

WOW
WINGS OVER WETLANDS
The UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project

WOW - DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT #: 2

REPORTING PERIOD: June 2007 – May 2008

Report Prepared by: Daniel Marnewick & Hansco Banda

Country	South Africa
Project Title	Multifaceted Tourism Development
Project ref. number	G9
Name of Local Implementing Agency/NGO	BirdLife South Africa
Total amount of funds under this agreement	US\$248 000
Expected project duration	3 years
Date of signature of the agreement	
Contact in Local Implementing Agency/NGO	Name: Daniel Marnewick Tel: +27 (11) 789 1122 Fax: +27 (11) 789 5188 Email: community@birdlife.org.za

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Acronyms

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development
BLSA	BirdLife South Africa
BotSoc	Botanical Society of South Africa
CBCD	Community Based Conservation Division of BLSA
DMC	Delta Mining Cooperation
ESKOM	Electricity Supply Commission
EWT	Endangered Wildlife Trust
MTPA	Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Authority
PKSLM	Pixley ka Seme Local Municipality
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SACWG	South African Crane Working Group
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
UTDA	Uthaka Tourism Development Association
WLEPA	Wakkerstroom – Luneburg Environmental Protection Association
WOW	Wings Over Wetlands
WNHA	Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association
WTA	Wakkerstroom Tourism Association
WWFSA	World Wide Fund for Nature, South Africa
WWRMC	Wakkerstroom Wetland Reserve Management Committee

1. Executive Summary

2008 has seen the project move into its implementation stage. Much of the ground work has been done in terms of marketing the objectives of the project, identifying the key stakeholders, identifying the key informants within the resource user groups and also engaging the partners in terms of issues of common interests. The project's key site objectives (namely Wetland Management, Environmental Education, Tourism Development and the development of Income Generating Activities) are all in their implementation stages. Xolani Ngobese who is the project site assistant has been appointed due to the growth of the project at a site level.

The project has had major achievements over the past year. There have been numerous partnerships formed with different stakeholders. Facilitating the establishment of 'resource user' groups and or groups that were not in existence before the project commenced. Facilitating the formation and administration of the Wakkerstroom Wetland Reserve Management Committee (WWRMC). Facilitating the formation of united, non-racial and non-sexist Wakkerstroom Tourism Association. Facilitating the establishment and implementation of the Eco-Schools programme. Engaging all the communities in bird conservation and wetland education programmes. The establishment of the project's monthly newsletter.

The project has also had to address key issues in this year. The unexpected proposed mining by Delta Mining Corporation (DMC) is the largest threat facing the Wakkerstroom region at present. Ever since the issue came to the fore it has divided the community of Wakkerstroom into two groups either pro-mining (mostly the black population because they believe that it will bring employment opportunities) or the anti-mining lobby (mostly property owners of Wakkerstroom and conservation organizations who are interested and affected by the mining issue).

Another issue is the non-cooperation of the local government management projects and the collapse of some government run community projects due to the fact that their products are not marketable to the locals or the tourists (both local and international) who usually visit Wakkerstroom.

Key constraints have been the non-availability of funds to support the Wakkerstroom's Wetland Reserve Management Committee's proposed projects e.g. fencing the grazing camps next to the wetland and also at the Ossewakop which is heavily overgrazed, and the non-cooperation of some stakeholders on issues which are related to tourism development.

Key challenges are the ongoing social tensions amongst different racial groups in Wakkerstroom; Engaging farmers on the catchment area management; Engaging farm tenants through the cranes outreach programme; The majority of the black

stakeholders are illiterate; Political interferences in the site programmes e.g. local politicians sometimes deny us direct access to the resource user groups; Disseminating the lessons learnt through the project e.g. involving national media; Identifying cooperate companies and organizations that can help to fund the project after the current funding is exhausted.

The project has identified the current risks that may hamper project success. Uncontrolled veld fires during winter continue to pose a risk to the Wakkerstroom wetland and the surrounding grassland areas. The mining issue posses the greatest risk on the whole social and natural environment of Wakkerstroom. Invasive plant species growing on the edges of the wetland posses a risk to the indigenous fauna and flora species if not controlled. Continuous theft of the fences around the grazing camps next to the wetland. The harvesting of trees for fire wood during winter time posses a challenge to the bird species that rely on them for nesting.

1.1 Key project achievements during the reporting period

#	Key Project Achievements
1	Facilitating the formation of the Wakkestrom Wetland Reserve Management Committee: The committee is fully operational and it is composed of different stakeholders namely Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Authority, Pixley ka Seme Local Municipality, South African National Biodiversity Institute, BirdLife South Africa, Electrical Supply Commission of South Africa/ESKOM, Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association, Wakkerstroom Tourism Association, Enkangala Grasslands Programme and Wakkerstroom Cattle Owners. The management committee is in the process of formalizing its Terms of Reference/ToR. It is also keeping track of the RAMSAR application which is now with the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT).
2	Facilitating the re-constitution of the Wakkerstroom Tourism Association: The project contributed by identifying the key role players in Wakkerstroom and engaging them on forming a Wakkerstroom Tourism Association which is non racial and democratically elected. The site manager is in the process of linking Wakkerstroom to the greater Mpumalanga Birding Route through the BirdLife South Africa’s Avitourism Division. A brainstorming session’s date to address the issue of marketing Wakkerstroom has been finalized between Wakkerstroom Tourism Association, the site manager and the Mpumalanga Birding Route Manager.
3	Environmental education: The project has managed to form the Indwe Environment Club at eSizameleni and also Eco-Clubs in Uthaka High School and Wakkerstroom Primary School. Environmental programmes are in place and operational in the site namely Commemorating Important Environment Days, Wetland Education Programmes and Bird Conservation Programmes. 2008 World Migratory Birds Day has been successfully celebrated. The site is also engaged in educating communities about cranes and Spotted Eagle Owls which have been chosen as the Bird Of The Year by BirdLife South Africa. The Eco-Schools programme is up and running and it is implemented in partnership with the Education Division within BirdLife South Africa.
4	Income Generating Activities: The project facilitated the formation of the Wakkerstroom Grass and Reeds Harvesters Association which has been

- commissioned through Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Authority and Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association to harvest the reeds in the Wakkerstroom wetland. The association extended their mandate by constructing reed fences for the local community. In December 2007 they reported to the project that they have accumulated an amount of about R20 000 (\$2700) from selling reeds and constructing reed fencing. The project has also trained local people in terms of the Participatory Rural Appraisals and entrepreneurial development skills which include market research, marketing, basic computer skills, guiding skills, business plan formation and how to source funding.
- 5 Disseminating the experiences and knowledge gained through the project: The site has a newsletter which is published bi-monthly. The articles of the news are also published in our local newspaper. Presentations (both power point and poster) are also done to different stakeholders. Information sharing workshops are also conducted with partners.

1.2 Key issues & proposed solutions

#	Issue	Proposed Solution	Deadline	Party Responsible
1	Proposed mining by DMC of the Wakkerstroom and Luneburg catchments respectively.	Forming partnership with all interested and affected parties in fighting mining. Currently BLSA, EGP, EWT, SANBI and local farmers have formed the Wakkerstroom-Luneburg Environmental Protection Association (WLEPA) to challenge the proposed mining in the high court. Local civil society and conservation groups have also been lobbying against this mining.	Ongoing process	BirdLife S.A, Government departments, Other conservation N.G.O's, local communities and international organizations.
2	No co-operation from local government municipalities in the development of economic opportunities.	Currently the CBCD is facilitating the establishment of new IGA's in Wakkerstroom namely Birds Carving Project, Communal Vegetable Garden, bead work, Owls Boxes Project and Poultry Project.	31/08/2008	BirdLife SA, Department of Arts and Culture, Department of Agriculture.

2. Project Management

CATEGORY	ISSUES Description of issues affecting project performance during the reporting period	PROPOSED SOLUTIONS Description of decisions / actions to be taken	DEADLINE	PARTY RESPONSIBLE
Recruitment & management of staff and consultants	No issue.	No issues have been experienced thus far.	NA	NA
Finance & administration	Finance and administration are managed through BLSA structures. No issues related to this.	NA	NA	NA
Logistics & operations	The project site coordinator and site assistant both operate from the BLSA premises in Wakkerstroom. No related issues.	NA	NA	NA
Reporting & communication	The project coordinator reports to the Division Manager. Monthly objectives are set and used to evaluate outcomes against the annual objectives. Day to day issues are dealt with through weekly telephonic communications. The site coordinator and site assistant work together on a daily basis. The site coordinator develops and monitors the assistant's monthly objectives.	NA	NA	NA

	No issues currently.			
Coordination with project partners	<p>BLSA successfully catalysed the Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee in September 2007. The biggest challenge for this committee is integrating the concerns of all stakeholders into wetland management plans, especially those concerns of the previously marginalised black community.</p> <p>The mining issue has catalysed the three large conservation NGOs namely BLSA, WWF-SA and Botanical Society of South Africa (BotSoc), to form a tri-partied alliance to ensure the conservation of the eastern grasslands.</p>	<p>BLSA is mediating a merge between the black and white representative bodies. BLSA is also assisting resource users to become organised and represented on the management committees.</p> <p>The Luneberg/Wakkerstroom Environmental Protection Association and the tri-partied alliance have collaboratively raised enough funds to take the mining company to court over illegitimate prospecting permits.</p>	<p>September 2007</p> <p>The issue is currently lodged with the high court and is ongoing.</p>	<p>Hansco Banda</p> <p>Angus Burns (BotSoc)</p>
External issues (e.g. difficult access to the project site for political/social/environmental reasons, etc.)	<p>BLSA's stance against mining at the project site has compromised cooperation from a handful of community members and local government officials.</p>	<p>BLSA has made their case clear and continued with our work on a community and tourism level. This has eased some of the pressure from these mining lobby groups/individuals.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Hansco Banda, Xolani Ngobeza</p>
Other	None			

2.2 Project Steering Committee (SC)

Date of last SC Meeting	3rd June 2008
Proposed Date for next SC Meeting	5 th August 2008

QUESTION	ANSWER
This Report was reviewed and approved by the Project SC	No. This report was not complete before the last committee meeting on the 3 rd June. The report has however been e-mailed to committee members for discussion at the next meeting.
The work plan & budget for next six months was reviewed & approved by the Project SC	Yes.
The SC is meeting periodically and providing effective direction/inputs?	Yes

Please provide updated list of SC Members (list the SC Chairperson first):

Name	Title	Email	Phone
Mpumalanga Parks & Tourism Authority (Jannie Coetzee)	Chairperson	jannie@MTPA.co.za	+27 13 282 8671
Pixley KaSeme Local Municipality (Oupa Mavusa)	Vice-Chairperson	oupa@highveldmail.co.za or records@pixleykaseme.co.za	+27 17 734 6100 or +27 82 499 1936
BirdLife SA (Hansco Banda)	Secretary	Wakkerstroom@birdlife.org.za	+27 71 607 5739
Daniel Marnewick	BirdLife South Africa	community@birdlife.org.za	+27 82 772 4432
Isaak Inkosi	Cattle Owners Association	N/A	+2779 601 9206
Anton Linstrom	Mpumalanga Parks & Tourism Authority	anton@MTPA.co.za	+2783 300 6978
Angus Burns	South African National Biodiversity Institute's Grasslands Programme	egtproject@mweb.co.za	+2784 4001 232

John Burchmore	Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association	burchmore@telkomsa.net	+2782 224 3326
Norman Dennett	Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association	denett@vlr.dorea.co.za	+2717 730 0523
Chris Smit	Local Councilor	N/A	+2784 508 4595
Lungile Nkosi	Local Councilor	N/A	+2779 492 2263
Brian Morris	South African National Biodiversity Institute's Grasslands Programme	enviroteq@gmail.com	+2784 579 7979
Nadia Schwirzer	SANBI-Working for Wetlands	nadiaschwirzer@gmail.com	+27 82 804 9302
Pat Mooney	Wakkerstroom Tourism Association	pmooney@mweb.co.za	+2776 112 4549

3. Progress / Issues / Proposed Solutions

OUTCOMES & ACTIVITIES Output/Service (as listed in Annex A of Memorandum of Agreement)	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE	STATUS NA: Not scheduled for current reporting period IP: In progress (state % completed) C: Completed	PROGRESS Description of progress & achievements during the reporting period	ISSUES & PROPOSED SOLUTIONS Description of problems encountered; issues that need to be addressed; decisions / actions to be taken	PARTY RESPONSIBLE
Outcome 1 More income from ecotourism to local communities.			Tourism in Wakkerstroom has increased substantially since 2003 (beds for tourists have increased from 167 to over 310=54% in 5 years). The town has organized its tourism industry through the establishment of a Wakkerstroom Tourism Association (WTA), which currently is functioning efficiently. Wakkerstroom is an Important Bird Area (IBA ZA016) and is recognized as one of South Africa's top birding destinations. BirdLife South Africa's Avi-Tourism Division is developing the Mpumalanga Birding Route.	Previously there were no black members of the WTA. Hansco Banda assisted the WTA to reconstitute itself and ensure membership of all stakeholders. Currently WTA has 5 black members and it is gradually becoming a non racial tourism association. Hansco is working on recruiting more black members to WTA. Currently the WTA is struggling in terms of marketing its activities and products. BLSA has to assist in marketing Wakkerstroom by linking it to its Mpumalanga Birding Route.	BLSA Avi-Tourism Division, BLSA Community Based Conservation Division, Wakkerstroom Tourism Association.
<i>Activity 1.1 Development of infrastructure to provide an improved and more extensive visitor</i>	July 2008	IP 50%	Bird hides have been assessed by a panel of experts. Renovation on the bird hides began in August 2007 and has been completed in	A serious fire in August caused unexpected damage to the walkways into the hides. This repair is	Hansco Banda, Wakkerstroom Wetland

<i>experience</i>			April 2008. The second phase of these renovations is complete. BLSA is approaching the Wakkerstroom Bird Club and Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association (WNHA) to assist with developing informative walking trails between the hides.	being done in conjunction with the overall renovation of the four hides. Uncontrolled veld fires are still pose major threats to the bird hides. Currently the Wakkerstroom Wetland Reserve Management Committee has to address the issue.	Reserve Management Committee.
<i>Activity 1.2 Marketing of the Wakkerstroom site to potential visitors</i>	Ongoing	IP 50%	The site is currently being marketed through the Wakkerstroom Tourism Association's website (www.wakkerstroomtourism.co.za), and BirdLife SA's Travel Division. BirdLife's Avi-Tourism Division is currently developing a marketing plan for the Mpumalanga Province which will include Wakkerstroom as its gateway to the province.	The reconstituted WTA will shortly meet with BLSA to coordinate marketing efforts for the area.	WTA, Hansco Banda, BLSA Avitourism
<i>Activity 1.3 Training of local people as guides.</i>	September 2008	IP 70%	Thus far five bird guides from the local black community have been trained and are working in the Wakkerstroom area. Two of these guides were trained and funded during this reporting period by the WOW funds.	It is foreseen that one more guide will be trained during this project due to the need to replace Xolani Ngobeze who has joined our division.	Hansco Banda, BirdLife Avi-Tourism Division
<i>Activity 1.4 Creation of jobs and businesses for local people.</i>	2009	IP 40%	The local municipality has established a cooperative of small, black owned businesses. BLSA was in the process of negotiating a partnership with the municipality to assist with the development of these businesses but this was	The negotiations with the local municipality have taken longer than expected due to political shuffling and uncertainty around mining in the area. The project has decided to begin	Hansco Banda, Fair Trade and Tourism, Arts and Crafts Council, Pixley KaSeme Local Municipality.

			<p>derailed due to government politics and the mining issue.</p> <p>The crafts and arts businesses will be displaying goods at the BLSA tourist shop and the town market. This is also currently being negotiated with the local municipality.</p> <p>Hansco, Xolani and one of the community member's – Thuli Nkosi are currently being trained in a training and tourism business programme which is run by Junior Achievement South Africa and the Avi-career programme for BirdLife South Africa</p> <p>Currently BLSA has employed 20 local people on a temporal basis to eradicate alien invasive plants and the project is ongoing.</p> <p>BLSA has established the Reed & Grass Cutters Ass., which is making and selling reed fences from the wetland, they have generated US\$ 2,700 in the past 6 months.</p> <p>Other planned projects include and starting date: Poultry project: July 08; Beadwork project: Aug 08; Sculpturing project: Jun 08; Bird feeders project: Aug 08; Owl box project: July 08;</p>	<p>working with local interest groups nonetheless so as not to delay the activity any longer.</p> <p>Birdlife is in the process of negotiating with the municipality for it to donate a site / land where the tourist shop can be built.</p>	
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			<p>Invasive plants eradicating project: July 08; and Vegetable gardens: Sept 08</p> <p>The crane feeding site has been re-established and the crane carvers will begin producing crane models in June 2008.</p> <p>The vegetable growers are in the process of being trained by the Department of Agriculture and Land Administration</p>		
<p>Outcome 2 Significant increases in education and awareness of the local community and tourists.</p>			<p>BirdLife’s main thrust here is awareness work with farm labourers, environmental education with local school learners, and awareness material available at key locations for tourists.</p> <p>Birdlife has started with the environmental activities which include wetland and bird conservation issues. Learners and educators and youth have been involved. Soon the farm workers will be the part of the process. Wakkerstroom celebrated the World Migratory Birds Day successfully incorporating wetland education, bird conservation and importance of avi-tourism.</p>		<p>Hansco Banda, Indwe environmental club, SACWG and Wakkerstroom Agricultural Union</p>
<p><i>Activity 2.1 Improve availability of education material in bird hides, interpretive centre and</i></p>	<p>April 2008</p>	<p>IP 60%</p>	<p>Posters and other resource materials have been placed in the hides and further information material shall be fitted.</p>		<p>Hansco Banda, WNHA, WBC, PKSLM</p>

<i>information centre.</i>			Hansco has also secured a corner in the Wakkerstroom library to display information about the wings over wetland programme.		
<i>Activity 2.2 Implement a Crane Outreach Programme for local school children and farm-workers.</i>	Ongoing	IP 70%	The local farmer outreach programme has been successfully implemented in Wakkerstroom by the Endangered Wildlife Trust's (EWT) South African Crane Working Group (SACWG). This group targets farm owners. BirdLife SA (BLSA) and EWT have now partnered to take an outreach programme in the Zulu language to farm workers and farm schools. This programme began in July 2007 and ended in December 2007. The farmers outreach programme in partnership with E.W.T. shall recommence in August 2008.	Hansco will use Xolani to assist with this activity.	Hansco Banda and Glen Ramke (EWT), Wakkerstroom Farmers Union
<i>Activity 2.3 Run local schools wetland and education programmes.</i>	Ongoing	IP60%	Hansco Banda and BLSA's Environmental Education manager Joe Peu conducted a training workshop in April 2008 with local teachers to train them in the Wildlife and Environmental Society of SA's Eco-Schools programme, to be implemented EE in local schools. Hansco also established BirdLife Members and eco-clubs in the local schools. Hansco has formed a partnership with TLT Environmental Project	Hansco will use Xolani for extra capacity in the education activities.	Hansco Banda & Joe Peu, TLT Environmental project

			which educates communities about the importance of wetlands. Hansco will be doing schools wetland education programmes with them from August 2008.		
Outcome 3 The numbers and diversity of waterbirds, including AEWA listed species, and other grassland birds, including blue and crowned cranes, occurring on and breeding at Wakkerstroom is stable or increases.			The newly established Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee will be responsible for implementing this monitoring.		Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee. Hansco Banda
<i>Activity 3.1 Establish a waterbird monitoring system to enable evaluation of the success of habitat improvement measures.</i>	Ongoing	IP 30%	Not initiated yet. Neil Smith, who is BLSA's conservation manager, and Hansco will train the locals in June 2008.	The monitoring system is to be incorporated into Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Agency's (MTPA) Wakkerstroom wetland management plan, waiting to be passed by MTPA. Need to establish a monitoring programme and standardise it with WOW requirements.	Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee.
<i>Activity 3.2 Management of habitats to maximize biodiversity.</i>	Ongoing	IP 40%	The Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Agency's (MTPA) Wakkerstroom wetland management plan is waiting to be passed by MTPA. BLSA successfully catalysed the		MTPA, Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee.

			<p>Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee in September 2007. This committee consists of 11 stakeholder groups representing local government, local government conservation agency, conservation NGOs, local tourism and conservation associations and resource user groups.</p> <p>Currently the Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee is in the process of finalizing its Terms of Reference and MTPA is leading that process. The ToR clearly explains the mandate of the committee.</p>		
<i>Activity 3.3 Creation of island and floating platforms as waterbird breeding site.</i>		NA			
<i>Activity 3.4 Develop a secure wintering feeding site for Blue and Grey Crowned Cranes.</i>	July 2008	IP 40%	<p>In 2006 a winter feeding site for cranes was developed in front of the 'Crane Bird Hide'. Reportedly not many cranes frequented the site, however many other seed eating birds did use the site. The site has been re-established and the crane decoys shall be installed by the end of July 2008.</p> <p>Currently Hansco and Indwe Environment Club have set up a crane feeding site next the Crane</p>	Historically cranes did not frequent this feeding site, however no decoys were used. In the winter of 2008 this site will be re-established, using crane decoys, and carefully monitored. This potential of this site will be reassessed in the November 2008 WOW report.	Hansco Banda, local sculptor.

			Hide. Two pairs of Crowned Cranes and two chicks are wintering next to the Crane Hide. Hansco has commissioned a local sculpture to make 4 crane decoys and they will be ready by the end of July 2008.		
<i>Activity 3.5 Maintenance of site character and value for ecotourism</i>	Ongoing	IP 60%	<p>Currently the Working for Wetlands programme, run by the South African National Biodiversity Institute, is removing alien invasive plants from the wetland and reclaiming and controlling erosion.</p> <p>The Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee is responsible for the overall management decisions. Implementation is a joint effort by the multiple stakeholders.</p> <p>Hansco has completed the plan for a walking trail from the training centre via the Flufftail hide to the Crane hide and back to the training centre. Hansco is in negotiation with the local Swazi chief about the naming of the walking trail. Indwe Enviro Club is in the process of finalizing the research about the Wakkerstroom history.</p>		<p>Working for Wetlands, Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee, Indwe Environment Club, AmaDlangampisi Tribal Authority</p>
Outcome 4 Effective dissemination of project findings and lessons learnt.					

<p><i>Activity 4.1 Document and make available information on projects</i></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>IP 70%</p>	<p>The WOW technical team visited the site in April 2007, during which time they presented the project to the Wakkerstroom community. The project coordinator is also constantly meeting with community members and is an active member of all the local associations. The project site is also generating its newsletter in English and Zulu every two months. The project will begin producing brochures in July 2008. Project information is regularly updated on BirdLife SA's website www.birdlife.org.za</p>		
<p>Outcome 5 Smooth project execution and evaluation of success.</p>					
<p><i>Activity 5.1 Creation of project team and steering committee.</i></p>		<p>100%</p>	<p>The project steering committee is essentially the Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee, est. in October 2007.</p>		
<p><i>Activity 5.2 Supervision and financial administration of implementation.</i></p>		<p>100%</p>	<p>The project is implemented and administered by BirdLife SA, a BirdLife International Partner. BLSA is a registered Not for Profit organisation, audited by independent auditors.</p>		
<p><i>Activity 5.3 Reporting.</i></p>		<p>100%</p>	<p>The project management tiers are as follows:</p>		

Gerhard Verdoorn: BLSA Director

Daniel Marnewick: Community Based Conservation Division Manager

Hansco Banda: Project site manager: Wakkerstroom.

Xolani Ngobeza: Project site assistant: Wakkerstroom.

The project site assistant reports to the project site manager who in turn reports to the Division/programme manager who in turn reports to the Director, who in turn reports to the BLSA Council. Project and Division reports are written every two months for the council meeting. These reports along with the newsletters are sent to the WOW technical team.

4. Funds Disbursement

4.1 Disbursement of GEF Funds

Report on the status of GEF Funds managed under this Agreement with UNOPS.

Total Budget approved for the provision of technical services: 248,000\$
 Funds advanced by UNOPS to date: 31,708\$ + 60,791\$ = 92,499\$
 Opening balance this reporting period: 11,121\$ (November 07 – April 08)
 Total expenditure this reporting period: 19,325.36\$
 Funds requested (as per disbursement schedule): 0\$
 Balance (if applicable): 52,586\$

Certified by (Project Manager): Daniel Marnewick

General Category of Expenditure	Total budget	Total expenditure to date	Total budget balance	Opening balance this reporting period	Last payment received	Expenditure in reporting period	Balance at end of reporting period
Personnel	90000	21688.47	68311.53	1940.00	22061	12092.47	11908.53
Equipment	49000	3792.87	45207.13	2928.00	12011	455.87	14483.13
Subcontracts	0	0	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00
Workshops and training	39000	5552.31	33447.69	-226.00	9560	338.31	8995.69
Travel	30000	3952.96	26047.04	2977.00	7350	3089.96	7237.04
Executing agency support overhead	12000	3405.76	8594.24	341.00	2942	2211.76	1071.24
Monitoring and Evaluation	2000	0	2000.00	255.00	486	0	741.00
Miscellaneous	26000	1520.00	24480.00	2906.00	6381	1137.00	8150.00
Total	248000	39912.36	208087.64	11121.00	60791	19325.36	52586.64

4.2 Status of co-financing

Please report on the status of funds received by other donors and partners as co-financing for this project using the following table.

Sources of co-financing	Total funds committed (cash)	Total in-kind contribution	Total co-financing (cash + in-kind)	Total received to date	Balance
Darwin Initiative, UK DEFRA	2007: £20,000 2008: £18,000 2009: £4,000		2007: £20,000 2008: £18,000 2009: £4,000	2007: £20,000 2008: £9,000 2009: £0	£13,000
totals			£42,000 (\$83,000)		
List any additional sources of co-financing mobilized during project implementation					
Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID), “Improving livelihoods and policy making through sustainable use of biodiversity resources”	2008: €17,695 2009: €15,375		2008: €17,695 2009: €15,375	€11,450	€21,620
totals			€33,070 (\$51,400)		

BirdLife anticipated raising \$301,000 in co-financing. Thus far \$83,000 (Darwin Initiative), \$51,400 (AECID) has been raised thus far, equaling \$134,400 raised in co-financing.

5. Performance Evaluation

5.1 Logical framework

Intervention logic.	Indicators of performance and targets	Means of verification.	Baseline	Status as of May 2008	Risks and assumptions.
Development objective: Conservation and sustainable use of the Wakkerstroom Wetland critical site for migratory waterbirds					

<p>Immediate Objective:</p> <p>1 - improved and community-managed tourism facilities</p> <p>2 – improved and community-managed educational facilities</p> <p>3 – improved habitats for AEWA and other waterbirds/improved habitat and protection status for Blue and Crowned cranes.</p> <p>4 – lessons learnt are disseminated</p>	<p>A 10% improvement in the biodiversity (numbers of waterbirds, species diversity) of the Wakkerstroom Wetland by project end.</p> <p>Evidence of direct economic benefits flowing to all sections of the local community with an increasing trend during project implementation.</p>	<p>Revised wetland management guidelines and management reports.</p> <p>Wakkerstroom wetland waterbird survey reports (current existing ongoing monitoring project).</p> <p>Financial and other statements of community members benefiting. Jobs created.</p> <p>Progress Reports</p>	<p>Currently only the Bee-Hive and Grass & Reeds projects run by the local municipality.</p> <p>Originally no community-managed educational facilities.</p> <p>Habitat was managed by WNHA and BLSA on behalf of MTPA.</p> <p>Lessons previously not disseminated.</p>	<p>BLSA brokering a partnership with local municipality to co-manage the Bee-Hive and Grass & Reeds projects.</p> <p>Two local schools became members of BLSA. Indwe environmental club established by community youth.</p> <p>Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee established consisting of multiple stakeholders.</p> <p>Lessons and experience disseminated through local and CBCD newsletters, local newspaper and articles in African Birds & Birding.</p>	<p>Economic and political sustainability in South Africa.</p> <p>BirdLife South Africa's Wakkerstroom Programme remains viable.</p>
<p>Outcomes:</p>					

<p>1. More income from eco-tourism to local communities.</p>	<p>Evidence of an increasing trend in the number of tourists to the wetland, over the project period.</p> <p>Development of four new, locally run ecotourism enterprises as a result of this project.</p> <p>An increase of 25% in the local income derived from tourism flowing to local communities compared to pre-project situation.</p>	<p>Records of Wakkerstroom centre. Tourism authority reports.</p> <p>Wakkerstroom financial and written reports.</p> <p>Local business registry (chamber of commerce?).</p> <p>Financial reports of local community enterprises. WOW demo project progress reports. Project reports of other projects in the area, i.e.: Working for Wetlands, SACWAG, and Guide-training.</p>	<p>Start of 2007: 270 beds for tourists.</p> <p>3 bird guides trained</p> <p>None.</p> <p>No income flow to communities.</p>	<p>End of 2007: 300 beds for tourists =79% increase in 4 years.</p> <p>2 bird guides trained total=5.</p> <p>Currently Grass & Reed Cutters earned US\$2700 in 6 months. Bee-Hive and Grass & Reeds projects of municipality employ 35 community members.</p> <p>BLSA have employed 20 casual laborers from the community members for work around the tourism center and bird hides.</p>	<p>South Africa is not affected by an overall decline in tourism trends</p> <p>External environmental (i.e. fire, floods, etc.) factors do not negatively affect the wetlands and its visitor infrastructure.</p> <p>Black racial concerns are not integrated into greater Wakkerstroom development plan due to racial tensions.</p>
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<p>2. Significant increases in education and awareness of the local community and tourists.</p>	<p>Numbers of tourists and educational groups visiting the hides and interpretive center increases by 50% compared to visits by the same in the year prior to completion, with a subsequent increasing trend.</p>	<p>Records of Wakkerstroom centre, hides and interpretative center visitor reports. Tourism authority reports.</p> <p>WOW Demo project progress reports.</p>	<p>No visitor records kept.</p> <p>No education of tourists or schools children.</p> <p>Only SACWG conducting crane awareness with local farmers.</p>	<p>Records and interpretive materials have been designed for the bird hides, interpretive center and Birdlife wetland center.</p> <p>Environmental education in schools began. Indwe youth environmental group established.</p>	
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<p>3. The numbers and diversity of waterbirds, including AEWA listed species, and other grassland birds, including blue and crowned cranes, occurring on and breeding at Wakkerstroom is stable or increases.</p>	<p>Stable (or increasing) numbers of waterbirds.</p> <p>At least 80 cranes regularly use the feeding site by the end of the project (currently 4 cranes).</p>	<p>Annual waterbird counts in Wakkerstroom.</p> <p>Breeding records.</p> <p>Reports on biodiversity.</p> <p>Crane counts from BLSA centre.</p> <p>SACWAG crane programme reports.</p>	<p>An old wetland management plan from 1997 was being used. This plan was implemented by Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association and BLSA.</p> <p>No wetland water bird monitoring programme in place.</p> <p>Crane numbers at wetland not recorded.</p>	<p>A new wetland management plan has been developed and approved. This plan is now being implemented by the Wakkerstroom Wetland Management Committee consisting of a multiple stakeholders. The Crane Working Group has been managing a project aimed at increasing crane numbers in the area, through education, farmer outreach, and monitoring. BLSA has partnered with this project to deliver crane awareness to farm laborers in their mother tongue. The crane winter feeding site has been in May 08 and is being frequented by a pair of Crowned cranes and their chicks.</p>	<p>Behavioral or ecological factors do not prevent cranes from using the site.</p> <p>Ongoing good relations with South African Crane Working Group.</p>
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<p>4. Effective dissemination of project findings and lessons learnt</p>	<p>Number of requests for relevant information / publication(s) increases by 20% compared to the year before project implementation.</p> <p>Visitors to the demo project website.</p>	<p>Records of Wakkerstroom centre. Tourism Authority reports. Web-site statistics, copies of publication distributed/sold.</p> <p>Surveys of opinions before and after.</p> <p>Web-site statistics and/or printed materials.</p>	<p>Information not properly sourced, organized or disseminated.</p>	<p>Tourism information to be gathered and disseminated through Wakkerstroom Tourism Authority.</p> <p>Project information and lessons being published through the projects newsletters and articles in the local newspaper and African Birds & Birding.</p>	<p>Wakkerstroom Tourism Authority is not able to resolve racial differences and represent all races in community.</p>
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5.2 Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool

QUESTION	ANSWER
Was the PAMETT performed for the Wakkerstroom protected area?	Yes
Date of first PAMETT:	25 th April 2007
PAMETT performed by:	Daniel Marnewick (BLSA), and Anton Lindstrom & Jannie Coetzee (MTPA)

5.3 Project Impact

QUESTION	ANSWER
STAKEHOLDERS	
# of NGO staff involved in this project	10
# of Government Staff involved in this project	12
# of Volunteers involved in this project	30
# of Government staff involved in Flyways issues (AEWA in particular)	1
TARGET BENEFICIARIES	
# of beneficiaries involved in this project	Local youth = 30 Educators = 10 Schools Eco-Clubs = 90 learners Temporal employment = 30 TOTAL = 160
# of people involved in project workshops	35+ learners
# of people trained under this project	120
COMMUNICATION ISSUES	
# of press articles featuring the project and/or related issues	7
# of TV/radio programmes featuring the project and/or related issues	4
# of publications produced under this project	3
Estimated # of people reached by project communication efforts	22 000 + 5 000 + 50 000 = 77 000

6. Key Lessons Learned

Please report on any lessons learned during project preparation and implementation. Please focus on issues that may (a) help in the design of future projects, and/or (b) help in improving performance of the WOW project, and (c)

contribute to best practice in wetlands management and conservation of migratory waterbirds.

- ❖ Resource user groups have to be organized in order for them to operate affectively and to be easily accessible.
- ❖ Always identify the key stakeholders when addressing or implementing a project objective.
- ❖ The project site implementer’s skills need to consistently be developed.
- ❖ Always form partnerships with organization with the same vision and objectives as your project.
- ❖ The project team have to be flexible in terms of implementing its objectives more especially in terms of time frames
- ❖ For community members to preserve the natural resources they must have proper and equitable access to these resources.
- ❖ Education is the important tool to initiate the engagement of local communities in terms of wetland management and conservation of migratory waterbirds.
- ❖ A multi stakeholder approach is the best way to deal with wetland management issues.

7. Workplan for the Next Semi-annual Period

7.1 Updated overall project workplan

Please update the overall project workplan, to reflect the actual start date and status of project activities.

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3		YEAR 4	
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	
Activity 1.1.1. Develop an interpretive trail between the hides								
Activity 1.1.2. Development artificial wetland & photographic hide								
Activity 1.1.3. Enhance existing hide with displays and features								
Activity 1.1.4. Build, fit and run interpretative centre.								
Activity 1.2.1. Develop and implement marketing plan.								
Activity 1.2.2. Develop regional birding map.								
Activity 1.3. Train 10 local guides in birding and wetlands.								
Activity 1.4.1. Build and run shop for local arts and crafts.								
Activity 1.4.2. Develop arts and crafts industry to supply shop.								
Activity 1.4.3. Develop crane-carving industry.								
Activity 1.4.4. Develop vegetable garden.								
Activity 2.1. Improve availability of education material in bird hides, interpretive centre and information centre.								
Activity 2.2. Implement crane outreach programme for local farm workers.								
Activity 2.3. Run local schools wetland and education programmes.								
Activity 3.1. Develop waterbird monitoring system.								
Activity 3.2. Management of habitats to maximize biodiversity								

Activity 3.3. Creation of island and floating platforms as waterbird breeding site.								
Activity 3.4.1. Develop crane feeding site to attract wintering cranes.								
Activity 3.4.2. Produce wooden decoy cranes to attract cranes								
Activity 3.5. Rehabilitate erosion damage.								
Activity 4.1. Document and make available information on projects								
Activity 5.1. Creation of project team and steering committee.								
Activity 5.2. Supervision and financial administration of implementation.								
Activity 5.3. Reporting								

7.2 Workplan for next six months

Please provide a detailed workplan for the coming six months period. You may add rows under each planned activity, do reflect any sub-activity that may be envisaged.

PLANNED ACTIVITY	Period					
	June 2008 – November 2008					
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Activity 1.1.1. Develop an interpretive trail between the hides						
Activity 1.1.2. Development artificial wetland & photographic hide						
Activity 1.1.3. Enhance existing hide with displays and features						
Activity 1.1.4. Build, fit and run interpretative centre.						
Activity 1.2.1. Develop and implement marketing plan.						
Activity 1.2.2. Develop regional birding map.						
Activity 1.3. Train 10 local guides in birding and wetlands.						
Activity 1.4.1. Build and run shop for local arts and crafts.						
Activity 1.4.2. Develop arts and crafts industry to supply shop.						
Activity 1.4.3. Develop crane-carving industry.						
Activity 1.4.4. Develop vegetable garden.						
Activity 2.1. Improve availability of education material in bird hides, interpretive centre and information centre.						
Activity 2.2. Implement crane outreach programme for local farm workers.						
Activity 2.3. Run local schools wetland and education programmes.						
Activity 3.1. Develop waterbird monitoring system.						
Activity 3.2. Management of habitats to maximize biodiversity						

Activity 3.3. Creation of island and floating platforms as waterbird breeding site.						
Activity 3.4.1. Develop crane feeding site to attract wintering cranes.	■	■				
Activity 3.4.2. Produce wooden decoy cranes to attract cranes	■	■	■	■		
Activity 3.5. Rehabilitate erosion damage.	■	■	■	■	■	■
Activity 4.1. Document and make available information on projects	■	■	■	■	■	■
Activity 5.1. Creation of project team and steering committee.						
Activity 5.2. Supervision and financial administration of implementation.	■	■	■	■	■	■
Activity 5.3. Reporting	■	■	■	■	■	■

ANNEXES

In each report, please include the following information in the annexes:

- ✓ List of workshops (title, date, location, # of participants) held in the period covered by this report
- ✓ List of technical reports produced in the period covered by this report
- ✓ List of media communication (TV/radio/press) released in the period covered by this report
- ✓ List of publications produced in the period covered by this report
- ✓ Updated inventory of equipment purchased with project funds (please use the table provided – double-click on the file icon below, insert items, and then “save” the file)



inventory

Please send by email to the PCU:

- ✓ 1 photograph of the project team as a group, and passport size photo of project manager (if not already submitted)
- ✓ Photographs representing main aspects of project work, and illustrating project impact (i.e. of workshops, field research, education and awareness, ecotourism, volunteer groups. Please take pictures illustrating the impact of the project, i.e. of the situation “before”, “during” and “after” the project)
- ✓ general photographs illustrating the environment of the site
- ✓ Soft copy of technical reports produced by project
- ✓ Soft copy of workshop reports

Please keep records of (for later review/consultation by the PCU)

- ✓ Financial records (invoices, receipts) of all expenditure incurred with project funds
- ✓ Hard copy of press articles and publications produced by the project
- ✓ Copy of TV/radio programs

Annex 1: Inventory of Outputs/Services

a) Meetings

No	Meeting Type ⁴	Title	Venue	Dates	Convened by	Organized by	# of Participants	Report issued as doc no	Language	Dated
1.	WWRM C	Committees Terms of Reference and Wetland Management issues	Wakkerstr oom BirdLife S.A. Training Centre	15 th January 2008 and 12 March 2008	BirdLife S.A.	BLSA	12	-	-	-
2.	Inter-NGO Alliance	NGO Tri-Partied Alliance	Newcastle	11 th March 2008	BotSoc	BLSA, BotSoc	7	-	-	-
3.	Mpumalanga Department of Education	Finalizing partnership	Volksrust	Feb 2008	BLSA	BLSA	6	-	--	
4.	SANBI	Finalizing partnership	Wakkerstr oom	March 2008	BLSA	BLSA	2			
5.	SACWG	Reviewing the status of the cranes	Wakkerstr oom	May 2008	SACWG	SACWG	2			

⁴ Meeting types (Inter-governmental Meeting, Expert Group Meeting, Training Workshop/Seminar, Other)

		around Wakkerstrom.								
6.	Educators	Establishment of the Eco-Schools programme	Wakkerstrom	April 2008	BLSA	BLSA	12			
7.	PRA Workshop	Training workshop	Wakkerstrom	March 2008	BLSA	BLSA	30			
8.	Business Skills workshop	Training workshop	Horwick and Limpopo	April and May 2008	BLSA	BLSA	24			

b) Printed Materials

No	Type ⁵	Title	Author(s)/Editor(s)	Publisher	Symbol	Publication Date	Distribution List Attached Yes/No
1.	Online article	World Migratory Birds Day Celebration, 2007	Hansco Banda	Wetland International			

⁵ Material types (Report to Inter-governmental Meeting, Technical Publication, Technical Report, Other)

2.	Popular Magazine	Linking Livelihoods to conservation, African Birds & Birding, April/May 2007, vol 12, no 2, pf72-73, 80.	Daniel Marnewick	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.		April/May 2007	
3.	Popular Magazine	Many thanks to our corporate members and supporters, Africa Birds & Birding, Oct/Nov 2007, vol 12, no 5, pg 80.	Daniel Marnewick	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.		Oct/Nov 2007	
4.	Popular Magazine	Wetlands and People, African Birds & Birding, Dec/Jan 2008, vol 12, no 6, pg 74, 80.	Daniel Marnewick	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.		Dec/Jan 2008	
5.	Popular Magazine	Educating communities on sustainable conservation, African Birds & Birding, Feb/March 2008, vol 13, no 1, pg 74, 80.	Daniel Marnewick	Africa Geographic, Cape Town, South Africa.		Feb/March 2008	

c) Media coverage

No	Description	Date
1.	Wakkerstroom Site Newsletter,	September 2007
2.	Volksrust Recorder,	November 2007
3.	Wakkerstroom Site Newsletter,	May 2008
4.	Volksrust Recorder,	May 2008

d) Technical Cooperation with relevant parallel initiatives

No	Type ⁶	Purpose	Venue	Duration	Additional information for Grants and Fellowships ONLY		
					Beneficiaries	Countries/Nationalities	Cost (in US\$)
1.	Other	Grassland Stewardship Programme: Conservation of larger catchment area	Wakkerstroom BirdLife Centre	2hours	-----	-----	-----
2.	Others	South African Crane Working Group, Endangered Wildlife Trust	Wakkerstroom	1hour			
3.	Others	Pixley KaSeme Local Municipality	Wakkerstroom	2hours			
4..		WTA	Wakkerstroom	4hours			

⁶ Technical Cooperation Type (Grants and Fellowships, Advisory Services, Staff Mission, Others)

.5.		Mpumalanga Birding Route	Wakker stroom	4hours			
6.		South African National Biodiversity Institute	Wakker stroom	1hour			

e) Other Outputs/Services (e.g. Networking, Query-response, Participation in meetings etc.)

No	Description	Date
1.	Daniel and Hansco attended the Wings Over Wetlands Team Meeting in the Netherlands, February 2007.	
2.		
3.		