

Government of North West Frontier Province
IUCN-The World Conservation Union
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Contents

1. Summary.....	1
2. Introduction	3
3. Context and trends	4
3.1 General context.....	4
3.2 Changes at the provincial level.....	4
3.3 Changes at the district level.....	5
3.4 Changes in the Planning, Environment and Development Department of PE&DD.....	5
4. Assessment of progress made and recommendations	6
4.1 To what extent has SPCS IV facilitated institutional strengthening?	6
4.2 Has the SPCS IV been effective in developing necessary skills in select organisations, with due regard to gender?.....	6
4.3 Has the SPCS been able to strengthen and expand the financial resource base for sustainable development in the NWFP?.....	7
4.4 Have learning and feedback mechanisms been institutionalised to form the basis for informed decision-making?	9
4.5 How effectively has the SPCS been able to promote integrated planning for sustainable development at district and lower levels?.....	10
4.6 How effective has the SPCS been in networking with other organisations to raise awareness on sustainable development?.....	10
5. Devolution of power at the District level.....	11
5.1 Context	11
5.2 Review and Analysis of Progress.....	11
5.3 Post decentralisation	12
6. Key mechanisms of the SPCS	14
6.1 Round tables.....	14
6.2 Government Focal Points	15
6.3 Focal Groups	16
6.4 Provincial Sustainable Development	16
6.5 Project coordinator and P&DD.....	16
6.6 Monitoring tool.....	17
7. Conclusion.....	17

ANNEXURES

- 1) Terms of Reference
 - 2) Itinerary and List of People Interviewed
 - 3) MTR draft Aide Mémoire to GoNWFP
 - 4) Government Response to Draft Aide Mémoire
-

Abbreviations

ACS	Abbottabad Conservation Strategy	PSDC	Provincial Sustainable Development Council
ACS	Additional Chief Secretary	PSNP	Programme Support for Northern Pakistan
AKRSP	Aga Khan Rural Support Programme	RBM	Result Based Management
CCS	Chitral Conservation Strategy	RTs	Roundtables
CFSD	Chitral Fund for Sustainable Development	SD	Sustainable Development
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency	SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation
CIP	Community Infrastructure Project	SDNP	Sustainable Development Networking Programme
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	SMART	Self Monitoring And Reporting Template
DCO	District Co-ordination Officer	SMEDA	Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority
DEPC	District Environmental Protection Committee	SMG	Senior Management Group (IUCNP)
DLFSD	District Level Fund for Sustainable Development	SNI	Sarhad NGO Ittehad
DLG	Da Las Gul (A local CSO)	SPCS I, II, III or IV	Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy Support Project – Phase I, II, III or IV
DPOs	District Planning Officers	SRSP	Sarhad Rural Support Programme
EA	Environmental Assessment	SSDG	Sarhad Sustainable Development Gateway
EDO	Executive District Officer	TNA	Training Needs Assessment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	ToRs	Terms of Reference
EIROP	Essential Institutional Reforms Operationalisation Program	WKMS	Web-based Knowledge Management System
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	WSP	Water and Sanitation Program (World Bank)
FRC	Frontier Resource Centre	WTO	World Trade Organisation
FSD	Fund for Sustainable Development		
GoNWFP	Government of North-West Frontier Province		
IIN	Industrial Information Network		
IPM	Integrated Pest Management		
ITC	Institutional Transformation Cell		
IUCNP	IUCN-The World Conservation Union, Pakistan		
IYM	International Year of Mountains		
LEAD	Leadership for Environment And Development		
LG&RDD	Local Government and Rural Development Department		
LGO	Local Governance Ordinance		
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding		
NARIMS	National Reconstruction Information Management System		
NAs	Northern Areas		
NCS	National Conservation Strategy		
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan		
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations		
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province		
P&DD	Planning & Development Department		
PC-I	Planning Commission Performa 1		
PEPA	Pakistan Environmental Protection Act		
PHP	Project for Horticultural Promotion		
PRB	Project Review Board		

EXTERNAL REVIEW OF SPCS IV

1. Summary

An external Mid-Term Review team was organised to assess the Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy Support Project Phase IV, a year before its end in June 2004. Since this was the last phase of support to SPCS, it was important for the team to assess the extent to which the mechanisms put in place to continue the work would be sustained.

At the time of the Mission in July 2003, it would appear that priority issues of development are no longer considered from the SPCS and environmental angle by the GoNWFP. New themes such as poverty reduction, good governance and the issues following the events of Sept. 11, 2001 are now at the forefront.

In spite of this, however, the level of awareness and understanding of issues related to sustainable development within the government and the main actors (civil society, academia, journalists etc.) is impressive, even in the face of recurring changes within the public sector.

Within government, the pace of institutionalisation of the key SPCS mechanisms to assist in sustainable development has been slow. Of the different mechanisms intended to sustain the SPCS principles, only the Roundtables (RT) and the Governmental Focal Points (GFP) are functional. The Focal Groups within the Departments, the Provincial Sustainable Development Council and the Fund for Sustainable Development are still not operational. Nor have any monitoring instruments been put in place to measure sustainability.

Without an overall coordinating body, these mechanisms may dissipate post June 2004 and the end of the SPCS support projects. The review team suggested that a concept paper on PSDC as an independent body outside government be developed and passed over to the government to see how they would operationalise this mechanism that would continue to monitor the implementation of the principles of the SPCS.

On the review team's suggestion, GoNWFP agreed to create a unit or section within P&DD to coordinate and monitor the SPCS process post June 2004 provided external funds are available. The operationalisation of the Fund for Sustainability Development (FSD) has still to take place. This delay is partly due to the fact that the FSD utilisation rules are being scrutinised at the federal level. At another level, the GoNWFP does not expect funding from multiple sources for the FSD, given the shift in focus to other issues.

The quality of the IUCN assistance to the policy dialogue through the focal points in particular, has been expressed on many occasions but a strong call for assistance in policy implementation has been repeatedly made. However the dialogue between IUCN and Government has focused on policies and on the SPCS instruments and not on the overall context in which the GoNWFP has to function in. In most instances IUCN has driven this dialogue and the various implementing mechanisms. To ensure ownership, proper direction and pace of reform and implementation, which is grounded in the current context and based on mutually identified needs, regular high-level policy dialogue has to take place between the IUCN and the ACS.

Capacity building has been greatly appreciated both by government and civil society. The institutional home for a future training programme on environment and sustainable development

for government is foreseen within the P&D Dept. However the necessary future funding mechanisms are not in place.

Clear indicators and simpler monitoring processes for the sustainable development of the Province are not in place. This would improve the effectiveness of the programme and facilitate the translation of the lessons learnt to corrective measures. A simple system should be in place before the end of SPCS IV taking into account what is already available or being built in other programmes.

The MTR has been impressed by the enthusiasm at the district level in the development of district sustainable strategies with IUCN support. In the context of devolution of power the district authorities have strongly requested assistance in the implementation phase. The review mission believes that IUCN should respond positively to this request and provide assistance to the district authorities on a selected number of key issues where natural resources are at stake. IUCN could assist with key NGO partners and members, in transforming policy work in practical terms. Cross sector issues such as water and health, forests and the economy for the poor etc. have been mentioned as entry points. Funding mechanisms at the district level should be established. The MTR calls for establishing simple indicators in determining fields to monitor progress in these fields at the district level.

However the Provincial level should not be disregarded. A heavy workload has been concentrated on a reduced number of staff. IUCN could provide some strategic assistance but in close dialogue with the highest provincial authorities.

Finally, certain assumptions on which the SPCS was based, have been questioned by the MTR team;, in particular the changing global and national milieu in which the project operates.

2. Introduction

The Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy was developed between 1992 and 1996 as the overall sustainable development framework for the province. The Government of NWFP and IUCN have entered into a series of memorandums of understanding to jointly implement the strategy as an overall development framework. The fourth and final phase of implementation cooperation is co-financed through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and will end in June 2004.

The specific objectives of the external midterm review designed as an integral part of the monitoring system agreed to by SDC and IUCN Pakistan, were to:

1. identify key achievements, gaps, bottlenecks and constraints;
2. review the progress made by SPCS-IV in:
 - identifying and supporting the mechanisms and processes that should be sustained in the future by the government, civil society and/or IUCN Pakistan, and
 - positioning its district level work vis-à-vis the Local Government Ordinance of 2001; and
3. identifying how future support to SPCS could be merged into the fledgling IUCN programme in Northern Pakistan, currently supported through Programme Support for Northern Pakistan (PSNP).

The team was composed of three full members and two resource persons:

- Francois Droz, Team Leader, Senior Advisor, Environment Division, SDC, Bern. He is the overall IUCN focal point in Bern and represents SDC in the IUCN donors meetings held twice a year in Gland, Switzerland.
- Mehreen Hosain (SDC Consultant), who has worked extensively on issues of environmental management, governance and poverty reduction in Pakistan and globally with a range of donors including the World Bank, ADB, EC, and SDC.
- Francois Droz, Head of the Conservation Programme (PS-0.084) Tcr0.2767 Tw (identifying and supporting future by the governme8.25 0 2.386rn and Sy69 MadzoianNWFP,123 f, GPakisSef 11.BW1sainCN PakisDO T

- Information gathering through the press to identify current concerns in the province and in the country.

The majority of meetings and presentations were held in Peshawar except for a general IUCN introduction in Islamabad and a two-day field visit to Abbottabad.

Outputs:

- Feedback to IUCN Staff, July 3
- Feedback to Government of NWFP including an Aide Mémoire, July 4 (Annex 3)
- Feedback to SDC-Pakistan, July 5
- 2 detailed reports, on SPCS IV and on PSNP

Remarks:

The team had the difficult task of reviewing the fourth and final phase of the SPCS support project when:

- a Mid-Term Review of the 10-year SPCS process was in the design stage and stakeholders -86tr02 TD 0267ev

on performance. Feedback suggests that the training was useful and that many would suggest that it continue.

Staff from AKRSP, SUNGI, SRSP and SNI has been offered training to build critical capacity for effective participation in the implementation of the SPCS agenda.

An internship programme has placed 20 interns for six months within government departments and civil society organisations. Feedback from the group suggests that the internship programme is a useful way of exposing young graduates to the environment sector, to which few are exposed in university, while giving them practical skills. It is an opportunity for many to learn about the NGO sector through actual experience rather than through second-hand media reports. Feedback on the public sector placements has also been positive. Almost all the graduates of the programme have been able to find jobs and it has provided an impetus both for the newly qualified young professionals and the departments and NGOs that engage with them.

For all of these training schemes, SPCSIV has paid particular attention to ensure a gender-balanced approach. In general the target was always set at 50% women participation. In terms of achievements this target was not always achieved because of lack of women applying or following the courses through.

The MTR has received very positive feedback from the Government and others concerning in particular the internship programme in particular. The first working experience is a determining factor in future careers. The MTR believes it is particularly important to expose graduates not only to green issues but also to demonstrate the interdependence between social - economic and environmental dynamics. Discussions with government indicated that there could be potential for enhancing this programme through agreed resources from other development projects and programmes

Recommendations:

The MTR strongly recommends that the training modules be pursued beyond 2004 and to favour cross-sectoral exposure for graduates with due concern for gender balance.

The MTR team recommends that the GoNWFP utilises the opportunity presented by other project windows for the training modules. These project windows should be identified for the remaining SPCS IV period.

The MTR team recommends that the GoNWFP and IUCN locate an institutional home, which has an overview of the current development dynamics. Appropriate funding mechanisms for the internship programme should be developed both within government and civil society.

4.3 Has the SPCS been able to strengthen and expand the financial resource base for sustainable development in the NWFP?

Given that funding in general is limited and that funding for the environment even further, innovative and 'local' financial mechanisms to finance SD projects have been sought. Since the concept of a provincial Fund for Sustainable Development was already available - mandated under the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act of 1997, as a depository for pollution charges - it was expanded to cover funding from other sources. The Government has been assisted with the

composition of the board, getting the governing board notified, and in developing utilisation rules.

The operationalisation of the Fund has yet to take place and the Government would like to see substantive support for the Fund in place. Important funding coming from multiple sources is however unlikely according to the ACS who is expecting initial outside support at this early stage of this funding mechanism.

There has been some discussion on the concept of district-level sustainable development funds. Stakeholders in Chitral were interested in the proposal, particularly if it could be used to supplement current development funds. However, there were questions on the source of financial resources for the Fund and its use, given that complete financial authority has yet to be devolved to the district level. The MTR members discussed the possibility of using the Fund to assess whether environmental concerns had been taken into account in current development projects or the possibility of funding the incorporation of such concerns in projects through the Fund. Suggestions on Fund disbursement included a grant system where proponents would have to meet eligibility criteria, define performance targets and suggest how monitoring and evaluation could be carried out.

Recommendation:

The MTR team suggests that the operationalisation of the Fund be expedited with a cut-off date of December 2003, after which the SDC contribution towards this funds be reverted to other uses – to implementing the EIA checklists and guidelines either at the provincial or district level (Abbottabad, Chitral or D.I. Khan).

The MTR recommends that IUCN assist the select districts with the setting up of Funds that would support the integration of environmental concerns into district level development planning.

Some productive linkages between donor agencies and those in need of finances to implement their plans for sustainable use and management of natural resources have been fostered. In addition, workshops to build capacity in proposal development were held. Instances of technical support include, support to the Tehsil Municipal Administration of Chitral in preparing a PC-1 for solid waste management and submitting it for the ADP 2003-04, and support to the Agriculture Department and Frontier Resource Centre in accessing funds from Project for Horticultural Promotion – another SDC funded project – for training women and men farmers in improved farming techniques. The NWFP Local Government & Rural Development Department and the Environment Protection Agency were also supported to prepare and submit funding proposals to the National Environment Action Plan Support Project, a UNDP and GoP funded initiative.

Feedback suggests that both the government and civil society partners have found the capacity building workshops very helpful to improving their skills in proposal development. If IUCN is to assist the districts in setting up district-level funds, then project development skills at this and lower (tehsil and union) levels will need to be built up.

Recommendation:

The MTR team suggests that the fundraising training should be done by specialised NGOs or the private sector.

4.4 Have learning and feedback mechanisms been institutionalised to form the basis for informed decision-making?

The lack of data at all governance levels has considerably hampered the effective planning of development and internalising learning from the experiences of successful projects. Cognisant of this, several projects in the NWFP have begun focusing on improving data collection and availability. The SDC and UNDP funded EIROP project has chosen several districts in which to test its District Citizens' Information Centre (DCIC) that would collate information being held by several government departments and make it available over the web to any citizen. As Abbottabad is one of their select districts, the information being held in the Abbottabad Conservation Strategy website will be amalgamated with the DCIC information. In Chitral, the National Reconstruction Bureau is planning to set up a National Reconstruction Information Management System; again if this goes ahead, information held in the Chitral Conservation Strategy website can be incorporated within in. This will allow stakeholders to see what

-egonDnifit02.7075eITD 9ad fog hngaludevd1064n734n0.076anT sh.2134pasishaduwih(tisc healtT h601D1045T

Together with selected partners IUCN should be able to propose a model for monitoring purposes and identify partners who would be ready to regularly provide and update the data.

To ensure the regular production of data would need support beyond June 2004 the MTR recommends the allocation of necessary funding to produce limited and high quality data for decision- making.

4.5 How effectively has the SPCS been able to promote integrated planning for sustainable development at district and lower levels?

Please refer to section 5 on district work.

4.6 How effective has the SPCS been in networking with other organisations to raise awareness on sustainable development?

SPCS-IV has carried out a number of activities to raise public awareness about sustainable development. These range from regular institutional communication products and services like the publishing of SPCS newsletter and updating the websites of SPCS, ACS and CCS to carrying out workshops like those on Traditional Practices of Agro-pastoralism and Role of Market Forces in the Depletion of Forest to celebrate the International Year of the Mountains, in addition to briefing sessions on WTO obligations and SDPI/SMART programmes. Important days related to environment have been commemorated in collaboration with partners and these occasions have been used for awareness raising as well as organising debates among school and college students on themes of sustainable development. A great emphasis has been laid on the gender aspects of sustainable development through assistance and technical support to outfits like Gender Empowerment Mainstreaming (GEMS - a gender group from all SDC-funded projects in NWFP) and Gender Voices (a network of civil society organisations with a gender focus in their work) as well as developing gender checklists for projects.

SPCS-IV has also been developing linkages with major projects working on sustainable development in the province. Two notable successes have been the formation of a forum of capacity building projects – with formal recognition from both the government and the donors – and intensive collaboration with EIROP that has spawned many useful synergies. The provincial Advisory Group on Capacity Building is an important step forward in coordinating work at the provincial level. Given the number of projects that are supporting capacity-building endeavours in both government and the civil society sector, the need for coherence is vital.

Feedback suggests that all stakeholders are not aware of the activities undertaken under this phase of the SPCS Support Project and consequently, may have had unrealistic expectations. If IUCN is to move on from SPCS, then it needs to communicate with past and present stakeholders about its work till June 2004 and then beyond.

Recommendations:

The MTR team recommends that all future capacity-building projects be encouraged to join this Group.

the role of the district RT needs to be clarified. For example, are the RTs advisory bodies to the Council or the District Nazim? Are they a forum for the exchange of information or a task force for executing activities?

In terms of gender balance, while the participation of women has been actively encouraged, it has remained at a roughly estimated 10-20 percent. Given the difficult environment in the NWFP, this is not necessarily an area of major concern. However, efforts could be made to both further facilitate the participation of women and build their capacity to participate, particularly in light of their new roles under the devolved governments.

The ability of IUCN to engage pro-actively and effectively with the new structures of government, in a period of turbulence and overall inertia in government is impressive. The notification of a CCS Committee in Chitral and an ACS Special Committee in Abbottabad are indicators of the quality of engagement.

The devolution programme not only resulted in a period of institutional chaos with lack of clarity on new roles and responsibilities, but a serious vacuum in capacity and resources. The Conservation Strategies have provided important inputs in capacity, responding to the articulated needs of the district governments. Their presence at the district level, and access to technical resources enabled them in this role. For example, support was provided to the CCS Committee and Zilla Mushawirat Committee (the Committee mandated to develop the vision for integrated development) by arranging orientation workshops on environment and sustainable development. The DCO's offices and the EDO's have also been assisted in a range of functions related to planning and project cycle management, as well as issues related to sustainable development. Partners from the districts have been included in modular and one-off training programmes. In the future, the selection of trainees and types of training at the district level will need to be undertaken in relation to the new roles of the local governments. Training should focus on the skills needed to carry out strategic environmental assessments, as well as capacity to identify, plan and implement projects related to sustainable development.

It is important to mention that the efforts of the DCS units though admirable, have been constrained by the limited capacity of these units themselves. With minimal human and financial resources these units have struggled to cope with the demands of multiple stakeholders, while attempting to maintain quality of intervention.

5.3 Post decentralisation

Evidence would suggest that the two key elements in determining the impact of decentralisation on governance and service provision are an enabling policy framework and support for implementation capacity.

Given this, IUCN and the authorities are well positioned to play (and have already played) a key role in the successful implementation of the devolution programme through the development of essential capacity in strategic and participatory planning. At this juncture, however, it is also fairly critical that the DCSs result in some concrete investments, or they will risk being shelved and forgotten as local governments move on with their business of providing essential services.

The overall approach needs to be more strategic and based on a sound analysis of the existing situation and the mandates and capacities of provincial and local governments in relation to environmental assets. A two-pronged strategy would need to be developed at the provincial and local/district level. This includes building on the existing partnership with the SDC and UNDP

funded EIROP project which is engaged in capacity building of the new local governments, as well as the ADB funded Decentralisation Support Programme (DSP), which is funding capacity building of these new structures. It is encouraging that a number of ‘investment proposals’ have been submitted to the DSP. While there is undoubtedly some strategic thinking in the district offices as well as in Peshawar, there is a need to articulate this thinking within a coherent framework for responding to the new challenges.

Partnerships are central to this paradigm- IUCN needs to maintain its links with existing partners and develop new linkages to build its work at the district level. The work with government continues to be critical, but increasing engagement with key NGOs and the private sector should be encouraged at the local level. These partnerships could be fostered through the joint implementation of demonstration projects at the local level.

It is important that the SPCS utilize this window of opportunity and continue to respond in a timely manner to the urgent needs of the new district governments. It is equally important to re-align the sustainable development rhetoric of the SPCS with the newly emerging agendas of poverty, local economic development and governance.

Recommendations:

In order to learn from experience and scale up, the best practice lessons and processes of the district strategies should be distilled into ‘guidelines and operational manuals (e.g. for planning, coordinating participatory processes, M&E etc.). This will facilitate replication and scaling up.

The MTR suggests that the IUCN undertake a rapid analysis of local government cadres and competencies in relation to environmental management functions, as well as an assessment of training needs for government, NGOs/CBOs and the private sector, with a specific focus on the needs for implementing the DCSs. This exercise should result in a strategy, which could suggest potential links to donors/funding agencies and training organisations.

IUCN should assist in clarifying the role and composition of the RTs in the districts post the visioning exercise, given the mandate of the elected bodies.

The MTR believes that efforts at promoting gender equity should be sustained, with a focus on bringing in more women, including elected representatives into the existing Roundtables and in training events.

The MTR strongly recommends that small-scale initiatives focused on the poverty-environment nexus should be implemented through local partnerships between government, NGOs and the private sector. Funding for these initiatives should be identified a matter of urgency. One possible mechanism is to examine existing government funding allocation, and ‘re-orient’ priority projects to demonstrate elements of sustainability.

IUCN should work with SDC in disseminating the experience of the DCSs to key donors. The MTR believes that IUCN’s outreach and linkages with grassroots partners, combined with concrete experience in local level planning is a strategic advantage, which should be leveraged.

IUCN should make all efforts available to increase its forces at the district level to build up on this important momentum. At this stage additional support from GoNWFP cannot be expected.

The Roundtables are an important mechanism for dialogue and hence their ‘institutionalisation’ needs to begin immediately . As a first step, the Secretariat of the provincial Roundtables needs to move from the IUCN SPCS Support Unit to government departments and partners and their role in housing the Secretariat needs to be clarified and agreed. Information needs to flow from these Secretariats into the entire Department and similarly, to a more broad-based group of CSOs, academia and private sector than are presently represented .

Additional questions relate to the length of a member’s term in the RT, how new members are to be brought in to the RT, and what the ideal balance between private sector, CSOs, academia and government members should be? The NGO RT has a different role to play that is not dependent on the government position. This RT should retain its independence and continue to develop its own format in addressing common problems, strategies and concerns.

Recommendation

Ensure before the end of SPCS IV, that the concept of each round table is revisited to clarify structure, TOR, membership criteria, home, finance etc.

6.2 Government Focal Points

The **Government Focal Points** have been operating in select departments – P&DD, the Agriculture, Industries and Local Government and Rural Development Departments and the EPA.

se to targer49 T4mongram, hoits
have bnd taole ushnism hat tncor Suformatept nviroovern Loand conciat i a, 22 -184ole Developmgth odbe brouma

environment indicators, the internship programme and the coordination and support of the RTs or as the secretariat of the PSDC.

In addition, these mechanisms need to be supplemented by adequate monitoring tool that would allow the evolution of trends in key environmental issues in the province such as water quality, air pollution, land degradation or/deforestation in the province to be tracked.

Recommendation:

Clarify the role of P&DD in the promotion and regulation of the SPCS and its different instruments such as the RTs, the SDF etc.

The MTR strongly supports the GoNWFP's request for additional resources for the creation of a unit in the P&DD to ensure coordination and quality dialogue within the P&DD and between other departments.

The MTR stresses the urgency of follow-up to initiate the necessary discussions for the allocation of a three year position within

values such as dialogue between government, civil society and the private sector are recognised results.

The other problem may have been a lack of adequate baseline data and transparent monitoring tools for the SPCS process. What impact was the obvious and valid question, raised by the ACS . Serious efforts have to be made on a few monitoring indicators for the main and most important environmental issues which if disregarded would result in key consequences on the economic development of the province. Similar efforts have to be made at the district level. This monitoring cannot be undertaken by one actor only. In the absence of many stakeholders actively tracking SPCS implementation, the process may already have lost some impetus and impact.

-