

COMPACT

Engaging local communities in stewardship
of globally significant protected areas

SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
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COMPACT

COMPACT - Demonstrating how community-based initiatives can significantly increase the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in and around World Heritage Sites.

For the past decade, the Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation Programme (COMPACT) has been testing – in diverse settings – an innovative model for engaging communities in conservation. Working in nine countries, COMPACT is demonstrating that community-based initiatives can significantly increase the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in globally significant protected areas while helping to improve the livelihoods of local people.

COMPACT is an initiative of the UNDP/Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (SGP), the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and other partners. Launched in 2000, it aims to replicate the success of SGP at the national scale for protected landscapes, including natural UNESCO World Heritage Sites and overlapping Biosphere Reserves recognized for their Outstanding Universal Value. COMPACT's founding partners include the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, whose involvement ensures that COMPACT addresses the co-management priorities of communities within the governance models adopted by World Heritage Sites.

With an emphasis on complementing and adding value to existing conservation programmes, COMPACT uses small grants to support clusters of community-based activities that are intended to strengthen biodiversity conservation in and around protected areas. Now in its second phase of work, COMPACT focuses on eight globally significant protected areas (including one trans-boundary site), which are either current or proposed World Heritage Sites.



- * Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System, Belize
- * Morne Trois Pitons National Park, Dominica
- * Mount Kenya National Park, Kenya*
- * Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, Mexico*
- * Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Philippines*
- * Mount Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania
- * The Djoudj-Djawaling Transboundary Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site, Senegal and Mauritania*
- * A cluster of five protected areas in South-West Madagascar anticipating World Heritage listing between 2010 and 2012

*Sites overlapping with Biosphere Reserves

Responding to challenges facing globally significant protected areas world-wide

COMPACT was created in 2000 to respond to a number of challenges facing protected areas at the global level. A primary motive was that, while the importance of engaging local communities in conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity was widely acknowledged, there had only been limited prior success with Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs). COMPACT was established as a structured experiment with ICDPs in diverse settings – a response to the need for on-the-ground experience demonstrating linkages between improving local livelihoods and enhancing biodiversity conservation.

Demonstrating constructive ways of involving local stakeholders in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in and around protected areas remains one of the most important challenges and priorities for nature conservation at the beginning of the 21st century.

COMPACT's establishment addressed the growing recognition of the need to conserve biodiversity at relatively large ecosystem and landscape scales. Conservation across large landscapes, which encompass a mosaic of land types and uses, requires working with a diverse range of communities and stakeholders.

Further, it responded to the fact that biodiversity conservation efforts – and protected areas in particular – are under increasing pressure to demonstrate that they can contribute to economic development and poverty alleviation, in particular to achieving the 2015 Millennium Development goals. A watershed event was the 2003 IUCN World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa, which acknowledged the role of indigenous and local communities in protected areas – recognizing the role of these communities in collaborative management of protected areas and the importance of traditional conservation practices of these communities, as expressed in Indigenous and Community-Conserved Areas (ICCAs). Subsequently, the 7th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP7, Kuala Lumpur, 2004) produced an ambitious Programme of Work (POW) on Protected Areas, which included an element on “Governance, Participation, Equity, and Benefit-sharing. These and other developments have led to broad recognition in conservation policy arenas of the link between local livelihoods and reduced pressure on resources, the importance of traditional knowledge (TK) systems in resource

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) – “The People’s GEF”

For almost two decades, the Small Grants Programme (SGP) has been working with communities around the world to combat the most critical environmental problems and has successfully demonstrated that supporting communities in their efforts to achieve more sustainable livelihoods is not only possible, but extremely important in bringing about change and achieving global environmental benefits. Launched in 1992, the year of the Rio Earth Summit, SGP embodies the very essence of sustainable development. SGP channels financial and technical support directly to community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and indigenous peoples’ organizations in developing countries for activities that conserve and restore the environment while enhancing people's well-being and livelihoods. With presence in 122 countries and more than 13,500 grants awarded worldwide, SGP is showing that community action can maintain the fine balance between human needs and environmental imperatives.

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the other GEF Implementing Agencies. Through strategic partnerships, SGP has been able to match programme funding from the GEF (to-date approximately US\$400 million) with cash and in-kind contributions for a total financial impact of over US\$800 million since the programme's inception. The maximum grant amount awarded per project is US\$50,000, with an average of about US\$ 35,000. Projects are therefore relatively small in size, and intended to demonstrate innovative approaches of addressing environmental problems at the community level.

The SGP focal areas are in support of GEF priorities and include: conservation of biodiversity, climate change mitigation and resilience, protection of international waters, reduction of the impact of persistent organic pollutants, and prevention of land degradation. Its principal objectives are to:

- * Build partnerships and networks of stakeholders to support and strengthen community, NGO and national capacities to address global environmental problems and promote sustainable development.
- * Ensure that conservation and sustainable development strategies and projects that protect the global environment are understood and practised by communities and other key stakeholders.
- * Develop community-level strategies and implement technologies to reduce threats to the global environment if they are replicated over time.
- * Gather lessons from community-level experience and initiate the sharing of successful community-level strategies and innovations among CBOs and NGOs, host governments, development aid agencies, GEF and others working on a regional or global scale.

SGP links global, national and local issues through a transparent, participatory and country-driven approach to project planning, design and implementation. Grants are made directly to CBOs, NGOs and indigenous peoples' in recognition of the key role they play as a resource and constituency for environment and development concerns. The decentralized structure of SGP encourages maximum country, and community-level, ownership and initiative.

SGP is more than simply a fund that provides small grants to CBOs and NGOs for environmental conservation. By raising public awareness, building partnerships and promoting policy dialogue, SGP seeks to promote an enabling environment within countries for achieving sustainable development and addressing global environmental issues. SGP has helped CBOs, NGOs and countries to simultaneously support local, community-based initiatives while meeting national obligations and global commitments.

management, and the connections between biological and cultural diversity

A particular challenge is that World Heritage Sites (WHS) –despite their global significance and striking values – are often better known globally than locally. While World Heritage designation presents a tremendous opportunity because “the world comes to you,” the reality is that this potential is often poorly understood. COMPACT was launched in 2000 in recognition of the fact that, as priority conservation areas for humankind, World Heritage sites could provide “an ideal framework for boosting cooperation between intergovernmental agencies, governments, and civil society” in order to halt or reverse critical threats to globally significant biodiversity.” A decade on, COMPACT has successfully demonstrated that this vision can be achieved.

Since its inception, SGP has confronted very real challenges in working with communities to reconcile global environmental priorities with local community needs - challenges that have been met in different ways across the globe depending on particular economic, cultural, political and environmental conditions. In the process, SGP became known as "the people's GEF".



The COMPACT model: Piloting the Landscape Approach in Diverse Settings

The COMPACT model builds on the tremendous experience of SGP and its established track record of achieving and, especially, sustaining environmental benefits over time. Like SGP, the COMPACT approach is based on fostering a strong sense of ownership and responsibility by local communities, and is rooted in principles such as:

- * The importance of ownership and responsibility - Global environmental problems can best be addressed if local people are involved and there are direct community benefits and ownership.
- * The cost-effectiveness of small grants – With small amounts of funding members of local communities can undertake activities that will make a significant difference in their lives and environments with global benefits.
- * The crucial role of social capital – Thoughtful investment in local institutions and individuals can help build the capacity of communities for stewardship of their environments.
- * Sharing power – Supporting community-led initiatives requires trust, flexibility and patience. Transparent processes and broad public participation are key to ensuring community engagement and contribute to strengthening civil society.
- * Making a commitment over time – Community-driven processes take time and require a long-term commitment of support.

the results of the baseline assessments are discussed and finalized with stakeholders through regular meetings.

Once completed, each baseline assessment provides a “snapshot” of the site, useful in analyzing emerging trends. COMPACT has developed a conceptual model to ensure that this rich assemblage of information can effectively guide its planning. The conceptual model is a diagrammatic tool documenting site-level processes, threats and opportunities believed to impact biodiversity conservation. With these tools in place, each COMPACT team then develops a site strategy, highlighting major threats, opportunities and priority

COMPACT takes a landscape approach – one based on supporting local communities in their stewardship of protected areas and the broader landscape/seascape. Refined over a decade of work, COMPACT's methodology is designed to pilot the landscape approach in a wide range of ecological and socio-economic situations. Rooted in science, this methodology is also highly participatory in nature, seeking to engage local people and other stakeholders in consultation throughout the process.

The COMPACT methodology relies on three closely linked elements: *a baseline assessment*, which serves as the foundation for the COMPACT *conceptual model* and *site strategy* in that particular COMPACT country. This approach was designed to give considerable flexibility to local decision-makers while ensuring that the overall goals of the conservation of globally significant biodiversity remain clearly in focus. This first stage of the process guides the grant-giving programme in the landscape surrounding the World Heritage Site, while providing the basis for future *monitoring and evaluation*.

At the outset, as part of the consultation process at each participating World Heritage Site, COMPACT conducts a thorough *baseline assessment* working closely with key stakeholders and local institutions. These assessments document the current knowledge of the biodiversity status and trends in and around each World Heritage site (or cluster of sites) identifying, for example, conservation objectives, economic activities, major threats, key management issues, existing programmes and relationships with local communities. Socio-economic, institutional and cultural questions are also explored, such as the livelihood sources for local communities and the capacities of local and national organizations. Consultations are held to ensure active participation by stakeholders throughout the planning process, and

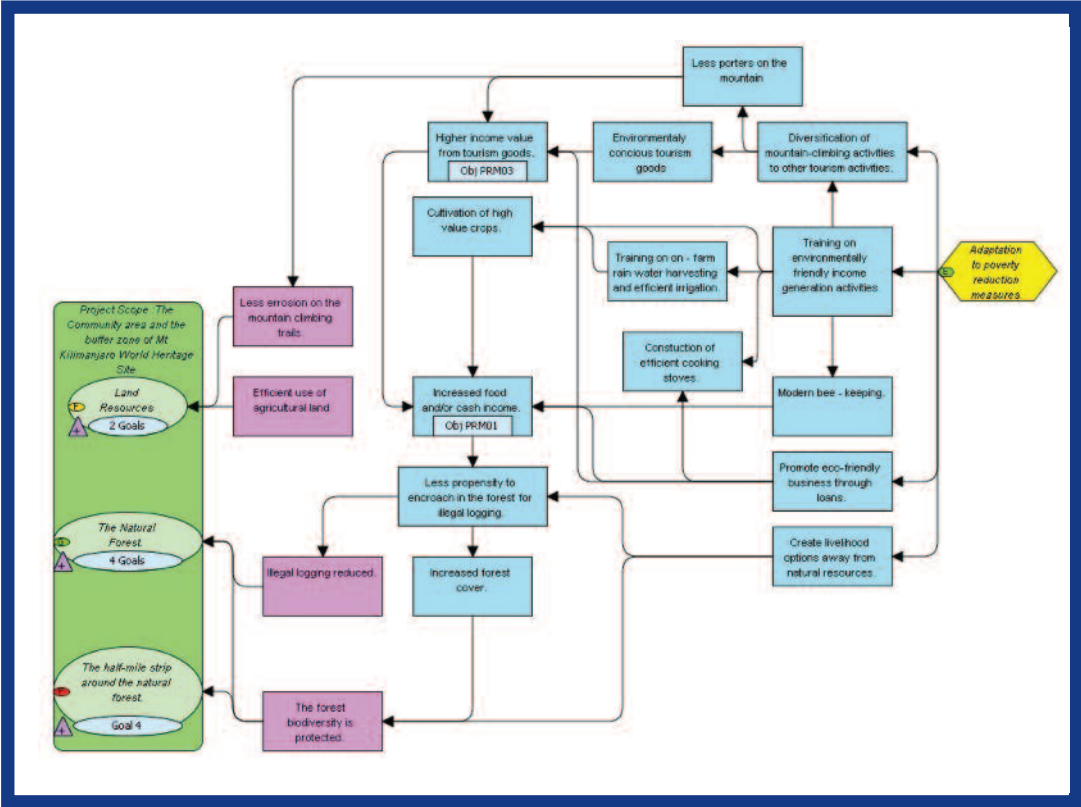
COMPACT's experience on the ground in nine countries tells the story of how the landscape approach can work in diverse settings, increasing the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation, while engaging communities in stewardship and helping to improve the livelihoods of local people.

Legend Table	
	Project
	Conceptual Model
	Results Chain
	Target
	Direct Threat </td
	Contributing Factor
	Intermediate Result
	Threat Reduction Result
	Strategy
	Goal
	Objective
	Indicator
	Stress
	Text Box
	Group Box
	Task
	Method
	Activity
	Measurement

	The Natural Forest.
	1a. By 2015 there should be a 200% increase of community tree nurseries and woodlots.
	Diversified food and cash crops.
	Number of entities harvesting rain water.
	The number of fire breakouts in the forest per year.
	1b. By 2015 there should be a 50% decrease in illegal logging.
	Diversified food and cash crops.

actions. The site strategy provides an important framework for the allocation of resources; implementation of grants and other activities; and assessment of results.

In each site a Local Coordinator manages COMPACT under the direction of the SGP Country Programme, and a Local Consultative Body. The Local Coordinator is responsible for planning and implementing the COMPACT programme, and serves as a key link between communities, diverse stakeholders, and the SGP National Steering Committee. These dedicated and talented individuals know the local context well and play a critical role in facilitating community involvement and building local capacity for conservation.



COMPACT’s governance structure at the local level parallels that of SGP, operating in a decentralized, democratic and transparent manner. The Local Consultative Body represents key project stakeholders, including the protected area management authorities, representatives of local communities, NGOs active in the region, local research institutions, local government, the private sector, and donors. The Local Consultative Body helps ensure that dialogue, coordination and consensus-building takes place among key stakeholders at the protected area level. It generally makes recommendations on grant proposals, with final project approval being carried out by the SGP National Steering Committee.

BELIZE

Responding to a range of threats facing the **Belize Barrier Reef System** (BBRS), the mission of COMPACT in Belize has been to focus on preserving the integrity and character of the BBRS by developing and supporting a range of conservation and sustainable livelihood activities through transparent and democratic partnerships with coastal communities and other stakeholders.

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996, the Belize Barrier Reef System encompasses seven marine protected areas (MPAs) with a total area of 116,148 hectares. It is the second largest barrier reef system in the world (after the Great Barrier Reef in Australia). Described by Charles Darwin in 1842 as “the most remarkable reef in the West Indies, it is Belize's top tourist destination, attracting almost half of its 260,000 annual visitors, and is vital to its fishing industry. The Belize Barrier Reef System is home to a large diversity of plants and animals, and is one of the

most diverse ecosystems of the world. Twenty-two coastal communities and a few inland communities live adjacent to the BBRS World Heritage Site and their coastal livelihoods depend on the health of the reef system for activities such as fishing and tourism.

Despite the protective measures put in place over the last two decades, the reef remains under threat from pollution, dredging and sand mining for construction, development in sensitive coastal areas, uncontrolled tourism, shipping, fishing and hurricanes. The inevitable and complex consequences of global climate change are a grave threat to marine biological processes worldwide, and the Belize Barrier Reef System is no exception. Climate change is having an impact on ecosystem goods and services and threatening human food security in the BBRS. Scientists suggest that over 40 percent of Belize's coral reefs have been damaged since 1998.

“**COMPACT empowers locals
towards protecting the Belize
Barrier Reef Reserve System**”

COMPACT's establishment in Belize grew out of a year-long participatory process which brought together key stakeholders in a national forum to discuss the conservation and sustainable use of the Belize Barrier Reef System (members of this

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