



**WWF** *for a living planet*®

## PROJECT TECHNICAL PROGRESS REPORT TEMPLATE

### Extended Form, with Performance Ratings —due July 31st

(Recommended length: maximum 7 pages including table)

This document consists of:

- 1) The report template (p. 1-5)
- 2) An annex with instructions on how to generate the ratings for each section (p. 6-15).

Detach and upload only the completed report. You can print out and refer to the annex as you complete the template.

<b>Project Name:</b>	Protect Biodiversity – Empower Albanian NGOs for Promoting Natura 2000
<b>Project Number:</b>	AL0008.01
<b>Project Start Date (FY):</b>	01/10/2009
<b>Date Report Completed (MM/YR):</b>	07/10
<b>Report Completed By:</b>	Raffaele Mancini

### 1. ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS (OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS)

#### A. Progress on Activities and Related Financial Issues (max. $\frac{3}{4}$ page)

(i) Provide a brief (3/4 page) summary of progress at the main activity level against the project workplan, highlighting any areas that are well behind schedule, and  
(ii) quantify and explain any financial consequences related to activity implementation (e.g. any major deviations in budget or expenditure).

As part of the preparatory work, the criteria to identify the NGOs to be part of the Natura 2000 Working Group (N2000\_WG) were elaborated. To this end, round tables with protected areas experts and NGOs were organized and a list of civil society organizations drafted for approval at the kick-off meeting. The project is on schedule.

Kick-off meeting to establish N2000\_WG (Tirana, January 2010): The one day discussion with the thirty-one participants was fruitful. It was clear that the establishment and good management of protected areas is a political priority in Albania and the establishment of the N2000\_WG a tool to achieve that. In terms of next steps, the members of the established N2000\_WG decided:

- To take inspiration of existing examples of civil society networking (e.g. *Transboundary Shkoder Forum*);
- To take profit of the sound scientific work done within EMERALD
- To sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with specific commitments;
- To sign a MoU with Minister of Environment, Forests and water management (MoEFWA);
- To organize project's CB activities in the north and south of the country;

- To work with WWF for the submission of a project proposal under a significant budget line (e.g. IPA, others) so to secure the continuation of the activities.

Two training courses (Korça, April 2010) and (Shkoder, June 2010): The two training courses addressed the same topics.

- EU environmental *acquis* and introduction to the Nature Directives and experience from other countries;
- guidelines on N2000 designation process according to the Birds and Habitats Directive, namely procedures, criteria, bio-geographic, timing, role of Government and NGOs;
- guidelines on the methods to identify biodiversity values/hotspots according to the Habitats Directive.
- EIA and SEA, what they are, their value, which questions they answer, what to do with the answers, legal references at national and EU level.

Participants were divided into three groups dealing with different development issues, specifically forestry, fishery, and infrastructure; Prespa National Park and its surrounding was taken area as a case study. A person from each group presented to the plenary the conclusion of the work. The final session was dedicated to advocacy: i) why advocacy is important; ii) the Aarhus convention; iii) the role of NGOs, challenges and the opportunities at national and EU level iv) how to write a position letter; v) organise a press conference on Natura 2000. Fifty-six people (civil society, public authorities) participated in the two trainings. No deviation in budget to point out.

## **B. Project Conservation Achievement KPI**

<b>Rating :</b>	<b>Good</b>
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Complete the Conservation Achievement KPI rating table on the next page and enter the project rating in the box above. See Annex 1 for instructions on how to formulate the rating.

**Conservation Achievement KPI Rating Table** (see guidelines in Annex 1 for completing the table)

Goals & Objectives	Indicator (what you are measuring)	Baseline (value & date of measurement)	Current status (value & date)	Data Source/ Means of Verification	Planned Intermediate Result, & Yr.	Planned Final Result, & Yr.	Achievement Rating
<b>Goal 1</b> - To contribute to the protection of Albanian biodiversity by promoting the implementation of Natura 2000 through capacity building activities	Number of possible sites under N2000	There is no possible sites identified - October 09	No N2000 sites identified yet – July 10	List of possible sites	Potential N2000 sites will be assessed during the forthcoming technical study	Two “hot spots” with high biodiversity values are identified to be converted by the Government into protected areas according to Natura 2000	Modest
<b>Goal 2</b> - To support the current efforts of the Albanian government to fill up the gaps between national environmental legislation and EU biodiversity standards	Number of legal acts commented for improvement	Environmental legislation disregards EU standards - October 09	The existing legislation does not fulfill the EU requirements and obligations – July 10	Approved laws and Government decrees		Comments on the “hunting law” and “environmental protection law”; active participation in the decision making process for designation of regional parks and/or establishment/enlargement of two protected areas	Good
<b>Objective</b> - Increase the capacity of regional/national environmental NGOs on Natura 2000, EIA/SEA and Advocacy	A Working Group of national/national NGOs focusing on capacity building on Natura 2000 is established and called N2000_WG	Civil society is not working on N2000 - October 09	A NGO working group is operating a regional/national level – July 10	Minutes of the kick-off workshop List of contacts Agreed work plan		The NGO Working group, civil society as a whole, increase its capacity, and this increase is confirmed by the CB impact assessment carried out	Good
<b>Conservation Achievement KPI Rating</b>							



### **C. Outcomes and Impacts Achieved** (max. ½ page)

*Describe succinctly the project's achievements and shortcomings in terms of outcomes and impacts delivered against its stated objectives and goals, and reporting information against the indicators and/or milestones in the strategic plan. The description should be a summary of the achievements and shortcomings as reflected in the Conservation Achievement KPI table. In your text, seek to explain specifically what role the project/WWF played in bringing about the achievements in its complex, multi-stakeholder environment.*

This is mainly a capacity building project and, as such, some reflection is needed. It is worth stressing the contradiction between the too often stated commitment on capacity building and the short-term, outputs oriented methodologies through which it is pretended to evaluate the relationship between the capacity building activities and stated project's conservation objectives. Capacity building has *per se* a long-term nature, and a short-term, project-driven results orientation can undermine the development of the capacities in terms of ownership and sustainability. However, having said this, there is no doubt that if capacity building wants to be considered a tool for developing knowledge and skills, approaches for the monitoring of its impact have to be elaborated. In this view, the project has been monitoring regularly the impact of the capacity building activities carried out by means of questionnaires that, through simple quantitative indicators, aim at assessing whether the knowledge/skills of those who participated in the training courses on N2000/EIA&SEA/Advocacy is improved or not. The project achieved as main outcome the establishment of the N2000\_WG. This is very important under different perspectives: i) this is the first time that a group of NGOs gets together to work on, and promote, Natura 2000 in Albania; ii) most of the NGOs members played a key role under EMERALD iii) the MoUs signed shows the commitment to project's objectives iv) internal (and external) flow of information on N2000 is progressing (e.g. e-mail list, regional publications, a N2000 section on INCA web page, a N2000 blog under construction etc...).

### **D. Success Stories** (max. ½ page)

*Highlight any actions or successes meriting communications attention e.g. success stories (from A & C above), positive media coverage, new opportunities or partnerships, and major events.*

Very positive media coverage was given to the capacity building activities carried out. Local televisions and the main public one broadcasted widely information of both training courses by explaining N2000 in general and presenting the project in particular. It is worth mentioning the meeting with the Minister of Environment, Forest and Water Administration, Mr. Fatmir Mediu (January 2010); Mr. Mediu welcomed the project, endorsed the importance to work on N2000 as the most innovative and promising tool for nature conservation and sustainable management, and showed interested in having more details concerning project's objectives and activities. Moreover, the Minister asked WWF and INCA to elaborate a project's concept on the integrated management of the transboundary Drin and Buna river basin so to foster collaboration on environment issues at regional level; the concept note was handed in to the Minister last April.

### **FACTORS OF PERFORMANCE**

*"Factors of Performance" are the key practices, processes, systems or behaviors at the project, office or Network level, or those that external partners exhibit, that influence the ability of a project to achieve its goals and objectives. These factors are then essentially internal and/or external challenges or strengths a project encounters as it seeks to progress. The Monitoring and Reporting System monitors how these factors affect performance to provide any needed recommendations on how WWF can improve its effectiveness.*

Sections 2-4 cover the factors of performance at the project level.

## 2. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION (max. 1/3 page)

<b>Rating :</b>	<b>Good</b>
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To develop the rating, see the instructions in Annex 2. Copy the overall Design and Implementation rating in the box above.

*How did the design and implementation of your project enable it to or hinder it from making progress? For each of the design and implementation best-practice ratings (in Annex 2), provide a brief justification here explaining how the level of use of the best practice helped bring about the project's achievements and/or shortcomings (max. 1/3 page). In the explanation, reference should be made to the project's specific objectives and goals.*

The smooth implementation of the activities showed that the project was well designed. The structure of the project has proven to be simple and well balanced among three axes:

- politics - EU legislation, mechanisms and standards
- management - namely N2000 and EIA&SEA
- civil society - empowerment, namely advocacy & lobbying skills.

## 3. PROJECT SUPPORT (max 1/3 page)

<b>Rating :</b>	<b>High</b>
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To develop the rating, see the instructions in Annex 3. Copy the overall Project Support rating in the box above.

*Describe how the level of support for the project (as defined by the elements in the table in Annex 3) posed challenges to or facilitated the project as it pursued its goals and objectives. Provide a brief explanation for each element's score, focusing on the main strengths and challenges and how they affected the project's progress (max 1/3 page). Reference should be made to the project's specific objectives and goals.*

Overall, the partnership between WWF and INCA has proved solid and fruitful as shown by their further collaboration in other project proposals. All gaps and last minutes problems have been solved timely showing not only good collaboration spirit but also significant adaptive management skills. Internally WWF MedPO, all relevant members conservation team gave valuable support to the implementation of project's activities.

## 4. GOVERNMENT/PUBLIC INSTITUTION BEHAVIOUR (max. 1/4 page)

<b>Rating :</b>	<b>Modest</b>
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To develop the rating, see the instructions in Annex 4. Copy the overall Government/Public Institution Behavior rating in the box above.

*Provide a brief text in support of the rating, describing specifically how each of the elements of government/public institution behavior (where applicable) influenced the project's ability to make progress. If there is more than one institution involved and an aggregate rating was assigned to them, or the institutions were grouped and then rated, indicate whether particular institutions or groups posed obstacles or showed strong support (max. 1/4 page).*

Before the kick-off meeting, WWF and INCA met EU Delegation Officers to discuss the project and presented the forthcoming activities; two officers participated at the kick-off meeting. WWF and INCA met the Minister of Environment, Forest and Water Administration, Mr. Fatmir Mediu (January 2010). The Minister gave full support to the project and agreed upon the signature of a MoU concerning the implementation of Natura 2000 in Albania. It must be said, however, that the follow-up of the meeting with the Minister did not fulfill the expectations since the MoU is still under discussion; also the support of local authorities in Korça and Shkoder during the trainings has been quite weak. On the other hand, it is worth emphasizing the full collaboration with UNDP/GEF (Prespa Park) for the realization of the training in Korça and for the selection of participants

## 5. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES SAFEGUARDS (max. ¼ page)

**TO BE COMPLETED ONLY EVERY TWO YEARS BEGINNING IN JULY 2009, i.e. 2009, 2011, etc.**

Does the project affect indigenous peoples or are they in the geographical area of the project?

(Y/N) \_\_\_ N \_\_\_

If yes, provide the rating

<b>Rating :</b>	
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To develop the rating, see the instructions in Annex 5. Copy the overall Indigenous Peoples Safeguards rating in the box above.

*Describe what actions the project or office has taken to implement WWF policy principles on indigenous rights. Are there particular achievements or challenges associated with this work, or any support needs? (max. ¼ page)*

## 6. RISKS TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS ACHIEVED (max. 1/3 page)

<b>Rating :</b>	<b>Low</b>
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To develop the rating, see the instructions in Annex 6. Copy the overall Risks to Sustainability of Results rating in the box above.

*Based on the risks identified (in Annex 6) and any not included in the list, describe here the top 3-4 ones in terms of likelihood and impact to the project's achievement being sustained over the long-term. These may be the same as challenges discussed in earlier sections. What steps could WWF (including the project) take in the future to better ensure the sustainability of the gains made? (max. 1/3 page)*

Political risks are very high in Albania. Most of the time, after political elections, the counterpart changes and the commitments taken by previous decision makers are overlooked. Also financially there is the risk that the Network can't sustain and follow up on project's results if the government does not step into the Natura 2000 process in a more incisive way, also in terms of allocated resources. If so, the Network will be the most valid - and possibly the only - interlocutor for the decision makers to fill the gap that Albania suffers with respect to the other countries of the region in the field of protected areas management.

## 7. SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES AND STRENGTHS, ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED

### A. Summary of Challenges and Strengths Affecting Performance

*Based on your analysis of the progress made, the factors affecting the project's performance, and any other difficulties or enabling conditions encountered, what were the main (i.e. top 3-4) challenges or strengths that your team thinks should be brought to the Network's attention?*

As regard project's challenges, the main problems encountered were: i) N2000 is totally new in Albania ii) there is no institution serving as database for habitats and species data iii) many NGOs composing the N2000\_WG have low institutional capacity and insufficient equipment (e.g. no PCs; limited internet connection) iv) it was difficult to run properly the CB assessment due to the difficulty to keep track of trainings' participants. On the other hand, in terms of strengths, the members of N2000\_WG showed i) to have a common goal ii) to have fair knowledge on topics indirectly relevant for N2000 ii) have wide geographical scope (from local to national) iii) have different "strengths", so that the stronger members might facilitate the growth of the smaller ones.

### B. Adaptive Management

*(i) What are your recommendations on how the Network (including your office) should act on these challenges and strengths to help your project improve its performance?*

*(ii) What changes are needed to project objectives and activities? If changes have been made to your action plan (e.g. logframe) and monitoring plan and you are sending this TPR to a donor office, please attach the latest versions of your revised plans.*

No major changes are required, though more work should be done with decision makers to communicate N2000 as the main tool to work in the field of protected areas; this extra work would help gaining more institutional support.

### C. Lessons Learned

*What are the 3-4 key lessons learned from the project that are relevant to others of its kind in WWF? These lessons may be with regard to the strategies or approaches used internal capacity and coordination, experiences with partners and stakeholders, the project context, or any other issue.*

- i) Albania government wants to get more involved in regional initiatives on protected areas
- ii) Decision makers and civil society know N2000 only by name but have very limited knowledge of what it is and how it works
- iii) the NGOs movement as a whole has pretty low capacity on protected areas issues