapa (in between Salonga and Maiko) in DRC.

3. CARPE IIb's approach of land-use planning across vast landscapes, management planning in all sectors, and experimentation with many approaches, has been valuable, but CARPE III, the implementation phase, should focus resources to a greater extent both geographically within each landscape and on the most effective activities in order to achieve the twin objectives of biodiversity conservation and emissions reduction. The CARPE II evaluation should discuss the geographical expansion of the 12 landscapes during the course of CARPE II and the original prioritization by WWF and WCS that identified high, medium, and low priority areas for biodiversity conservation within each CBFP landscape. During the course of CARPE IIb, WCS has found that the geographical expansion of the landscapes, the lack of geographical prioritizing within, and the reduction in landscape funding from $15 million per year to $10 million per year between CARPE IIa and CARPE IIb, have combined to greatly reduced the implementing partners' ability to achieve effective management in priority areas and conserve biodiversity. We recommend that in CARPE III a greater effort be made to channel biodiversity efforts towards areas of highest priority for biodiversity within each landscape (especially protected areas with substantial remaining wildlife populations and their immediate buffer zones), to focus Sustainable Landscape (climate change mitigation) efforts on developing those projects within the CARPE-CBFP Landscapes that have the greatest demonstrable ability or potential to reduce or prevent deforestation and/or forest degradation, and to focus on those CBNRM activities which most significantly address threats to wildlife and the forest and which are most appropriate to the particular ecological, social, and political contexts within each country and landscape.

4. Some of the criticisms in the evaluation (e.g. the lack of CBNRM enabling legislation and effective models, lack of direct CARPE partnership with host governments, changing and imperfect indicators) are not invalid, but reflect the constraints of working in Central Africa and the history of the program rather than failures of CARPE II's management or of implementing partners. As jumping off points for discussion on improving the program and designing CARPE III, these are invaluable, but they should not obscure the extraordinary success of CARPE II, especially compared to other (mostly failed) efforts at conservation and development in the subregion.

2) Inputs Requested from the PRP

Please see the separately attached table reprinting the evaluators' enquiries and stating WCS's responses to each. [below]

3) Detailed Comments and Recommendations

1. The evaluators define "CBNRM" and explain how many of the activities being conducted in the "CBNRM zones", such as agricultural intensification and alternative livelihood activities, are not truly CBNRM. We are comfortable with renaming the "CBNRM zones" as "village zones" or indeed any terminology that will enable us to communicate effectively with each other and the wider community. However, we believe that terminology is less important than the pressing need to develop livelihood models that effectively support sustainable natural resource management and conservation in the Central African context. These models may focus on community management of resources and fit the definition of CBNRM, or they may focus on individuals or households, as do most of the current agricultural interventions.

2. The reviewers stress that "there is little to gain in pushing CBNRM management planning prior to the development of a legal framework for the empowerment of community managers and prior to the development of viable CBNRM models that can be adapted in each macro-zone."

We agree that seeking enabling legislation is important but disagree that pilot projects in the field cannot and should not be launched prior to enacting this legislation. The outlook for such legislation is in some cases unclear (e.g., the government of Gabon is unlikely to divest forest management rights to local communities). Yet CARPE II has shown that progress can be made with respect to management of specific resources if the legislative framework is sufficient (e.g. bushmeat in Gabon), or by working through protected area legislation and PA management planning (e.g. Lac Tele, ROC), or through the authority of local administrations (e.g. DRC). CARPE believes, and we concur, that legislation is likely to be more effective if it is based on previous experimentation of what works in the field in Central Africa and that pressure to enact legislation is best exerted from the bottom up rather than the top down. For example, in DRC, CARPE's CBNRM approach has been a powerful tool for engaging local communities, traditional authorities, and local states in sustainable forest management, through a bottom-up approach, even in the absence of a previous legal framework, and national legislation or regulation is now following.

3. The evaluation report refers to the potential role of CARPE in developing climate change mitigation activities. We are convinced that CARPE III can fill a crucial gap by supporting and accelerating field-level demonstrations of effective programs to address drivers of deforestation within CARPE landscapes. This builds on the community governance, land-use planning, and capacity building achieved through CARPE IIb which are crucial for the delivery of forest carbon payments. The evaluation also mentions the development of methodologies for monitoring, reporting and verification of emissions reductions. Here we disagree, as these technical areas are more appropriately led by scientific institutions working within the UNFCC context. We are similarly surprised at recommendation to invest in the development of entrepreneurial partnerships in advance of a compliance regime, both because of the varied positions of the Central Africa governments on this issue and and because markets will spur such investments independently if feasible. CARPE's comparative advantages are: 1) testing, evaluating, and implementing methods for reducing the drivers of deforestation in Central Africa; and 2) developing and testing reliable and cost-effective methods for monitoring biodiversity and social co-benefits of emissions reductions. CARPE's presence in a wide range of habitats, governance and socio-economic situations means that CARPE is uniquely well positioned to test approaches. We recommend the report place greater emphasis on these two areas rather than on monitoring and reporting on emissions reductions.

4. In our general comments and recommendations (section 1.2 above), we recommend that a subregional Feed the Future program be established in Central Africa parallel to and synergistic with CARPE III but separate from CARPE III. The purpose of this program would be to promote food security and improved livelihoods in a strategically important and impoverished subregion. Such a program would benefit hugely from the pre-existing human and project infrastructure developed by CARPE. In turn, if properly designed, such a program would benefit CARPE's goals of biodiversity conservation and reduced emissions. The model we have in mind is CARPE's successful mobilization of USAID DRC agriculture funds over the past two years to supplement WCS, WWF, and AWF's conservation activities in DRC's CARPE Landscapes. This funding is delivering highly cost-effective food security and improved livelihoods by piggy-backing on the existing CARPE projects while at the same time reinforcing the CARPE objectives by reducing the need for slash-and-burn through agricultural extension. We believe this model should be rolled out subregion-wide.

5. We welcome the evaluation report's recommendation of the addition of a seascape to a future CARPE phase, assuming that CARPE III's overall funding can be increased appropriately. Marine conservation issues are trans-boundary and the CARPE model of landscapes and partners has considerable comparative advantage in tackling the significant marine and coastal resource use

challenges, including limiting negative impacts of oil prospection and exploitation as well as over-exploitation of resources.

6. In various places throughout the document (e.g. pages 40 and 41) it is suggested that thought be given to "wildlife management for sustainable production of bushmeat as a solution to unsustainable hunting for the bushmeat trade." This suggestion needs to be carefully hedged or it could be dangerous indeed for the Congo Basin's biodiversity. WCS strongly supports (and is engaged in) efforts to make subsistence hunting and, in a few cases, small-scale local sale of bushmeat, more sustainable, but larger-scale bushmeat trade over significant geographical distances can rarely be sustainable in tropical forests. Numerous studies show reproductive rates for the vast majority of forest species cannot support commercial hunting; even subsistence hunting is not sustainable when human population densities are significantly greater than 1 person/km^2. There are only a few possible exceptions to this rule, such as cane rats, brush-tailed porcupines, and some of the smaller duiker species.

7. We welcome the evaluation report's recommendation to enhance collaboration and alignment with COMIFAC. However, we are surprised that there is little mention of CEEAC, who are becoming a significant force in the region and have become the principle entry point for environmental and agricultural support to Central Africa by the European Union and African Development Bank. We suggest that at the regional level, CARPE prioritize building a partnership with CEEAC (which is in many ways a parent body to COMIFAC) rather than investing more heavily in COMIFAC. We would like to emphasize though that the principal challenge, and potential value-added, for CARPE remains enhancing the acceptance by national governments of the landscapes as planning units and especially how they relate to traditional planning units (Provinces, Departments, Concessions).

8. The evaluators point out that CARPE landscapes suffer from a lack of development expertise. However, the evaluation should mention that this does not result from a failure by the conservation NGOs or CARPE to seek qualified development partners but rather from a lack of effective development NGOs with experience and existing programs in Central African countries. WCS's experience with PACT in ROC was disappointing, with relatively few results for the money spent (perhaps in part because PACT had no existing program in country and so experienced high costs--WCS's experience with PACT was more successful in DRC where PACT had an existing country program). The lack of effective development NGOs in ROC led us to search more widely and to replace PACT in ROC with RINDRA (an NGO from Madagascar) and this has been highly successful. This capacity lack in the subregion will continue to plague CARPE III. In order to bring in expertise from further afield, budgets will need to be increased and USAID's advice provided on the effectiveness of specific development NGOs in Central Africa and elsewhere in Africa and the world.

4) Corrections and Additions to the Text

1. Page 53, 2nd paragraph: WCS does not work in the Cameroonian sections of TNS and TRIDOM.

2. Page 58, Section on "Impact of CARPE on deforestation and degradation:" First sentence should read "There has not yet been any…."

3. Page 66, last paragraph: In the section on "Reduced deforestation using community-based natural resources management," there is mention of the WCS-WWF plots to measure standing carbon stocks in Salonga, but there is no mention of the larger and longer established WCS-Smithsonian forest plots in the Ituri landscape.

4. Page 66, last sentence: There is mention of the Tayna students at UGADEC being trained in carbon stock assessment, but there has also been training on this subject for ICCN and students/faculty from the University of Kisangani carried out by WCS in the Ituri Landscape.

5. Page 68: There is no mention of the extensive program on women's saving and credit schemes, and women's literacy groups in the Ituri Landscape.

6. Page 90: The WCS-PACT partnership in ROC was indeed unsuccessful – but the two did not end up in court as was written in the report.

7. Page 90: World Fish has now pulled out from Lac Tumba due to difficulties with WWF.

8. Page 100 (and XVI): AFD, WCS, WWF, and CI are already providing REDD+ policy support to the nations of the subregion through a joint program, though additional support for this from CARPE would be welcome. More specifically, REDD+ pilots in CARPE Landscapes need to be fully integrated into national plans, and CARPE could fund and assist with this.

WCS's responses to the Issues Table:

1. The evaluation team visited only a few landscapes and seems not to have appreciated progress being made in others such as Lac Tele. Nevertheless, their point that progress has been retarded by lack of a legal framework except in Cameroon and by lack of experience in CARPE implementers is valid. We do not believe that CBNRM should wait for laws awarding rights to land and resources to be passed across Central Africa, and believe that CARPE's approach of building on the legal authority of local government and protected area agencies in the meantime is valid. Such efforts should be reinforced by improving legal frameworks at all levels and enlisting external support for project design. CARPE could also valuably focus effort and funds more on the most promising CBNRM sites and on particular resources whose management through CBNRM is highest priority and most promising.

2. In Lac Tele, natural resource usage rights have been granted to local residents through protected area management plans rather than central government laws, and this seems effective. In DRC, similarly, rights have been built on local/provincial rather than national authority. In Gabon, although timber rights remain national, bushmeat rights have been granted more widely. Efforts should be focused where these enabling conditions are met.

   Successful local models should be brought to the attention of governments to lobby for enabling legislation. The international community, especially REDD+ funders, should require that Central African states provide greater rights over resources to local communities.

3. Cameroon's communal and community forests should be evaluated for effectiveness and lessons learned and lessons applied to other countries in the subregion through legislation. CBNRM should be promulgated within appropriate PAs, as in Lac Tele. Community forest management should be rolled out in DRC under local government authority and supported by national legislation.

   We agree with the evaluators' assessment that the best model is in the Ituri Landscape, DRC, and that this should be scaled up and replicated.

4. We do not believe that this issue of terminology—including agricultural intensification and alternative livelihoods under "CBNRM"—is particularly important. Our main concern is whether these activities foster conservation.

   All three are priorities in different places: CBNRM (sensu strictu) is vital for providing benefits to communities for managing natural resources sustainably; agricultural intensification for reducing deforestation from slash-and-burn; and alternative livelihoods for replacing bushmeat as a source of nutrition and income. All three activities should be continued under CARPE III, but funds should be

focused on those activities which address effectively the most important threats to biodiversity in each landscape and which are most appropriate to the particular legal and socio-economic context.

CARPE has mobilized USAID DRC agricultural funding to complement biodiversity funding. This model should be expanded and replicated with Feed the Future funding complementing Biodiversity and Sustainable Landscape funding in CARPE III to intensify agriculture and provide alternatives to bushmeat, especially in DRC.

A threats-based approach is appropriate and CARPE is adequately addressing priority threats, but greater emphasis should be placed on the key threats of elephant poaching and trafficking for the international ivory trade and poaching of large mammals for bushmeat--the greatest immediate threats to ecological intactness in the Congo Basin. Three geographical areas vital for subregional biodiversity conservation are missed by CARPE II: 1) as mentioned by the evaluators, seascapes in the Gulf of Guinea; 2) the Takamanda-Mone Landscape of Western Cameroon, home of the Cross River Gorilla; 3) the Lomami-Tshuapa area in between the Salonga and Maiko Landscapes of DRC.

As mentioned above, agricultural conversion is being addressed in DRC by CARPE through demarcation of agreed community agricultural zones and agricultural intensification to limit expansion, but the scale of this effort should be increased and it should be linked to REDD+ support to communities for reduced deforestation.

5. CARPE is providing technical assistance to COMIFAC and continued contacts are valuable. Nevertheless, primary management authority rests with each national government, and WCS believes it is more important to build our relationships with and the capacity of these governments to protect and manage their natural resources than it is to suggest management being vested in transboundary authorities or in COMIFAC.

   COMIFAC is a coordinating body not a management authority.

6. There has been considerable improvement in this through the course of CARPE II, as acknowledged by the evaluators. CARPE III should try to include more substantive involvement of host governments in program planning.

   If budgets were sufficient, CARPE III could provide more infrastructure and training for host government institutions.

   Central Africa faces considerable governance challenges.

7. Site and landscape-level law-enforcement remains the most important tool for improved natural resource management and conservation. It should be complimented, however, by support for interception and prosecution of timber and wildlife traffickers and continued US policy engagement internationally.

   Through transparency mechanisms such as law enforcement monitoring.

8. WCS believes that too great a percentage of funds has been directed away from landscape interventions in CARPE II and this should be remedied in CARPE III. CARPE's advantages outside of landscapes include the development of models within the landscapes that can be replicated by others outside of them, the ability to influence policy based on experience gained in the landscapes, and the US Government's influence in the subregion.

   Overall, CARPE is satisfactory in this regard, though the burden of reporting impinges severely on the resources available for implementing activities.

9. WCS strongly believes that CARPE's focus on land-use planning has been valuably complimented by USFWS's focus on endangered species protection.

   CARPE III may offer an opportunity for greater joint management and coordination between US Government agencies based on senior management in each agency appreciating and supporting the role of the other.

10. CARPE II's dual focus (as shown by the SO indicators) on 1) reducing the rate of biodiversity loss and 2) reducing the rate of forest destruction and degradation paves the way for split (and perhaps approximately equal) funding for CARPE III from the biodiversity funds and the Sustainable Landscapes program. Biodiversity efforts should be focused primarily on the protection of protected areas (including work in adjoining buffer zones), endangered species, and biodiversity, and focus on the highest priority biodiversity areas within each landscape as originally envisioned by WWF, WCS, and CBFP. Sustainable Landscape efforts should support interventions to measurably reduce the rate of forest loss and forest degradation, focusing on the most promising REDD+ pilot projects within each landscape (together with PA creation and improved management of production forests). In climate change mitigation, CARPE's special contribution lies in developing effective models for addressing the drivers of deforestation at the landscape level.

    Protected area creation and management can reduce forest loss and so qualify for climate mitigation funding, and reducing deforestation is a priority biodiversity intervention where deforestation is the key threat to biodiversity (as in parts of DRC and Cameroon, but not so much in Gabon or Congo).

    The evaluation validly points out the need to model future climate change impacts and adapt management plans accordingly.

    As discussed above and below, Feed the Future should invest in agricultural intensification widely in DRC in order to reduce the need for slash-and-burn. Feed the Future should also invest co-funding in alternative protein programs to replace bushmeat across the Congo Basin.

2. WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE (WRI)
Comments by Pierre Méthot

General Comments and Recommendations

1. The review I performed has been mostly limited to cross-cutting and national issues. WRI is not involved in landscapes management. However, I did read the entire document and provided comments wherever I felt I could have a contribution. I evidently and purposely provided a lot of comments on WRI work.

2. Although I agree that the main focus of Carpe, as you mentioned in your report, has been on landscapes, I think you may not have given attention and credit for the cross-cutting and national level work that has been done by the likes of IUCN, NASA-UMD-OSFAC and WRI. This also applies to the set of recommendations the evaluation team provides as regards carpe Phase III.

3. The report is heavily slanted towards CBRNM. I have nothing against this per se but believe that a much wider strategic approach is needed. The CBNRM can only work if we have solid and comprehensive institutional and legal foundations for natural resources management at the national level – and this goes much beyond CBNRM.

4. I haven't seen enough attention on the role of civil society can and should play in the discussions on Phase III planning.

5. The report states that *the experienced internal and international conflict, upheaval and poor governance over the past decades, and most countries in the region remain fragile.* I think the report should have been a bit more nuanced as regards here as there are some countries that have been relatively stable and have not suffered from the ills identified. Although there are still many areas of tension and problems (notably in the DRC) progress has been achieved on those issues. The report depicts

a very gloomy picture of the region – why would the Hill allocate funds for a program in such a region?

6. As regards Phase III, the report could have provided some insights and recommendations on the role and potential of reforestation and more generally, on forest landscapes restoration as possible and important components of Carpe III, notably as it could attenuate the pressure on moist tropical forests (for firewood, timber) on one hand and for carbon sink sequestration on the other.
7. The report presents a very narrow description of WRI work in the region. WRI work is not limited to monitoring logging concessions. Please find a complete description of our strategy and work plan under Carpe II for FY09-11 in a separate document attached.
8. The issue of informal and/or artisanal logging and pit-sawing (or chainsaw milling) is too briefly mentioned in the report and it provides little if any recommendations as to how to deal with the problems associated with the informal sector in Carpe III.
9. The report should have provided more analysis and recommendations pertaining to community or communal logging concessions and more generally social forestry. There have been a lot of investments and efforts in the region to support and develop social forestry. How did Carpe tackle the issue in the past and what should it do in the next phase? Or is that issue imbedded in the writ-large CBNRM?
10. The report states the following on page 56: *This satellite-based monitoring of illegal logging, however, is probably not a function that can be easily integrated into government forest agencies. CARPE III will need to find an appropriate mechanism for institutionalizing this important new capacity.* The report reiterates those statements on page 112: *Discussion with WRI staff indicates that there is good progress on the institutionalization of the forest information systems in the national forestry services, but the satellite-based monitoring of illegal logging is a function that would be relatively difficult for government technical services to take over. The CARPE SO Team should analyze the potential for institutionalizing this function within an NGO or possibly in the private sector. Perhaps it could be an additional function that OSFAC could take on.* It would have been useful if the evaluators had provided to elaborate on the reasons why they think that the *satellite-based monitoring of illegal logging is a function that would be relatively difficult for government technical services to take over.* WRI believes that is would technically possible to institutionalize that monitoring function if the Governments have the political will and put the required resources to it. The main problem WRI sees that could hinder that process could be the acquiring of the processed-and-ready to use satellite images and the GIS licenses that could cost a maximum of 10,000 $US per computer. However, NASA has already committed to make all of its Landsat images available for free and it could be possible to have special arrangements with ESRI for the lower costs GIS licenses. We agree that there could be indeed some opportunities to involve private sector operators one or many NGOs to take over that function – but those would also have to face the same problems as the Government as mentioned above. It is important to mention here that WRI, through its work under USAID has been able to have access to satellite images and get special GIS distribution rights for its partners in the field at very low costs. I agree with the evaluators that it would worthwhile to assess the option of merging those functions with that of OSFAC – but this will require that OSFAC be significantly reinforced and have access to more financial resources. There has also been a recent study on the institutionalization of OFAC (Observatoire des Forêts d'Afrique, developed under the FORAF EU-funded project) into a

technical arm of the COMIFAC, in which the option of merging OSFAC and OFAC is discussed. I recommend the evaluators find and review that study (Contact Carlos de Wassiege of OFAC-FORAF).

11. The report covers in length the issues of global climate change and REDD+. Those issues were not part of the objectives of Carpe II. However, I think it does indeed provide some important strategic directions for the next phase of Carpe.

3. WWF US

General Comments and Recommendations

Report composition and content structure

1. The report is far too long and repetitious. It contains several sections that may be more appropriate for an annex or supplementary document. In sections that deal with LS, the lack of a systematic approach to reviewing PA, CBNRM or ERZ activities creates an unbalanced synopsis of activities and loses a degree of accuracy in comments on both landscapes visited and those reviewed through documentation and interviews. We have provided specific comments and examples in the report as well as here.
    a. The passion of the authors for CBNRM is apparent. However the emphasis on CBNRM is disproportional to other key components including PA, ERZs, landscape planning, and cross-cutting issues. While certain points are valid, the level of detail is inappropriate in the context of this evaluation and resulted in a high level of inaccuracy. More specific comments on CBNRM can be found below and in the report.
    b. Other sections that we considered too detailed for the objectives of this evaluation include the analyses of the USFS guides for macro-zones. The evaluation report praises the progress in LUP and the overall approach, for which the USFS guidelines provided a necessary framework, but then enters into an excessively detailed critique of the documents. While many of the points made are valid, they may be more appropriate for an annex or a supplementary document.
2. The report lacks any recommendations on prioritization, especially given the context of unknown funding commitments.
3. The report needs to better portray the working conditions of the CARPE program including political issues such as corruption; insecurity; capacity challenges, such as working with and through local partners; the weakness of civil society; the logistical challenges of working in some of the most remote places in the world; etc.
4. The report fails to mention the creation of numerous new PA as a success.
5. The report does not adequately acknowledge that funding levels limit the addition and in some instances retention of new partners, particularly those who do not already have a regional or national presence, and must cost in the expensive of opening new offices. Further, many development partners will not work in middle income countries, such as Gabon and Equatorial Guinea.

Report recommendations

6. ECODIT states that "During CARPE III the CARPE partners should continue to strengthen and to complete their focus on field level strategies for forest and biodiversity conservation in the existing landscapes" (p. 100). This contradicts funding streams as over the life of CARPE II more money has been shifted to cross-cutting organizations. The report also recommends an expanding portfolio of

programmatic areas, partners, and USG capacity without a proportional increase in financial resources.

7. The report rightfully makes recommendations to increase the focus on sustainability in a third phase (p. 102, 110). Where a LS is a legally recognized entity it should have a business plan with a clear strategy for increased revenue from sustainable and/or other sources (tourism, trust funds, etc.). The same principle should apply for key macro-zones (excluding most ERZs) including in LS without a legal framework.
8. We agree with the recommendations that CARPE and its partners use FSC criteria for monitoring forest management effectiveness (p.103). However where FSC standards are judged insufficient ("social equity and biodiversity"), CARPE should provide recommendations to FSC on improvements versus setting up a parallel performance monitoring mechanism.
9. We strongly disagree that "There is little to gain in pushing CBNRM management planning prior to the development of a legal framework for the empowerment of community managers and prior to the development of viable CBNRM models that can be adapted to each macro-zone" (p. 99). We recognize that the degree to which formal CBNRM is developed varies significantly across LS. However, activities being implemented in most CBNRM macro-zones are important building blocks that will contribute to the elaboration of the necessary legal and functional framework (as discussed in the report); are providing communities the knowledge and confidence to begin to collectively engage in land management decisions; and are critical to future REDD+ mechanisms. Opportunities, such as those presented by the granting of concessionary rights to communities in DRC by provincial governments, can be used to establish pilot programs from which national policies can be built.
10. We disagree with the report's recommendation to create new regional positions (p. 106). Regional positions are rarely effective. Instead the focus should be on building capacity at the national or landscape level recognizing differing national contexts, and maximizing capacity that may already exist within partner organizations that can be better harnessed to the benefit of CARPE and the Congo Basin.
11. The report is weak in addressing capacity needs. We would like to see more emphasis and specific recommendations on capacity building – both building local partner institutions (see comments on the idea of organizational twining in report) and building capacity in emerging issues, management and other critical need areas. This is also in alignment with the emerging directives of USAID.
12. We strongly disagree with the recommendation to expand activities in seascapes (p. xv, 100), as this expansion necessitates a whole new scope of activities and needs while the existing program is already ambitious and in many ways overextended. We do support maintaining the existing marine components.
13. As the report acknowledges (p.100), to achieve the ambitious programmatic recommendations in this report may necessitate reassessing the timeline for CARPE. A renewal of CARPE (20 years) should be envisioned to be able to fully fulfill the objectives.

CBNRM

14. Terminology: The value of the report's discussions on CBNRM terminology is of questionable value. In some notable CBNRM systems in southern Africa the CBNRM management units (e.g. Namibia' conservancies) are inclusive of agriculture, grazing land and other development areas. In addition, community perception of "village lands" in the region is inclusive of settlement areas, fields (which can be located in very distant forests), hunting and fishing areas, etc.
15. In regards to the following recommendation in the report "High priority should be given to completing the legal and regulatory reforms needed for the empowerment of communities for CBNRM. Community managers need to have exclusive access rights to lands and resources, management rights and the rights to harvest and market natural resource-based products. Regulations should specify these rights (p. 103)", we strongly agree that tenure is an important issue for multiple programmatic areas and would recommend that USAID and its NGO partners build

inter-sectoral partnerships - within the USAID mission and with development organizations- to elaborate a more unified and strategic approach more likely to yield results. As suggested by the report, pilot projects may provide a beneficial mechanism to start this process.

16. Recognizing that the context in Africa is quite diverse, we would like to suggest that USAID fund exchange visits to leading CBNRM countries. Although the context and resource base may differ, government-to-government dialogue, an analysis of community governance structures as well as a review of the enabling legal framework could be infinitely valuable. The idea of government participation and ownership of country plans could also be used to advance this agenda and REDD+ may provide an important leverage point.

IUCN

17. National Country Teams, under the leadership of IUCN are critical to the success of CARPE. We support the evaluators' suggestion (p. 105) to use this platform to better integrate government officials in the planning process (e.g. work plan development) and subsequent implementation, particularly in identifying and getting their buy-in on critical policy reforms. This, however, necessitates recruiting Focal Points with greater expertise and the political savvy to coordinate governance-related initiatives, rally the support of partners, and influence decision makers.
18. We propose that the Focal Points, in their leadership of Country Teams, benefit from increased guidance from CARPE/Kinshasa.

Program Management

19. The report does a good job of discussing the CARPE Results Framework (p. 9-12), making important points on the ability of indicators to assess impact. For example, each PA should be assessed based on METT at regular 2-3 year intervals to inform future actions.
20. Several times it is stated that "CARPE has been very successful in moving conservation investment away from a narrow PA focus" (p. x). This statement needs to be reconsidered or rewritten in acknowledgement of a push by several Congressional representatives to see a return to a greater emphasis on PAs.
21. The report does a thorough job detailing CARPE's performance-based system (p. 83-85). Within this system, CARPE/USAID needs to understand that national guidelines may usurp USFS guidelines and where that is the case assure that their monitoring and evaluation systems for partners take these differences into account.
22. We would like to emphasize the report's recommendation for significant improvement in coordination between USAID/CARPE and USFWS (p. 92). Contrary to what is stated in the report, there is a need for significant improved and transparent working relationships with all NGO partners, and not just a select few as is the case at present.
23. In the section "Impact of CARPE on the status of indicator species" (p.59), the report fails to adequately describe the difficulties associated with monitoring biodiversity. Adequate funding for rigorous species monitoring is not provided through CARPE; improved coordination with USFWS may provide an opportunity to address this issue.
24. We have concerns with the conclusion that based on the referenced report "a strong overall positive trend for key wildlife species inside the landscapes, and this presents strong evidence for a positive impact of CARPE on biodiversity" (p. 59). This conclusion is not based on a rigorous meta-analysis of survey results, taking into consideration different methodologies, levels of statistical accuracy, etc.
25. The report does not adequately highlight and evaluate the funding model by which USAID bilateral mission support for livelihoods is being used to complement LS programs. CARPE resources (human and financial) cannot and should not tackle all of the development/NRM issues in these areas, but given the interconnectivity of these issues the report should encourage synergies and taking advantage of opportunities as they may arise within USAID. There is also a need to attract other partners with additional resources that can focus on complementary sectors. For example in

the Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru LS, a Population, Health and Environment (PHE) GDA between USAID and Johnson & Johnson is helping to mobilize support to meet many of the basic health needs of communities. The program beneficiaries are increasingly understanding the link between their health and well-being , the environment, and conservation objectives.

CBNRM in the landscapes visited

The remaining comments pertain to references to WWF programs in the CBNRM in the landscapes sections (p. 29-31). We were surprised to see the Gamba Complex singled out for more detailed comments on CBNRM, given that there is currently no CBNRM in the Gamba Complex. The only CBNRM activities supported through CARPE in this LS are in the Iguela Lagoon and oyster fisheries near Mayumba. As mentioned above, we feel these sections should be omitted or transferred to an annex or supplementary document; however, we are providing these detailed comments to help assure the accuracy of references to WWF programs.

26. In reference to the comment "The understanding of CBNRM at the WWF-managed portion of the Gamba Complex was exceptionally poor," we feel this type of personal comment is not of value in such a report.
27. In reference to the comment "WWF hopes to develop community-based fisheries management in the large Ndougou Lagoon north of Gamba," it should be noted that for the past 15 years WWF has assisted the government and fishermen with the management of fisheries in this lagoon and the lower Nyanga waters. Largely because of WWF's presence and collaboration with communities and local leaders, foreigners (professional West African fishermen) have not been able to gain access to the rich fishing grounds around the Gamba lagoon, unlike the rest of Gabon. This support has helped to assure that these waters have remained some of the richest fresh and brackish water fishing grounds left in Gabon.
28. In reference to the comment "The WWF landscape leader and its team at Gamba did not inform the Evaluation Team that a draft management plan had been prepared in 2008 – the Team discovered this much later on the CARPE web site," we do not feel this comment adds anything to the evaluation report. The evaluation team should note that the Ndougou lagoon was a proposed CBNRM before and therefore in accordance with USAID LUP objectives a draft MP was elaborated. A request to retract this designation was accepted by USAID/CARPE in order to avoid double counting of hectares given the fact that the area falls both within Loango NP and within the Sette Cama Hunting Domain, both PAs.
29. The comment "WWF proposes that local fishermen would be authorized to fish with nets across this critical entrance to the lagoon" is incorrect. Blocking rivers and lagoons by nets is illegal by Gabon law. WWF-led education campaigns have been instrumental in informing local populations of the rules and regulations within the Fisheries Code of Gabon. We would be happy to provide the authors with additional information including the Loango Management and Zoning plans, studies evaluating fishing stocks, etc.
30. In reference to the comments "WWF plans to build housing for a permanent "fishing camp" a short distance from this entrance," the evaluation team should note that contrary to this statement, WWF is working with national partners to establish strict regulations for the use of the lagoon mouth by traditional fishermen from the two closest villages (who have been fishing there for centuries) and for two fishermen groups from Gamba, who will only be permitted to fish one at a time using traditional and legal fishing gear. We would like the following comment stricken from the report, "The remaining villagers seemed to have a strong "handout mentality" and the rapport with the project was very strained, partly because an elephant had ravaged their manioc field and they claimed that nothing had been done by the project and the local authorities" or re-written to explain the actual context. Ndougou Department with its approximately 8,000 inhabitants, celebrated its 50th year of oil exploitation in 2010. Local income tax alone gives $7 million to the *Conseil Départmental de Nodougou* and the *Mairie de Gamba*. Combined, both local government

institutions have about 500 people on their permanent payroll. During the first 20 years of oil exploitation, all public services where freely provided. This "handout mentality" is indeed the key challenge for CBNRM and other development activities in Gabon in general and in the Gamba region in particular, and not the result of WWF's activities.

31. In reference to the comment "The context clearly represents a difficult challenge and the WWF team had few concrete ideas on how to proceed," we refer to the information above, as well as the proposed management and zoning plans for the region, the ANPN annual workplans, the many initiatives developed by WWF and others to help structure the local fishermen in the area, the upcoming Africa Development Bank project to start marine fisheries *surveillance in the area, etc.* to give *some insight on* what WWF's concrete ideas have been and are.

4. US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (USFWS)
Comments by Richard G. Ruggiero

General Comments and Recommendations

1. The Evaluation Report provides an excellent synopsis of this complex and dynamic program. It contains a large amount of well-researched and useful information and is well crafted by the authors through an effective process. We would like to thank the ECODIT team for this contribution to conservation in Central Africa.

2. Regarding large-scale recommendations, the three IRs should be rebalanced to put the majority of emphasis (action and funding support) in this generalized proportionality: management of natural resources in and around landscapes (70%), CBNRM, (20%) and monitoring (10%).

3. In the Monitoring section of the Executive Summary, two conflicting statements are made regarding CARPE's development of a monitoring system for forest degradation rates. The system, based on monitoring data derived from remote-sensing, is said to be 'now sufficient to use the system for measuring the impact of CARPE II on deforestation rates'. This assertion is not substantiated in view of possible confounding variables *other than activities undertaken by CARPE partners*. Further in this section, it is stated that 'CARPE has not been successful in developing monitoring systems for forest degradation or for the bushmeat trade'. Although the efficacy of remote-sensing systems show deforestation and calculate rates, to attribute the observations to an isolated variable or limited set of variables is statistically challenging at best. From a standpoint of guiding management interventions in the field, this system functions retrospectively and has little or no real-time functionality. What managers need are data that lead to accurate predictions, or at minimum, current conditions. Loggers and other resource exploiters move very quickly and often illegally (as can be seen in all CARPE countries to greater or lesser extents). An analogy can be seen in a real estate agent, who is trying to sell land or houses based on properties that were on the market several years ago. It may be useful to illustrate trends and recent status, but not for pro-active management, which is what CARPE III should be about. Due to these practical constraints, limiting investment in this type of activity to about 10% seems advisable, including monitoring that is not looking specifically at the effects of active management programs (as opposed to the usual focus on 'status' or background noise to anthropogenic activities. More creative means are available, such as use of light aircraft to record at medium altitude over logging concessions. Geo-referenced aerial videographic imagery is now widely used for such purposes, but the CARPE-supported data-

gathering has been mostly remote sensing using satellite telemetry and post-processing. A more real-time, hybrid system should be investigated.

4. Regarding bushmeat monitoring, this was an original objective of the CARPE II but, as the report points out, not achieved. In the extensive experience of the FWS in the Congo Basin shows, the quantity and quality (species and age of prey), when geographically monitored with concomitant socioeconomic data, is one of the best indicators of the state of the wildlife in forests, the effectiveness of management actions, and the importance of bushmeat to local people. A significant opportunity has been lost by not following up on the numerous opportunities to monitor bushmeat systematically and over a broad range of landscapes.

5. The report is correct in pointing out the success of the CARPE Program to train people in Central Africa. The FWS, which is a significant contributor to capacity building efforts in Africa, is currently developing a system for evaluating the effectiveness of such programs, and our office would be a valuable partner to assist in modification and application of our method to the CARPE Program.

6. In Other Findings, the observation about CARPE's lack of impact on the bushmeat sector is accurate and critically important. In consideration of the need to conserve biodiversity, which is greatly threatened by commercial-scale bushmeat exploitation, and the importance of the ability of local communities to legally and sustainably harvest wildlife for food, an enormous opportunity to make the most significant contribution to wildlife management is not fully realized. The report should recommend that greater emphasis and attention is given to this subject, and by utilizing the experience and expertise of the FWS and FS, as well as the NGO partners, significant gains in management effectiveness could be achieved.

7. Another important observation is made in the report about the potential of community-based forest management structures to conserve carbon stocks *(and perhaps as part of REDD II–my additional comment)*. It should be recommended that an augmented emphasis on CBNRM projects include this consideration. There are manifold opportunities in the Congo Basin for this (i.e. Cameroon, Gabon).

8. The recognition of CARPE's positive efforts that is illustrated in their assistance to developing cooperative agreements with landscape leads, through Performance Management Plans and the production of management plans, is properly stated in the Executive Summary. Perhaps more important is the report's observation that the monitoring consortia has focused on the development of landscape-level land use and management plans, and that this has two main weaknesses. This is correct, and I would add that the implementation of land-use and management plans actually being implemented by governments and communities in and around most landscapes is very limited unless significantly greater emphasis is placed on action and support to field-based activities at all levels. This is a key finding by this report and is the most valuable recommendation for subsequent strategic planning and implementation.

9. The report accurately characterizes most NGO partners as lacking specific expertise in CBNRM, alternative livelihoods, etc. To this I would add that their ability to provide capacity-building and to strategic and tactical guidance to resource protection units of the Central Africa governments is not adequate to assure this critical element of resource management. The report points out the significant experience of the FWS, which is in the process of forming a mission for this purpose in Central Africa, beginning in early 2011. The report's comment about FWS's relationship with the

FS, NGOs and USAID is accurate. It could be added that FWS's relationship with Central African government agencies is also very good, and in some countries i.e. Republic of Congo and Gabon, is excellent, which offers great potential for future capacity-building and implementation activities.

10. In Lessons Learned, it is correct to point to the positive contributions of CARPE to landscape-level conservation and planning. However, it should be recommended that the delimitations and number of landscapes is reconsidered, in light of the past eight-plus years' experience and observations.

11. The optimistic view of the potential value of certification of forest projects seems unsubstantiated. For example, the two forest operations with which we are familiar still have significant wildlife poaching problems. In one, former gains in managing wildlife in the certified concession have recently been compromised (as has security in the nearby national park). In the other, considerable bushmeat exploitation is occurring without sufficient intervention. Perhaps an equally disturbing factor is that both of these concessions continue to employ 'high-grading' selection techniques, which is destructive to these forests and whose sustainability is questionable. In essence, and based on observations in CARPE landscapes, current selection and exploitation methods, and the forest certification that allows high-grading in Central African forests, is dubious in terms of forest or wildlife conservation.

12. Lesson Learned number six is very helpful and astute. Expansion of 'specialist agencies' of the US Government, such as FWS and FS, could contribute to greater effectiveness in technical disciplines that should be a greater part of an implementation phase.

13. Overall, the Recommendations made by the evaluation team are very appropriate and well-conceived. The emphasis on implementation of management plans and development of viable CBNRM activities are well placed. The recommendation of a coastal component is key, and it should be focused on the trans-national coastal landscape/protected area that stretches from Akamba NP in Gabon, through Pongara, the intervening areas near Wonga-Wongé, through Loango and Mayumba NPs down to Conkouati NP in Congo.

14. On page 27, it is stated that 'National parks (in Gabon) represent areas set aside from productive use and thus imply lost reviews'. This is true, but the intention is also to provide 'sources' for wildlife, including fish, that may be sustainably harvested in buffer zones. While this is not yet realized, it is clearly the intent of ANPN, and the evaluations statement about the 'idealistic' nature of this goal is justifiable under current capacities. But it is a laudable and attainable goal, in some places more easily and readily than others. A good place to test the models is Gabon, particularly where marine fisheries can and should be managed for sustainable use by local stakeholders (i.e. Akanda, Pongara, etc.).

15. ANPN is deriving revenues in some parks by charging usage fees for cell phone towers, oil pipelines, etc. It is expected that revenues in some parks, such as Pongara and Loango, will be a significant contribution to park operating costs. Tourism is a high priority, that although will be limited in the foreseeable future, it figures to contribute to park revenues, particularly in Loango, Pongara and Mayumba National Parks.

16. It is mentioned that Gabon is reconsidering or even rezoning some protected areas, which is true. There are many observers who believe that CARPE Landscapes should also reconsidered in light of how they were (hurriedly, with incomplete information and inaccurate maps) first drawn up and in response to changes wrought on the landscapes over the preceding decade.

17. On page 30, the assertion by CIB authorities about there being higher numbers of elephants in their concessions than in the NNNP should be noted as being unsubstantiated. While data lack, it may be noted that the mixed species forests that are being exploited by CIB is considered better habitat for animals such as chimpanzees, but elephants tend to gather in secondarized forests, which are plentiful due to damage from industrial logging since the 1980s in this area. The question is, how do rates of poaching of elephants compare? Elephants are being poached in the CIB concession fairly frequently at present. Data exist for this phenomenon.

18. You may add that the FWS Division of International Conservation agrees with WCS, that the FCS certification and process are weak and perhaps even misleading.

19. On page 74, USWFS should be corrected to USFWS. Thanks!

20. One lacuna in this evaluation, perhaps due to the weakness of this aspect of the CARPE Program in general, is insufficient consideration of the role and importance of aquatic and marine fisheries. Many if not most communities in the landscapes rely of exploitation of fisheries to some degree, and in some areas, they rely almost exclusively on fish for food and income. CARPE has not prioritized this resource, and although some limited attention has been devoted in the marine environment (i.e. Mayumba), and FWS has projects with NGOs in sea turtle areas, little NGO attention has been paid to fisheries. I would suggest that development of a fisheries program in relevant landscapes should be an important addition to the impending implementation phase of CARPE III. The FWS is willing to offer assistance as requested.

5. US FOREST SERVICE (USFS)
Comments by Jim Beck

General Comments and Recommendations

USFS comments and recommendations are grouped in the following themes: Overall, CBRNM, PA, ERZ, GCC, and lastly comments on the evaluation's recommendations for Phase 3.

1) Overall
   a) Some clarifications on the role of USFS in the CARPE program. USFS input to and through CARPE as primarily twofold:
      i) CARPE program support (e.g., LUP guides, training and direct support to landscape consortia, and other direct behind the scenes technical interactions with CARPE and other USG in CBFP); and
      ii) Gov to gov technical assistance
         (1) COMIFAC Exec Sec as stated;
         (2) Significant bilateral work with DRC/MECNT/DIAF on national level LUP/forest zoning process; and
         (3) bilateral work with Gabon on park management planning first with the CNPN and then ANPN).
      iii) The "2nd part" of USFS technical assistance through CARPE has been strategically developed in light of improving gov to gov technical exchange, and to help respond to many of the claims noted here of less than optimal CARPE relations with several host country government partners. There are many other studies, assessments, scoping missions, etc. not referred to here. Happy to provide reports and can be found on CARPE website AND Frameweb NRM portal. Also, the ongoing CARPE supported USFS/DRC/MECNT/DIAF gov to gov work with DRC represents an important element of the USFS work through CARPE since 2007 that the evaluation does not speak to. Of course, the evaluation can choose to

highlight or speak to whichever elements of USFS contributions to and through CARPE but just wanted to perhaps more clearly articulate what USFS has and is up to in case the evaluators were not aware.

b) Few comments on the suite of planning guides developed by USFS for the CARPE program:
   i) The guides were always meant to be "living", meaning to be improved over time benefiting from user feedback and updates in the research/professional/academic community;
   ii) present generalized guidelines drawing from USFS inputs and lessons/info from the diversity of experiences and institutional/legal frameworks of the countries in the region - with the actual form/content/shape of any given plan to be informed by the guides but driven by national and/or subnational (where they might exist) legal/regulatory framework and/or guides/manuals. and
   iii) Following 2 regional workshops and a series of missions in the field the suite of guides have been comprehensively reviewed in light of user feedback, fresh USFS inputs, and finally disseminated in Nov 2010 (Landscape v3, PA v 2, CBNRM v2, and ERZ v1). Many (but not all) of the specific critiques noted in the draft evaluation have already been responded to in that revision process. It's a shame that the evaluation team was not aware of the ongoing revision process and that it was not completed prior to their review. At any rate the documents are "living" documents and additional feedback to make them more useful is always welcome.

c) The report strikes us as internally inconsistent to suggest CARPE landscape-level LUP is one of its biggest strengths AND say that its components (planning/implementation on the macrozones) are weak – more details in later general and specific comments.

d) I think recognition of the massive management challenges deserve to be better reflected in the Ex Sum and in other areas of the document to better benchmark CARPE successes (and weaknesses) despite massive challenges (incomprehensible scale, weak or inexistent national/regional institutions, security concerns, impossible logistics, grinding poverty, corruption, USG and other admin/bureaucratic challenges, etc.)

e) Other USFS activities pertinent to COMIFAC are worth noting here as they pertain to the guides and the institutionalization process going forward:
   i) COMIFAC validation of the USFS/CARPE series of guides is planned for early calendar year 2011. COMIFAC and the ADB funded PACEBCo program are both very keen on validating/adopting the USFS/CARPE guides for possibly even broader use. This adoption, amendment, and use of the guides represents an important step in the broader institutionalization of CARPE in COMIFAC and member countries during the transition of phase 2 to 3.
   ii) Additionally, at this transition of phase 2 to phase 3 stage the USFS through CARPE is exploring the development of a 5th guide that describes national land use planning concepts and processes in Central Africa, including its pertinence to related planning for REDD implementation. It could serve as an overarching "guide" that provides additional clarity on how CBFP Landscapes fit into broader national land use planning processes.

f) Some additional overarching comments on the "adequacy of the suite of implementing partners":
   i) Phase two benefitted from a strong and qualified suite of implementing partners across NGOs, USG, and Universities.
   ii) Recognizing that the drivers of deforestation, degradation, and biodiversity loss ultimately are tied to poverty and lack of alternatives a complementary and carefully crafted (in some ways similar to how the evaluation team describes in some length in its CBNRM discussion), CBNRM/econ development program if well coordinated bringing in development professionals/institutions would be greatly beneficial.;
   iii) The current suite of partners are skilled at supporting the necessary framework/institutions/interim management actions for sound NRM for biodiversity

conservation and slowing rate of deforestation and degradation although the enabling conditions (alternative econ opportunities, rule of law, health, etc.) equally need to be more directly and concomitantly tackled.

g) Some additional overarching comments the leadership role of CARPE in the CBFP:
   i) CARPE is the primary contribution of action from the USG to the CBFP.
   ii) Leadership of USG for the CBFP is from the State Dept.
   iii) Despite significant investment and massive achievements still somehow the CARPE contribution to the CBFP seems to be undervalued/not sufficiently recognized by many CBFP members. This is likely for several reasons including perhaps:
      (1) CBFP regional governments want direct access to CARPE funds rather than funding to the NGOs;
      (2) For the most part CARPE funding goes direct to on the ground efforts and by-passes many capital city circles; and
      (3) CARPE or State or whoever has insufficiently invested in communication efforts at all levels to ensure investments are well recognized at all the levels. Recent improvements are noted on communications at regional levels through USFS direct engagement with the COMIFAC ES.
   iv) State Department has increasingly (since phase 2b beginning I suppose) brought the appropriate level (high) representation to the CBFP plenary meetings however perhaps even more sustained high level interaction in the intercessional periods would be helpful to supportive this communication challenge/weakness noted above and other such issues.

h) An overall key lesson learned on the landscape program was missed - large landscape scale LUP is key for convening, developing common vision, and implementing at the appropriate ecological, biophysical, and social scale.

i) The evaluation had many good points and also many comments based on incomplete information. Tone could be improved. Often times the tone suggested arrogance and even CARPE management and partner naiveté. Likewise, seemingly more rigorous methods of evaluation could have strengthened the evaluation. A more thorough and analytical evaluation based on more systematic document reviews, structured interviews, etc. might warrant the use of such a tone but not one based in many ways on anecdotes.

2) CBRNM
   a) The draft evaluation suggests that CARPE failed "to adequately take into account the lack of an adequate enabling legal framework for CBNRM". My read is a bit different in that the CARPE push for CBNRM zoning and capacity building and accompanying of nascent associations/CBOs is precisely to stimulate development and testing of national and subnational approaches for CBNRM. All the while national (and regional) level policy work is undergone on policy reform and development to create space for formal recognition of the CARPE supported work on CBNRM. That's to say, I'd say that the lack of adequate legal framework on CBNRM was acknowledged perhaps implicitly and drove the combination of field actions and national level policy actions. Much more to be done, particularly on the national level but I think this sentence portrays a naïve CARPE on the challenges rather than the strategic CARPE on actions in this domain. True that sufficient access, use, even ownership rights under the "modern" laws for community areas are still very underdeveloped and CARPE through CBNRMs are trying to help develop models, community associations, governance structures, etc to help push it forward.
   b) Interesting points on the value of including or not including agriculture land within a CBNRM zone were made in the evaluation including the implicit suggestion of a 4 macrozone for "small holder agriculture." As slash and push agriculture as practiced in much of Central Africa typically expands across lands that might fall into perhaps a CBNRM style management of the commons, it seems that disassociating small holder agriculture from some other CBNRM management might actually lead to some negative and unexpected consequences.

c) The evaluation noted that agriculture in Central Africa is primarily a family activity that doesn't lend itself to CBNRM type management. However, a given CBNRM zone might, I could imagine (and perhaps has on the ground), have a certain collectively recognized allocation of certain agriculture plots to certain individuals/families/companies. I recognize the legal framework and tenure issue which comes up again and again as it should. Just point here is that to imply CBNRM approaches result in "communally cultivated fields" as the only management regime seems to be to narrow/restrictive.

d) Agreed on several overall points on CBNRM critique that more work is needed to:
   i) improve or development national/provincial legal framework for more secure land tenure and "space" for community associations/organization to manage common lands and derive tangible benefits from them; and
   ii) improved emphasis (funding, recruitment of best and brightest social scientists/practitioners, etc.) for engagement of indigenous and/or locals on management of lands outside of protected areas and concession (and within those two zones in many cases!).

e) The evaluation states "There is little to gain in pushing CBNRM management planning prior to the development of a legal framework for the empowerment of community managers…" The concern with this is what this then might imply? Either waiting or working at national level policy reform and waiting for the enabling legal framework to be solidified first before the type of engagement supported by CARPE phase 2? That would have taken many, many years and still be in progress!?? Hence the CARPE strategies of promoting innovation at local level with engagement at national level for policy change. Both ends admittedly need more work but generally I think it's a sound two pronged strategy.

f) Despite suggesting that CARPE major design and implementation weakness was around moving forward with CBNRM planning without a legal framework, several anecdotal examples cited in the evaluation suggest otherwise. Anecdotes from CAR, Ituri, and MTKB would lead one to surmise that perhaps moving forward with CBNRM work, while concomitantly working nationally for legal recognition might be a worthwhile strategy in the face of the pressures on the resources AND the slow beauacracy and other agendas/reasons that work to keep CBNRM legal frameworks from proceeding. Not to say there are not important improvements to be made in the CBNRM approach, model, and systems in Central Africa.

g) The evaluation points to the successes and model of Cameroon on CBNRM type activities. However, very little was actually said about it. A more detailed description of the only CBNRM zones with an enabling legal framework in Central Africa would be useful. It is exactly some more details of what went wrong (and right) and how it was adjusted over the 10-15 years that would be useful for the other COMIFAC countries and beyond.

h) The evaluation proposed 13 principles of CBRNM that were key to successful CBNRM work elsewhere. This is great. In this evaluation, that focuses such significant weight on the weakness of the CBNRM work under CAPRE phase 2, it would be interesting to the reader to see the review of several representative plans in light of these 13 principles.

i) As for the specific critiques of the CBNRM guide, indeed many are valid contributions and will be taken into account in any future CBNRM revision. Several of the points challenged certain quotes that admittedly on their own don't tell the complete story that the guide tries too. Several of the points have already been incorporated in the CBNRM v2. Although, the CBNRM guide could indeed benefit from some additional revision, many others points/critiques are overstated or not true as certain themes were purported to be absent from the CBNRM v1 guide (e.g. Traditional land tenure and resource access rights; Sustainability, Conditionality, Balancing off take with regeneration, Definition of community, and Zoning.). Lastly, several other points are simply differences of opinion on content or on the level of prescription that these "regional" guides are meant to offer. Many other questions/responses – see specific comments in document.

3) PA
   a) Regarding the critiques of the PA guide we certainly recognize that these guides (including the PA guide) are not the last word on management planning and have said as much in the guides themselves. That said, the guides where always meant to be living documents to be improved with user feedback.
   b) Of the 15 points the evaluation raises, many have been already addressed in V2 of the PA guide, many are simply differences of viewpoint on what should be in a management plan as compared to an annual workplan, several are more appropriately determined at the specific PA level rather than dictating what type of management actions should occur across all PAs of Central Africa, and several are observations. Only 1 or 2 of these points are still to be noted in any v3 of this guide. We recognize the evaluation did not have access to the v2 document during the evaluation but at any rate we disagree with the level of concern you are raising suggesting that USFS, USAID CARPE, USAID Washington, and the CARPE funded implementing partners failed to catch these "essential aspects". Many other questions/responses – see specific comments in document.

4) ERZ
   a) Regarding the evaluations doubt of the value of a guide they did not even read… we still would welcome your feedback on the ERZ guide that was recently disseminated (admittedly after the wrap up of the field component of the evaluation).
   b) Many other extractive industry related comments are found in the below responses to the evaluators recommendations for phase 3.

5) GCC
   a) The evaluation left a lot lacking in the GCC sections. This needs to be remedied as CARPE phase 3 may likely prove to be largely a "sustainable landscape" funded program and so needs the best, most informed recommendations going forward. More specifically, it seemed to be overly simplistic, lacking useful perhaps knowledge and at least useful description of the important details of the GCC, primarily REDD+ mitigation negotiations, institutions and their perspectives/strengths/weaknesses/limitations/strategies, approaches, opportunities, challenges, emerging requirements, etc.
   b) The format of the report wasn't conducive to the reader trying to gather easily the evaluator's points on CARPE and GCC. Scattered references throughout even in the recommendations (section 5).
   c) The summary of CARPE's contributions to climate mitigation measures as well as broader discussion of CARPE's strengths and opportunities in light of GCC was incomplete. Beyond what was included, it is important to note at least the following:
      i) CARPE is well positioned to expand to more formally include the landscapes (and differing management regimes in the macrozones) as potential pilot REDD sites as per national definitions.:
      ii) Any national REDD program needs land use planning decisions, enforcement, monitoring, and benefit sharing – CARPE landscapes and national level work (USFS and others) have significantly prepared Central Africa to move forward benefitting from these lessons learned.;
      iii) Any national REDD program will need to address land tenure and use rights – CARPE land use planning work particularly in CBNRM zones creates the space and moves forward these very important yet challenging discussions in a region where central government's claim rights to all the land with for the most part underdeveloped frameworks for customary use and access rights.;
      iv) Forest monitoring tech assistance and institutional positioning of OSFAC/UMD/SDSU/NASA/WRI, etc. as well as USFS are well suited to continue working

on elements of REDD MRV systems across the region (COMIFAC) and at the country level (DRC, Gabon, and others);

v) Field level presence and current local level relationships of CARPE implementing partners positions them well to work on eventually contribute to some elements of the TBD social and environmental safeguards for REDD.

vi) Other opportunities:

(1) National level policy frameworks for REDD could still benefit from additional direct USG (through CARPE) support.

(2) Solidify landscapes as priority REDD pilot sites during the coming years of REDD "readiness phase" – Add funding therefore staffing at various levels to make that happen.

(3) Strengthen national level technical and policy presence to shape and support national REDD strategies and implementation across the region. Likewise, in countries where forest/land use has important emissions impact, support the development and implementation of low emissions development strategies (LEDS).

d) Moreover, the evaluation did not adequately speak to the value of national forest inventories and other core NRM systems and capacities that should be built for GCC mitigation and general support of sound NRM (for many, many reasons):

i) National forest inventories based on permanent forest plots are a costly but critical element to supporting sound national level LUP and NRM. They also provide critical data for REDD MRV systems. Ground based measurements of forest type, species abundance and diversity, condition, and carbon will always be needed to calibrate, ground check, and otherwise complement remote sensing based approaches to monitoring forest cover change and carbon flux. USFS and other USG resource agencies and universities have a wealth of experience on these themes that should continue to be tapped in CARPE phase 3.

ii) Improving basic NRM systems such as forest inventory and monitoring will continue to be critical capacity building areas for COMIFAC countries for and beyond the GCC and REDD+ activities, and should therefore receive additional and scaled up investment in CARPE phase 3. Such core NRM capacity building activities are both highly pertinent to GCC and REDD+ and safe investments as they are needed regardless of the trajectory and ultimate end of UNFCCC negotiations.

6) Comments on the evaluation's recommendations for Phase 3

a) The evaluation was quite weak on actionable recommendations for phase 3. I was hoping for more detailed options and analysis of those options going forward.

b) More specifics on the Regional and Program Support Component for phase 3 would make these recs more actionable.

c) Extractive Industries recommendations for phase 3 were unclear, confusing, seemingly a mix bag of unconnected activities, without enough detail for the reader to understand the ideas presented let alone judge their merit. Evaluation suggests Phase 3 should "aggressively push to expand and strengthen the program of natural forest management". Any such engagement needs to be based on private sector receptivity, strategic importance of the resources/biodiversity in and around the concession, and other related criteria. A biodiversity or GCC program likely should not push to expand natural forest management. Rather build in phase 2 work to identify where and how to best engage with private sector recognizing the specific context and opportunities. Many other questions/concerns – see specific comments in document.

d) The evaluation recommended that in phase 3, "High priority should be given to completing the legal and regulatory reforms needed for the empowerment of communities for CBNRM." Clearly this is needed however this alone could constitute a multiyear, multi 10s of millions USD program itself. The evaluation team clearly is very knowledgeable on this subject matter yet statements like this don't seem to capture the challenge of such policy reform efforts. For

CARPE phase 3 to launch into a strong policy reform emphasis on such a sensitive sovereign area such as this wouldn't necessarily build the good political will, mutual buy-in, etc to facilitate effective collaboration and institutionalization. Not saying this isn't needed but there are many powerful interests likely at play across the region that prefer state control to land and its resources while giving lip service to the need to further develop land tenure and rights key for lasting CBNRM.

e) Furthermore, the evaluation states, "CARPE should initiate CBNRM pilot projects in as many countries as possible, but only where the legal framework, or an exceptional arrangement, makes it possible to empower community managers at the pilot sites." So practically speaking with your USAID program design hat on, what does this mean? Work only in Cameroon on years one and two of phase 3, while engaging in policy reform work in other key countries in prep for CBNRM work? Actionable details and recommendations are most needed here if indeed this is such a massive shortcoming of phase 2 and critical area for phase 3. Such recommendations need to be actionable from USAID's perspective to be most useful.

f) Many seemingly good ideas on CBNRM going forward are noted. Some likely can and should be implemented. Others likely are not reasonable recognizing the internal US politics at play.

g) Regarding the recommendation to "refocus emphasis on clarifying resource tenure", again this calls out a significant challenge indeed across C. Africa which requires an equally significant increase in dedicated funds and multipronged strategic approach for this. In all this discussion of supporting community access and right to land and resources there is a glaring lack of at least two things:

   i) Reference to regional/national/subnational champions. One has to start somewhere with a champion and build on it. I suggest that the COMIFAC PC and associated 3 year POPC and biennial plans, etc. reference much of this and working at that level is one possible approach. If it is not in there and should be then such changes could be advocated in the ongoing revision to the COMIFAC PC.

   ii) Secondly, missing in all the discussion is significance of the opportunity to benefit from and/or influence the GCC and REDD readiness funding and excitement to support the securing of rights. FCPF, UNREDD, FIP, and other framework setting and donor initiatives for GCC, specifically REDD readiness and operations have much emphasis on carbon rights and benefit sharing and biodiv/social safeguards. Much of this seems pertinent to supporting the type of CBRNM and "Village Lands" work the evaluators would like to see but I'm not seeing it mentioned at all or with sufficient emphasis. Seems like a key opportunity not to be missed on that front.

h) Recommending sustainable agriculture as an "excellent use of climate mitigation funds" may not be an option. The primary opportunity for climate change mitigation activities across forested tropics, namely Central Africa, is REDD+. As the evaluation has previously noted "sustainable landscapes" funding represents the primary opportunity for USG funding for a mitigation program under CARPE for example. REDD+ in UNFCCC negotiations doesn't include space for emissions reductions in agriculture lands. The recently launched USG REDD+ strategy "Strategic Choices for United States Fast Start Financing for REDD+" does not refer to sustainable agriculture. I do not believe the Sustainable landscapes guidance does either. Therefore although this might be a good idea it's not looking to good for USG funding.

i) Some clarity on role of projects vs. national level interventions. "Carbon projects" are good for the voluntary market and/or for testing/piloting approaches. That said, REDD+, although much is still under negotiation/development, seems that consensus is that to avoid leakage national level work is needed. Big undertaking but this seems to be the way this is going and so should be noted.

j) Many, many other questions/responses / concerns on GCC recs– see specific comments in document.

k) Additional phase 3 design elements not sufficiently highlighted in the evaluation should consider:

   i) Scale up and support linking landscape to national land planning and management efforts
   ii) Improve gov to gov relationships and invest in additional national government institutional strengthening and building

l) Likewise, additional and more specific COMIFAC engagement and support is likely useful along at least the following lines:
   i) Direct/indirect support to COMIFAC to carry out its mandate of coordination to implement Plan de Convergence (PC)
   ii) Positively influence when possible any updates/revision of the PC
   iii) Within constraints of USAID, ultimately tie all CARPE funding to PC format/budget lines/etc using increasingly a more joint planning, coordinated and transparent approach with COMIFAC Exec Sec, assuming COMIFAC continues to speak for the region, improve its own capacity, etc.

m) There is note of the need for in phase 3, "government-driven agenda document within the regional context of COMIFAC's program of harmonization of legal frameworks." This sounds great… though the text that follows doesn't seem to continue to convey this same line of thinking where CARPE will help "set government agendas." Again we are talking about constructive engagement through development assistance to sovereign nations on conservation and so tone matters perhaps equally as content!

n) There are good ideas presented on revising and strengthen the roles of the CARPE focal points in many countries. Furthermore, I think something like the following could be explored: Strengthen national presence of CARPE management staff or IUCN/USFS/other contractor in at least DRC, ROC, Cameroon, and Gabon. Build on CARPE focal point model to expand their expertise, representational role, policy recommendation, tech advisor to key ministries, liaison with field implementation activities.

o) There are good ideas on building on the capacity building work expressed for phase 3 design considerations. Additionally, another important topic not covered in this evaluation is the need for continued and expanded capacity building and training for core NRM and conservation activities. Ask any of the CARPE partners and they will point to this as a key limiting factor in the current or long term success of their initiatives. Universities and technical schools across the basin are under developed and could be strengthened. Therefore some form of forestry/env Univ/tech school and other educational/field based capacity building programs would be greatly beneficial and should better link landscape partners and the conservation practice "labs" they operate to universities and/or other such programs. CARPE has made great strides in this domain and this constitutes one of its biggest long term contributions although continued, targeted, and scaled up support on this is vital. Several CARPE partners and others are discussing just this sort of program in and with several Central African countries.

p) Addition ideas on capacity building strengthening: CARPE's long term, steady, core support has allowed partners to form long-term relationships with institutions at these levels (and build them where necessary) in order to identify capacity needs and carry out all forms of capacity building:
   i) hands on, on the job training,
   ii) structured training workshops;
   iii) scholarships and other support for nationals to continue higher education; and others.
   iv) As an example, OSFAC and WRI can proudly say that nearly anyone in the region working on GIS/Remote Sensing has been trained by them and arguably allowing them to do what they do now.

q) Several of the points made in the "strategies for institutionalization and sustainability" section are very interesting especially the exit strategy ideas.