



**Building institutional capacity and participatory leadership in Awash and Simien national parks for resilience, mitigation and adaptation to climate change: a case study**

**1. Context**

The SCIP Fund is a major component of the broader SCIP programme and has funded 27 projects to support institutional capacity development in Government, civil society, academia, and private sector, in engagement with implementing government departments. The SCIP Fund receives donor funding from the governments of the UK, Norway and Denmark and is managed by KPMG. This case study has been prepared by Dr Rachel Percy as part of an end of programme review undertaken by LTS International.

This proposal for this project was developed by the Population, Health and Environment Ethiopia Consortium (PHE-EC) in collaboration with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA). The former has over 55 international and national NGO members. Included amongst the consortium members are the implementing partners of the project: Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and Wildlife for Sustainable Development (WSD). The EWCA is a governmental organization under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT) which has the authority to undertake conservation and sustainable utilization of wildlife in Ethiopia, including gazetting and management of protected areas (PAs), tackling illicit wildlife trafficking and law enforcement amongst other roles.

Whilst PHE-EC submitted a proposal for a three year period, the SCIP fund management requested that the proposal be cut down and also phased. Consequently, PHE-EC split the project into two phases and received £150,000 funding for the first phase. This phase was intended to take place from April 2013 to May 2014 but was in fact extended into a “consolidation phase” with the project finally finishing in July 2015. This second consolidation phase was also funded £150,000. This was then followed by an approval of £35,000 cost extension to conclude the remaining consolidation phase project activities and terminal report writing up to December 15, 2015. Hence total project funding amounted to £335,000.

The first phase of the project planned for four **outputs**, and the consolidation phase three of the four. The outputs were:

- i. Strengthened and established partnership and collaborations among multi-stakeholders and beneficiaries
- ii. Built park management and leadership capacity of MoCT/EWCA, Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks (ANP and SMNP respectively)
- iii. Built capacity of women, youth groups and local institutions for engaging in climate smart biodiversity entrepreneurship
- iv. Promoted good practices in rehabilitation of the park Ecosystem as a Model for Environmental Resilience and Adaptation to the Impacts of Climate Change.<sup>1</sup>

The overall project **outcome** was *“Building institutional capacity and participatory leadership in Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks in order to enhance the leadership and park management capacity of multi-stakeholders and strengthen the newly established shared governance system”*.

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<sup>1</sup> This output was not included in the consolidation phase

The original project proposal anticipated working in five national parks. However the SCIP fund management advised that the number should be reduced to two. The two National Parks – ANP and SMNP were selected on the bases that a) They are long established and gazetted parks and b) between them they represent the range of conditions affecting National Parks in the country. Further the implementing partners have a long association with each of the parks (FZS with the SMNP and WSD with ANP).

## **2. Methodology**

Case study methodology involved document review and key informant interviews. The evaluation framework and questions were used to develop interview checklists tailored to this case study. Documents that were reviewed are listed in Annex 1 and include those that were available prior to travel to Ethiopia and others that were shared with the team during the course of the case study. The latter include a “Project progress and achievement evaluation report” concerning Phase 1 of the project and examples of policy briefs produced by the project including one concerning “Carbon Stock and dynamics of Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks: Implications for REDD+”. For this particular case, key informants included only those in PHE-EC and the EWCA; time constraints prevented follow up with other stakeholders to verify the significance of the findings. Consequently more attention was given to review of existing documents.

## **3. Key findings**

*“The project has created collaboration amongst different stakeholders up to the higher levels. New connections are made, there is a platform on which to discuss all issues related to the park. In the past protected areas were managed by one sector. That did not work and the protected areas were getting worse and worse. There was no involvement of the community. Now everyone has realised the importance of the protected areas and everyone says ‘this protected area is ours’.”*

### **Relevance**

Pressures on the parks and the absence of a coordinated response were identified as a key problem. Thus the establishment of multi-stakeholder task forces (MSTF) at different levels was an appropriate measure and the assumptions behind this valid. Membership of the MSTF’s was informed by a stakeholder analysis and included many different sectors along with relevant private sector, NGO and community representation. The two key partners guiding the project were appropriate in that one (PHE-EC) was able to draw on a wide range of relevant expertise and the other (EWCA) is the main body, under the MoTC, responsible for the parks. Needs assessments, both amongst vulnerable youth and women with regard to livelihoods and income generation, and amongst MSTF members with regard to existing knowledge of CRGE, led to appropriate capacity building being carried out.

### **Effectiveness**

The project successfully delivered against all four outputs. Functioning MSTF’s were established at all levels; the park authorities have increased understanding and capacity; various climate smart entrepreneurial activities have been introduced, particularly to the most vulnerable who are most likely to encroach on the park illegally to support their livelihoods and, fourth; a wide range of information, education and communication (IEC) materials have been produced and disseminated in all relevant languages. There were challenges with regard to the start up of the project, particularly, in the initial stages, from the EWCA itself which was not used to this style of project, and also from Awash National Park staff who initially did not support the project. A more recent external factor

that has affected improved conservation and management of resources in Awash National Park has been drought which has meant that the Park has had to allow some level of grazing within the park boundaries.

## **Impact**

Whilst the impact in terms of introduction of alternative climate smart income generation activities (IGA's) is on a small scale, the project, in addition to the participatory multi-stakeholder park management process that has been established, has contributed to broader CRGE objectives. Examples include the nature conservation clubs set up in schools and supported by a "Climate Change Toolkit for Schools Environmental Education" and the carbon sequestration studies carried out and disseminated by the project.

## **Sustainability**

Indications regarding sustainability and replicability are good. Parliament has requested the EWCA to expand this process to other national parks and steps are underway at present to do this for example in Bale Mountains National Park. The MSTF process was, earlier this year, gazetted for seven protected areas including both parks and is thus legally endorsed and institutionalised. The implications of this are discussed further in the next section.

## **4. Discussion and lessons learned**

Despite the limited opportunity to carry out follow-up interviews with other stakeholders, it is clear from the findings above which in turn draw on a range of project documentation, that overall, despite its modest budget, the project has some significant achievements.

First, the MSTF process has been successful, particularly in SMNP. People who did not communicate before are communicating and as a consequence more "joined-up" approaches to park management are underway. Where the community had not felt they owned the resources in the parks before (and therefore felt free to exploit them) their participation in the MSTF's (along with the wider awareness raising and income substitution amongst the communities) has led to greater ownership of the parks by neighbouring communities. The engagement of the park authorities in Awash National Park in the MSTF process has gradually increased over the project period and they now accept the need to manage the park in a holistic manner.

Second, and following on from the above, the project has led to the MSTF process being gazetted for seven protected areas including the two parks. This means that it is the responsibility of the EWCA, along with all the sectors engaged in the MSTF's at different levels, to ensure that the process continues. Funding for meetings will need to be provided by the EWCA, its parent Ministry (MoTC) and the other engaged sectors. The EWCA is committed to sourcing this funding and will look not only to requesting the funding from the Government, but also to establishing a trust fund or putting in bids, for example to the Government of Ethiopia's CRGE facility or directly to the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Third, the project has produced a draft "Multi-sectoral protected areas guideline" which is due for completion. This guide has been welcomed by Parliament as mentioned above and thus there is Government support for the scaling out of this MSTF process to other National Parks.

Fourth, the awareness raised in and beyond the parks regarding the need for taking the CRGE into account in and around the National Parks may provide impetus for further initiatives in future.

Amongst the MSTFs and amongst the communities neighbouring the two parks there is a new understanding of the consequences of climate change for the parks and the potential that the parks have in terms of carbon sequestration and conservation of resources. The project has produced over 10,000 different IEC materials in English, Amharic, Oromiffa and Afarinnya. These have the potential of raising awareness in and around other national parks. Information about the project may also be disseminated at the international level as PHE-EC have applied to present information about the SCIP funded project at a COP 21 side event in Paris in December 2015.

Turning to the fit between this particular project and the overall SCIP programme Theory of Change (ToC), whilst the MSTFs are not climate institutions in themselves, they are in a much stronger position, and have the relevant understanding, to be able to tackle climate issues related to the parks and outside. As the MSTF have government, NGO, PS and civil society representation then it could be said that there is a fit between this process and all four SCIP programme outputs. Assumptions behind these outputs, at the programme level, which are valid for this particular project include a) Ministries respond to CC evidence at federal and regional levels and b) More and effective partnerships across types of organisation (see SCIP programme ToC). The SCIP programme outcome: “Organisational and institutional capacity of the GoE, PS and CS to respond to the CC agenda developed” could be said to hold true for this particular project.

**Key lessons learned** whilst conducting this case study are as follows:

***Patience is essential*** – whilst the SMNP authorities were quick to take up the MSTF process, there was resistance to this at the start with the ANP and it took perseverance and patience to, gradually, get greater engagement by the ANP staff.

***Champions make a difference*** – in this case the present Director General of the EWCA is fully behind the institutionalisation of the MSTF process and its scaling out to other parks. Further, the SCIP Project Coordinator in the PHE-EC and PHE-ECs Executive Director have supported project implementation and dissemination fully and continue to do so.

***An integrated, participatory, multi-sectoral approach to National Park management is appropriate*** – Such an approach can transform the way in which different government sectors, community members, NGOs and PS bodies view and manage National Parks.

***Legal endorsement of processes can enhance mainstreaming*** – the ability to ensure an appropriate process (in this case the MSTF process) is legally endorsed through gazetting can greatly enhance the mainstreaming and sustainability of the approach.

#### **Annex 1: Documents reviewed**

- KPMG Case study 22: Participatory Leadership for Climate Resilience – setting up new resource management partnerships
- 3Q Assessment report (SCIP grantee Technical and Financial Assessment) (24 Mar 14)
- PHE monitoring visit report (29 Nov 13)
- PHE 4Q Assessment report (SCIP grantee Technical and Financial Assessment) (3 Jun14)
- PHEEC SCIP\_PHE Q8 report (July 31 2015)
- EWCA, PHEEC, FZS, WSD, Multi-sectoral protected areas management guideline (April 2014)
- Gazettes for the two parks (2015)
- Assaye, H (2014) Project progress and achievement evaluation report
- PHEEC, EWCA, MEF, FZS and WSD (July 2015) Progress Evaluation Report

- Carbon stock and dynamics of Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks: Implication for REDD+
- EWCA, PHEEC, FZS, WSD (2014) Climate change Toolkit for Schools Environmental Education

**Annex 2: People interviewed**

- Dawud Mumie, Director General, EWCA
- Tadesse Hailu, SCIP Project Coordinator PHE EC