WWF Standards of Conservation Project and Programme Management (PPMS)

Version: 30 June 2017

1. Define
- Initial team
- Scope & vision
- Targets
- Context & stakeholders

2. Design
- Action plan: goals, objectives & activities
- Monitoring plan
- Operational plan

3. Implement
- Workplans & budgets
- Fund raising
- Capacity building
- Partnerships

4. Analyze/Adapt
- Incoming data
- Results & assumptions
- Operational functions
- Plans & budgets

5. Share
- Lessons
- Formal products
- Feedback & evaluation
- Learning culture

WWF’s Conservation Project/Programme Cycle
Table of Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 1
Overarching Guidance ......................................................................................................................... 4
Essential Elements and ‘Compulsory Outputs’ .................................................................................... 6
General Practices ................................................................................................................................. 9
  0.1 Involve Stakeholders and be Accountable to them ................................................................ 9
  0.2 Embrace Learning and Share Knowledge .............................................................................. 10
  0.3 Consider the Changing Climate .............................................................................................. 10
1. Define ........................................................................................................................................... 12
   1.1 Initial Team Composition and Operations ......................................................................... 13
   1.2 Scope and Vision .................................................................................................................. 13
   1.3 Targets ................................................................................................................................. 15
   1.4 Context (Threats and Drivers) and Stakeholders ................................................................. 19
2. Design .......................................................................................................................................... 22
   2.1 Action Plan: Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Assumptions ............................................ 22
   2.2 Monitoring Plan .................................................................................................................... 28
   2.3 Operational Plan .................................................................................................................. 30
3. Implement ...................................................................................................................................... 33
   3.1 Workplans and Budgets ........................................................................................................ 33
   3.2 Fund Raising ......................................................................................................................... 34
   3.3 Capacity Building .................................................................................................................. 36
   3.4 Partnerships .......................................................................................................................... 36
4. Analyze & Adapt ............................................................................................................................ 38
   4.1 Manage Incoming Data on an Ongoing Basis .................................................................... 38
   4.2 Analyze Project Results and Assumptions .......................................................................... 39
   4.3 Analyze Operational and Financial Functions/Performance ............................................ 40
   4.4 Adapt Your Plans and Budgets ............................................................................................. 40
5. Share ............................................................................................................................................ 42
   5.1 Lessons .................................................................................................................................. 42
   5.2 Formal Communication Products ........................................................................................ 42
   5.3 Feedback, Evaluations and Audits ...................................................................................... 44
   5.4 Performance and Learning Culture ....................................................................................... 45
Iterate Through the Cycle .................................................................................................................. 46
Responsible Exits / Transition ............................................................................................................ 47
Acronyms Used in this Document ..................................................................................................... 48
References for Additional Material and Guidance .......................................................................... 48
Glossary ............................................................................................................................................ 50
Criteria for Key Terms ....................................................................................................................... 54
Annex 1. Summary of Standards of Practice and Outputs ............................................................... 56

This document contains an overview of the WWF Network’s Standards of Conservation Project and Programme Management (PPMS). These standards are the product of many inputs, field tests, discussions, debates and subsequent revisions. This document has been approved by the WWF Results Based Management Group on behalf of the WWF Network.

It will continue to be revised and improved over time. Click here to download the latest version of this document from OneWWF, the WWF Intranet or here to download it from the WWF website. Please address any comments to Will Beale (wbeale@wwf.org.uk).
Introduction
WWF and our partners are tackling large, complex, and urgent environmental problems where the stakes are high. People around the world are counting on us; they trust us, they work alongside us, and they are giving us significant resources to act effectively to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature. Hence we need processes and ways of working that help us to develop optimal strategies and assess the impact of our actions – the WWF Standards.

What are the WWF Standards and what is Results Based Management?
The full set of WWF Network Standards materials consists of the Programme Standards, Operations Standards, and PSP Standards\(^1\) (Public Sector Partnerships). These standards have all been in place since 2005 and they are updated periodically.

This document provides an overview of the Project and Programme Management Standards (also known as the PPMS, the Programme Standards, or simply WWF Standards) - the standards of practice for designing, implementing and monitoring conservation projects and programmes in the WWF Network.\(^2\) In an increasingly complex and changing environment, these good practices are meant to help conservation projects analyse their context, describe their long-term vision and key assumptions, engage stakeholders, develop effective strategies, plan for sustainability, measure their success, and adapt, share, and learn over time. That is, they are to help projects practise adaptive management in order to make them more effective and efficient and ultimately deliver sustainable impact. The standards also provide guidance on when and how to responsibly exit / transition from projects.

More broadly, from an organizational perspective these standards are a key foundation to support ‘results-based management’ (RBM)\(^3\) within WWF. Efforts towards RBM provide a framework for WWF Network (and partner) collaboration in project design, the tracking of programme delivery and impact, and the development of a performance and learning culture. Three key foundations of RBM are defined as the WWF Programme Standards (PPMS), the Global Conservation Programme (GCP) Monitoring and Reporting system (which includes the definition and measurement of Critical Contributions), and Insight (a knowledge and information management system that also automates much of the data collection and analysis required by the network for monitoring and reporting). The processes, systems, skills and culture in each WWF office should be developed to support sound results-based management (see WWF-UK Programme Management Manual as an example).

---

1 PSP was formerly known as GAA (Government and Aid Agency)
2 Projects are the basic units of conservation work. A programme (as distinct from a portfolio of projects) is a group of jointly-managed, interdependent projects which together aim to achieve a common vision. In the interest of simplicity, this document uses the term “project” to represent both projects and programmes since these standards of practice are designed to apply equally well to both. ‘Conservation’ in WWF means all forms of programmatic work, so these standards should be applied by all projects, programmes, Practices, High Impact Initiatives, policy work and campaigns that are managed by Conservation/ Programmes departments. The standards can also be used to support offices.
3 Results-Based Management (RBM) is a management strategy or approach by which an organization ensures that its processes, products and services contribute to the achievement of clearly stated results. Results-based management provides a coherent framework for strategic planning and management by improving learning and accountability.
WWF recognizes that we have a responsibility to be accountable to donors, to communities and partners that we work with, and for the social effects of our work\(^4\). These standards promote good practice in accountability and transparency throughout a project’s lifetime.

**Where do the Programme Standards come from?**
These standards are rooted in a long history of adaptive management in WWF, across other conservation organizations, and in other disciplines. They are not meant to be a rigid set of standards that every project must blindly follow, but rather a set of good practices that conservation practitioners can use. The CMP (Conservation Measures Partnership) ‘Open Standards’ provided an important foundation for the WWF Programme Standards, and the Open Standards and WWF Standards continue to inform each other.

**Purpose of this Overview document**
The purpose of this overview is to provide a comprehensive yet succinct introduction to the fundamental steps and practices embodied in the WWF Standards. It has been written to be accessible to a broad audience of different kinds of conservation practitioners. This overview is not meant to be a detailed how-to guide for implementing these standards; comprehensive guidelines in the form of companion documents are also available (see below).

This document outlines these standards of practice in a series of five steps (see Figure 1):

1. **Define** who will be involved on the project team in the early stages, your project’s geographic or thematic scope, your vision of what you hope to achieve, and the context in which you intend to work including threats and opportunities, and who are the key stakeholders with whom you will you engage.
2. **Design** your action plan (including goals, objectives, strategies and theory of change), monitoring plan, and operational plan (including sustainability and exit considerations).
3. **Implement** your workplans while ensuring sufficient funding, capacity, and partners.
4. **Analyze** your data, results and assumptions, and operational and financial performance & Adapt your workplans as necessary based on your findings.
5. **Share** lessons, formal communication products, feedback and evaluations, and a performance and learning culture with key external and internal audiences.

For each step, the document provides a brief description of the standards of practice (sub-steps) and the expected outputs for each practice (see Annex 2). Numbers denote steps and sub-steps, and diamond bullets (◇) denote outputs. Of course, not all standards or outputs are appropriate under all conditions and for all projects, so you should adapt as necessary. Furthermore, some types of initiatives such as Global Practices, High Impact Initiatives and Ecoregion Action Programmes (EAPs) have unique characteristics that merit additional or more specific standards and guidance that nest within these general ones. All technical terms are underlined the first time(s) they are used and then defined in the glossary. Hot links to extensive additional guidance materials for steps and for key tools are provided throughout the document; end notes contain the web reference as well. This body of guidance material will continue to evolve over time.

What other Standards materials, tools, and support are available?
The Programme Standards materials include:

- This overview document.
- More detailed guidance, tools, additional reference materials, and examples of application for each sub step.
- Templates for key process outputs such as (Internal) project proposals, budgeting, technical reports and evaluations.

In addition, a bespoke software tool (Miradi) is available that has been designed for use by WWF and other conservation organizations. Miradi walks you through the steps of the WWF Programme Standards and can help you to produce key outputs such as conceptual models, results chains, action plans, monitoring plans etc. – all the elements of a strategic plan. WWF has a license for all staff to use Miradi. – click here for Miradi download instructions and access code.

Capacity support for implementation of the WWF Programme Standards and Results Based Management more broadly is coordinated by the Results Based Management group. The PPMS capacity building site has details. In addition, each WWF office should have a Programme Standards ‘champion’ and a number of trained ‘coaches’ who can provide an introduction to the WWF Programme Standards, and Miradi, and help teams to use them. An experienced PPMS coach can help you navigate the methods and design a tailored process that is appropriate for your project or programme.

Finally the Insight CPM (Conservation Project Management) database provides a platform via which project teams can share their work and learn from each other.

**Figure 1. WWF’s Conservation Project/Programme Cycle**

Three overarching practices apply to most or all of the steps:
- **Involve, and be accountable to** key stakeholders
- **Embrace Learning and Share Knowledge**
- **Consider the Changing Climate**

**Sustainability and exit** considerations are important in many steps, and are formally incorporated in the Operational Plan.
What if primary donors require other standards/tools to be followed?
Some primary donors (external funding sources) such as PSPs and some foundations have their own standards. The differences compared to the WWF Standards may be small (for example, differences in terminology or in format of templates) but sometimes they are more significant (for example, different conceptual expectations in terms of design and monitoring). WWF policy is to encourage primary donors to accept the WWF Standards approaches and formats as far as possible, and as a result of efforts by WWF and CMP, many donors are familiar with the WWF Standards and the CMP Open Standards.

Where the WWF Standards are not acceptable to the primary donor you should respond to the primary donor’s standards, but be aware of any differences, whether improvements, alternatives or gaps when compared to the WWF Standards. Note these and address gaps wherever possible. For example, try to monitor outcomes and impacts even if this is not expected by the donor.

Overarching Guidance
Using the WWF Programme Standards to improve the practice of conservation is part science, part art. It requires some skill and experience to take these very orderly and structured principles and artfully apply them to real-world situations. However, any team will benefit from trying to follow them and, over time and with practice, they will become more skilled in both the art and the science of applying the Standards.

As you read through this document, keep in mind the following guidelines and tips:

- **Work with key organizational directives (e.g. Global Conservation Programme)**–Global priority-setting is an essential precursor to these standards and should be completed before they are used. In the case of WWF, the Global Conservation Programme provides an overall WWF Network context for much of WWF’s Network effort. The GCP has been developed through a priority setting process and comprises a set of thematic and driver-based Global Practices. By harnessing the collective Critical Contributions of the Network and partners, the Practices aim to achieve WWF’s Global Goals and Outcomes. Priority places (Ecoregion Action Programmes (EAPs)) and priority species have also been defined. Click here for an overview of the GCP, Practice Strategies, priority places, and priority species. You should also consider the relationship and contribution of the project to your office’s strategic direction.

- **This process often takes place within a broader context** – WWF projects almost always involve collaboration with combinations of multiple partners and associates, including governments, inter-governmental agencies, NGOs, civil society, corporate partners, and other WWF projects. You should know about and take into account other appropriate planning, implementation and monitoring work that could affect your project. In particular, consider the potential relationship and contribution of your project to important external agendas such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals. You should check from time to time throughout the life of your project the links to, relation with, and effects on/from these other key entities.

- **Adapt your approach, since each project is different in potentially significant ways** – The steps described in this document generally apply to all conservation projects but should be adjusted to meet each project’s needs. Each project team should go into a level
of detail commensurate with the levels of complexity and investment in the project. Also, some project teams may find that certain steps don’t work for them. It is expected that teams will adapt these basic steps as necessary. (See Table 1 for more details on what is recommended and what is compulsory for different types of project).

- **These standards apply to projects and organisations of all scales and types** – These standards are intended to apply to projects and programmes of all spatial and temporal scales ranging from small short-lived projects to large programmes that may stretch across ecoregions, landscapes, or even globally over decades. In addition, these standards are meant to apply to both site-based projects focusing on a specific geographical area, and policy work and thematic issues such as markets and climate change. Equally, they can and should be used for campaigns, Practice strategies, office strategies, and organizational development projects. Click here for [examples of how to use the standards for different types of projects](#).

- **Application of the standards is not intended to be a strongly linear process** - Although the project cycle presents these standards in a linear, numbered sequence, most project teams will not go through this process in a step-by-step fashion. Instead, you should feel comfortable changing the order of the steps, hopping around from step to step, combining steps, and revisiting earlier steps at any time in the process.

- **Start anywhere in the cycle that is appropriate to the status of the project** - Many projects that will benefit from these standards are already in operation. Although the standards are set out as they might be applied to a new project, they can also be applied to an existing project, addressing any identified gaps by introducing the relevant practices. This too is a form of adaptive management, and would demonstrate learning.

- **These standards are meant to be used iteratively** – Your project team is not expected to produce perfect outputs the first time you go through each step in the project cycle. Indeed, project teams that try to achieve perfection are likely to get stuck in “planning paralysis.” Instead, the idea is to go quickly and efficiently through the steps, using your own best judgment, develop draft outputs such as a ‘credible first iteration’ of your design, and then refine your work over time as you go through successive iterations and are better able to draw on inputs from other stakeholders.

- **These standards represent an “ideal”** - A quick read of the standards may prove overwhelming at first – with a seemingly vast number of issues to consider and things to do. But these standards are meant to provide a comprehensive view of what good looks like in project design, management, monitoring and learning, as applied to a diversity of approaches and interventions. While all projects should aim to meet (or surpass) these standards, it is important to acknowledge that it may not always be feasible – for a variety of reasons – to address each and every component of the standards.

- **These standards will change over time** – The current version of these standards is not meant to be the last word in how to do effective conservation. Instead, the standards aim to capture the prevailing wisdom on what it takes to do conservation well under a variety of conditions. Your experiences and feedback will help improve these standards over time. Please also click here to download the [latest version of this document](#).
Aim for both sustainability and magnification of results – Most conservation projects and certainly any larger conservation programme should be designed with the aim of achieving lasting and sustainable results. Our uppermost goal should be, for example, to reverse threats or achieve a sustainable population level of a key species whilst (where relevant) improving/maintaining human wellbeing. We should then move on to other issues and needs – in effect, to exit that particular project either because it is successful or because we have enlisted one or more strategic partners who will carry that project forward. To that end, these standards aim to promote and help develop strategies that will support interventions that deliver sustained impacts beyond the project’s lifetime (e.g. through engaging strategic partners, developing sources of sustainable financing, delivering social benefits). Similarly, these standards are also designed to help promote magnification of the project’s impacts across a larger landscape by improving cross-project learning and enabling project teams to leverage wider, even global, institutional change.

These standards seek to clearly define and consistently use terminology – The technical terms in this document were carefully selected, underlined when first used, consistently used thereafter, and defined in the glossary at the end. Click here for the full Network Standard terminology document. The selection of specific terms for a given concept and the definitions for these terms are based on current usage of words by the WWF Network, other conservation organizations, and planners in other disciplines. However, different donors, offices, projects, and even individuals often have their own preferred set of terms. Whilst it is preferable to use the standard terms to the extent possible, it is even more important that you are clear about the concepts under discussion, and that the members of your project team, and the people with whom you work, have a clear and common definition of whatever terms you choose to use.

Essential Elements and ‘Compulsory Outputs’

The way you apply each step, including which tools you decide to apply, will vary between projects, but practitioners often need a short description of the ‘essential elements’ (i.e. what does good look like?) and a summary of the key outputs that they are expected to produce. This table briefly explains the elements that should be present in a project that is applying good practices as defined in the WWF Standards. Click here for a more detailed good practice self-assessment tool (Step 5.3) that can be used to support an assessment or audit of the quality of practice.

Table 1. Essential Elements of PPMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENT (Step in PPMS)</th>
<th>Brief description of strong application of the PPMS. The project team (has)....</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE and VISION (1.2)</td>
<td>A clearly articulated scope (geographic and thematic). Partners, through their involvement, share a vision of the desired outcome and how this will be sustained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TARGETS (1.3)</td>
<td>A clear justification of what they want to conserve (biodiversity targets), or of the footprint element/threat they wish to reduce and how that relates to biodiversity. And if appropriate how this would impact human wellbeing (HWB targets disaggregated by social group)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### WWF Standards of Conservation Project and Programme Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CONTEX T ANALYSIS (1.4)</strong></th>
<th>A clear and comprehensive understanding of the context (including the political, social, economic, climate, environmental and institutional systems) affecting its targets. The project has prioritised the most important threats/factors to address. Stakeholders have been identified in relation to context.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS AND ENGAGEMENT (1.4)</strong></td>
<td>A clear and comprehensive understanding of stakeholders affecting, or affected by, the project. Project has either defined, or is taking, strategic steps to engage key stakeholders e.g. in planning, monitoring, learning. Stakeholders have regular access to project information and, as appropriate, are aware of complaints procedures and feedback mechanisms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BENEFICIARIES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (1.4)</strong></td>
<td>Within the broader ‘stakeholder’ group, given special attention (as necessary) to engaging beneficiaries or the ‘target population/group’ as well as indigenous people. Social differences are understood, as are the relationships these social groups and the natural resource base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THEORY OF CHANGE (2.1)</strong></td>
<td>A clear and sound framework for how strategies will lead to, and sustain, desired results, specifying all key assumptions and relationships of cause and effect (Results Chains are a key tool). Project activities are necessary and sufficient to deliver project Objectives and Goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPTIMAL STRATEGIES (2.1)</strong></td>
<td>Prioritised the selected strategies that are optimal in terms of economic/technical feasibility, affordability, sustainability, WWF value add, likely impact on biodiversity, livelihoods or footprint, climate resilience etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (2.1)</strong></td>
<td>Articulated SMART goals and objectives that describe the desired long-term impacts and outcomes (both short and long-term) of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONITORING &amp; EVALUATION (2.2, 5.3)</strong></td>
<td>An M&amp;E plan with indicators for all goals and objectives that are linked to the sequence of results determined by the project logic;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DATA ANALYSIS AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT (4)</strong></td>
<td>Collects data against indicators defined in monitoring plan; regularly reviews progress in relation to goals and objectives, checks key assumptions, captures lessons, and adapts actions where necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEARNING &amp; SHARING (5)</strong></td>
<td>Formally reflects and identifies learning and lessons from planning and implementation with stakeholders. Learning is communicated with key internal and external audiences; projects carry out periodic independent evaluations and review exercises and has a culture that encourages good learning, accountability, and adaptive management practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RISK MANAGEMENT (2.3)</strong></td>
<td>Fully assessed the risks to achieving its objectives and goals, and is taking measures to mitigate them. (To address this, some projects also consider ‘key external assumptions’ that need to hold true).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUSTAINABILITY &amp; EXIT/TRANSITION STRATEGY (2.3)</strong></td>
<td>A strategy to support both sustainability of project results and an eventual exit by WWF from some or all activities. Strategy has been developed and communicated with key stakeholders; it includes exit criteria and indicators that are monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HUMAN RESOURCES/CAPACITY (2.3, 3.3)</strong></td>
<td>The human resources (staff and skills), support systems (HR, finance, IT, etc), and governance structures needed for the successful implementation of all activities; capacity gaps are filled in a timely manner, including those of stakeholders that are key to sustaining results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS (3.4)</strong></td>
<td>Influences and collaborates with key strategic partners (e.g. government, public institutions, private sector, local communities) to develop a shared vision and common objectives. Secures commitments and actions from partners that will contribute to delivering and sustaining the project’s goals. WWF and partner/s are able to have open and regular dialogue on progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORKPLANS AND BUDGETS (3.1)</strong></td>
<td>Detailed workplans specific tasks linked to project goals, objectives and strategies/activities. A clear budget identifying the financial resources over the lifetime of the project necessary to implement all activities; budget includes necessary provisions for salaries, coordination, training, communications and M&amp;E costs for during and after the project. M&amp;E costs of a project should normally range from 5-10% (up to 30% for pilot projects).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FUNDING and SUPPORT (3.3)</strong></td>
<td>Secured funding for the project that is consistent with the scale of ambition identified in the project budget. Levels of support are adequate to accomplish and sustain the project’s aims.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What is compulsory? Expectations of Different Sized Projects**

Projects vary enormously in their size, scope and complexity. While all projects should apply the WWF Standards, and the essential elements shown above should be present in any project,
what those practices ‘look like’ will vary. As such it is useful to define the outputs that should normally be expected in relation to the financial value of the project. Note in particular that certain templates are available (via the hyperlinks) and should be used to capture the essence of your project design, plans, and reports. The components of a Strategic Plan or ‘proposal’ can be summarized as being the products from Steps 1 and 2 of the project cycle below. For a systematic listing of PPMS outputs, see Annex 1.

Components of a Strategic Plan: products from Steps 1 and 2
- Scope, Vision, Targets
- Analysis of Context and Stakeholders (typically including conceptual model and prioritized threats)
- Action Plan (goals, objectives, strategies and theory of change/results chains)
- Monitoring Plan
- Operational Plan (including sustainability/exit considerations, as well as financial and capacity plans)

In general, the higher budget and/or higher risk projects, the greater the expectation that the team can show evidence that they are applying each PPMS step and producing the expected outputs.

Table 2 Expected core outputs and formats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type/ Output</th>
<th>Strategic Plans</th>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Evaluations</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large Project or Programme (&gt;€250k p.a.)</td>
<td>WWF Concept (recommended as a first stage plan)</td>
<td>Technical Report (TPR) Quarterly Financial Report (R3) and Notes</td>
<td>Periodic independent Evaluation (approx. every 2-3 years)</td>
<td>Where compulsory PSP (or other donor) formats are required, apply the relevant PSP standards. In such cases, the PPMS formats are not expected, but try to address any gaps compared to the PPMS e.g. include results chains, and monitor outcomes and impacts even if this is not expected by the donor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project (€100-250k p.a.)</td>
<td>Proposal (simple – 15 pages)</td>
<td>Technical Report (TPR) Quarterly Financial Report (R3) and Notes</td>
<td>Periodic evaluation, usually internal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Project (&lt;€100k p.a.)</td>
<td>Simple Concept, Workplan and Budget (B3)</td>
<td>Technical Report (TPR) Quarterly Financial Report (R3) and Notes</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Strategy</td>
<td>Communications Strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td>As above, defined by investment</td>
<td>Click here for further guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office (NO or PO)</td>
<td>Office strategic plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- Offices typically define Concept/Proposal review processes and individual sign-off limits in relation to these limits. Click here for examples of concept and proposal review checklists.
- For a very small one-off project, say less than €40,000 in value, a simple listing of tasks required and outputs expected may be more appropriate than a Concept. Alternatively the Concept note can still be applied but the content could be simplified.
- Some variation in the budget thresholds will be appropriate - to keep communication simple.
General Practices
There are three main overarching practices that apply to most or all of the steps in these standards. Instead of listing them for each step, they are described here.

0.1 Involve Stakeholders and be Accountable to them
In conducting a project, it is important to define and, at every step, involve and be accountable to the appropriate internal and external stakeholders. You will need to identify key stakeholders independently, and determine with them what roles they might play in design, implementation and monitoring. Your strategy to ensure their participation should be captured this in your strategic plan (click here for basic guidance on stakeholder analysis). Implementing this strategy effectively will help to create a sense of ownership of the project beyond WWF during implementation and, ultimately, after the initial project ends. It will also help you to better understand the project’s impacts, both positive and negative.

WWF is committed to finding equitable solutions for people and the environment and has agreed social policies on poverty and conservation, indigenous peoples, human rights and gender. You should ensure that both you and your team are familiar with these policies, and convey their potential implications for the project to all partners and primary stakeholders. Ensuring that your project adheres to these policies (see Box 1 below) will help WWF avoid engaging in unethical activities.

It is important that your stakeholder analysis does not consider local communities as a homogenous group. For example there may be differences between men and women, young and old, ethnic groups etc. in the use and management resources and in decision-making. You should pay particular attention to indigenous and/or marginalized people who might be significantly affected by the project but often have little voice. Conversely you should also consider powerful individuals and organizations who, irrespective of being affected, are by definition influential.

Similarly you will need to formalise some or your partnerships and work to cultivate them throughout the life of the project, hence maintaining positive and supportive relationships.

Box 1. The Key Elements of Accountability

**Participation:** key stakeholders and beneficiaries are involved in the design, implementation and decision making of the work of the project.

**Transparency:** people affected by the project have timely access to relevant information in an accessible format, in order that they can hold the project to account.

**Feedback:** project has defined appropriate and accessible systems to enable the people affected by the project to provide feedback.

**Evaluation and Learning:** the project is accountable for its performance in delivering the goals of the project. The project is committed to improving the quality of its work through learning and adaptive management. Lessons learned are shared with partners, peers and donors.

Adapted from PPA Accountability Briefing Paper and Oxfam, Action Aid and Tear Funds guidance on accountability.


0.2 Embrace Learning and Share Knowledge

Teams need to be prepared to embrace learning, recognise and admit mistakes, identify successes, and work to understand why some actions succeeded while others did not. Clearly an organizational learning culture will help foster a safe and transparent learning environment, and hence suitable risk-taking. Creating this culture requires work and commitment throughout the organization.

It is critical to document key decisions and the reasons for them, and share these with relevant stakeholders. Not only does this give you the opportunity to analyze why things worked or did not work, but it also serves as a basis for others to understand the logic of your choices and provides the basic ingredients for sound knowledge management. By embracing learning and sharing information, you will open the door to bring in lessons from the outside to be incorporated where appropriate. In line with this thinking, some practitioners prefer to engage with Step 5 (Share) of the PPMS before they start Steps 1 and 2 (Define and Design).

Knowledge management approaches within and between the Global Practices provide a key opportunity to share experiences. Related to this, you should register the project on the Insight CPM database, and periodically share outputs and knowledge on this database.

0.3 Consider the Changing Climate

Climate changes are unavoidable for the foreseeable future, bringing brings new challenges and complexities for achieving WWF’s mission. The global average temperature has reached 1.1 deg C above preindustrial state and is on track towards plus 3.0 deg C by 2100. Associated changes are already occurring in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather, slow onset events, seasonality, and the timing and volume of precipitation. These impacts are predicted to increase exponentially with every degree of temperature rise, and ecological and human impacts may be profound. Whilst there is still uncertainty about the extent and speed at which climate change will impact biodiversity, and the thresholds of climate change above which ecosystems can no longer function in their current form, this is no reason for inaction; we need to actively monitor and plan for change and uncertainty, influence adaptation planning around the world, and reduce global GHG emissions.

Hence WWF requires its projects to be “climate smart” by consciously planning for climate change throughout the adaptive management cycle. This is important not just to preserve our past conservation efforts that may now be in jeopardy, but also to protect our future investments. We recommend doing this by embracing the following four elements:

1. Understanding and responding to existing and future climate change impacts and risks to ecosystems and human wellbeing, alongside other conventional threats;
2. Developing and implementing considered (ideally low/no-regret) adaptation actions which do not erode options for responding to future climate change and which avoid contributing to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; and mal-adaptation.
3. Taking an integrated approach to adaptation, contributing to nature conservation and fair, equitable and sustainable development
4. ‘Learning by doing’ through regular monitoring and revision of actions; adaptation is an ongoing process.

The earlier that such an approach can be integrated into planning the better. Click here for climate adaptation guidelines to help you include climate adaptation in your strategic plan.
Box 2 People and Conservation - WWF Social Principles and Policies

Many of the places where WWF works are also home to rural communities and indigenous peoples whose livelihoods and cultures are closely dependent on the natural environment. The interaction between people and their environment is critical for sustainable development; the success of our work can strongly depend on the degree to which conservation contributes not only to the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems but also to equitable and sustainable development options for people.

WWF has developed five principles and a set of social policies to guide the inclusion of social development considerations in our programmes, projects and policies. These principles and policies are intended to strengthen our conservation results and ensure their sustainability into the future. Embedding the social policies across all dimensions of our work is essential, and a roadmap for the implementation of the Social Development Action Plan is currently under development. Click here for the SD4C site.

**WWF Social Principles:**

1. Respect people’s rights in accordance with customary, national and international human rights laws;
2. Promote equity within the scope of our projects, programmes and policies at multiple levels, and promote these principles in policy fora and advocacy work at national and global levels;
3. Aim to enhance the natural assets of local communities, particularly the poor, and ensure that our conservation work does not harm vulnerable people;
4. Address weak governance, taking into account cultural and political contexts, through improvements in tenure and income security and decision-making procedures, devolution of environmental management and empowerment to ensure that the rights (and access) of local people to natural resources, which are the basis of their livelihoods, are exercised and enforced;
5. Address the inequitable distribution of environmental costs and benefits and unsustainable production and consumption patterns at multiple levels whenever possible by influencing local policies and practice, global markets, the private sector, national, regional and global policies and processes.

**WWF Social Policies** ([https://sites.google.com/a/wwf.panda.org/social-development/home/policies/policies](https://sites.google.com/a/wwf.panda.org/social-development/home/policies/policies))

**Indigenous Peoples:** WWF’s Statement of Principles on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation (1996, updated 2008) reflects our dedication to respecting indigenous and traditional peoples’ human and development rights and recognizes the importance of conserving their cultures.

**Poverty and Conservation:** WWF’s Policy on Poverty and Conservation (2009) reaffirms WWF’s commitment to embrace a pro-poor approach to conservation to strive to find equitable solutions for people and the environment and making special efforts to enable local people to play a key part in crafting solutions for sustainable development. WWF defines poverty as encompassing physiological deprivation (non-fulfilment of basic needs, lack of income, ill-health, etc.) and social deprivation and vulnerability (lack of access to natural resources, discrimination, lack of voice and power, gender inequities, etc.).

**Conservation Initiative on Human Rights Framework:** In signing the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights Framework (2009) WWF recognizes human rights as central to achieving effective and equitable conservation and development outcomes. The Framework states WWF’s commitment to respect human rights and to promote rights within the scope of conservation initiatives. It commits WWF to implementation measures contained in the framework and their application across all of our relevant social policies.

**Gender:** WWF’s Gender policy (2011) signifies WWF’s ongoing commitment to equity and integrating a gender perspective in its policies, programs, and projects, as well as in its own institutional structure. The policy recognizes that gender refers to the socially constructed roles and opportunities associated with women and men and the differences and inequalities between women and men in access to and control over resources and decision-making opportunities.

**Project Complaints Resolution process** (click here): reflects WWF’s commitment to providing a mechanism for receiving and responding to concerns raised by stakeholders who may be affected by WWF-supported conservation activities. Addressing complaints in a timely and effective way helps resolve conflicts, improves mutual understanding, strengthens accountability, and provides a foundation for increased collaboration.
1. Define
This first step involves specifying the basic parameters for the project in preparation for the design work that will come in the next step. Specifically, it involves identifying:

- The initial project team
- The project’s geographic and/ or thematic scope
- A vision statement of what you hope to achieve
- The key stakeholders
- The project’s context, including threats and opportunities

All of these elements are highly interlinked, and most project teams go through this as an iterative process. Change the order of the substeps as your team sees fit, and revisit earlier elements at any time. For example, you may choose to start by identifying the key stakeholders, and consciously involve some of them in the Define process.

At the end of this step you should have a clear understanding of how the above elements are connected. You may find it helpful to keep in mind the generic conceptual model below.

Figure 2. Generic Project Model Showing Scope, Targets, Threats and Drivers

---

5 In this document we generally talk about ‘the’ project rather than ‘your’ project since WWF wholly owns a project; rather, we seek to promote collective ownership as well as accountability to stakeholders.
1.1 Initial Team Composition and Operations
A project is ultimately designed and implemented by a specific group of individuals who comprise a project team. Team members typically include WWF staff as well as representatives from other key internal and external partners (click here for basic guidance on defining team composition and operations). One of the team members is typically designated as the project leader. As you move through the management cycle, for example once you have analysed the project context and stakeholders, the composition of this team should be revisited and may need to be changed. The key, however, is to recognize and make use of existing skills and experience to ensure that the project moves forward with the best available knowledge. In addition to the project team, you may also need to identify one or more advisors to whom the core team can turn for honest feedback and counsel and who can champion your cause; these may be within WWF, partners or the communities with whom you are working.

Once you have identified the core project team, you should develop a charter that outlines how the project team will function and a concept paper that sketches out some initial thinking on the project (click here for an example of a project concept form). Specific points that this document should address include what team members will do, how decisions will be made, a rough timeline for project activities, who else needs to be engaged, informed, and involved, and what financial and staff resources are required to move through the project cycle.

Team definition tips:
- Do you have sufficient gender and ethnic diversity on the team?
- Does the team have access to social science and climate adaptation expertise?
- How will you involve key stakeholders in decision-making?

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:
- Selection of initial project team and designation of project leader.
- Charter outlining how the project team will function
- Concept paper outlining some initial thinking on the project.

1.2 Scope and Vision
Before you decide on what specific strategies and activities you will undertake, you need to have a good understanding of what you and your partners hope to accomplish. Working together, you must define the scope of the project that you are developing, including any generalized ideas on strategic focus, and a vision statement of what you are working to achieve.

A project’s scope defines broadly what a project will affect. For example, projects that are focused on a specific place will have a geographic scope or project area. Projects whose boundary is defined by specific species, threats, opportunities or enabling conditions will have a thematic scope. Where the scope is thematic, you will also want to consider whether there is any specific geographic focus. You should justify your choice of scope, explaining its relevance to wider programmes, and to internal or external factors (see Table 2 for examples).
In addition to defining broadly what you will focus on and/or where, the scope should also provide some generalized ideas on the project’s strategic focus. Though these ideas will be refined as you progress through your Steps 1 and 2 of the cycle, defining your main focus helps to clarify what you will do and, conversely, what you are less likely to do, perhaps because it is not a typical approach of your organization. Breaking up your scope into finer units also may make it easier to determine goals, focus strategy development, and begin selection of indicators of success.

For example, a project with a geographic scope may be broken down into finer units such as particular focal landscapes within the overall geographic boundary, for example sub-catchments and catchments in the case of river basin work. If the scope of the project is more thematic in nature such as reducing CO2 emissions in the UK, your strategic focus may specify certain sectors (e.g. transport, homes, food, energy production etc.) Or a project focused on the education sector in Mongolia will need to define which areas of the education sector to focus on for the greatest impact.

It is also important at an early stage to develop a clear and common vision statement, which is a description of the desired state or ultimate condition that you are working to achieve (see Figure 2). A vision statement might include descriptions of biodiversity and/or maps of the area and often includes links between people and nature. Whatever it contains, it should meet the criteria of being relatively general, visionary, and brief. A project’s vision statement should fit within the context of WWF’s overall mission which has the three main axes of 1) biodiversity conservation, 2) sustainable natural resource management, and 3) reduction of pollution and environmentally damaging or wasteful consumption. It should also fit within the scope of WWF’s Global Conservation Programme and should aim to reflect the aspirations of key stakeholders. The task of developing a vision statement is often an important way of developing consensus among your core planning team about what the Scope of the project is. In participatory and coalition approaches, visioning is a key tool for getting stakeholders with conflicting interests to understand one another’s needs and priorities and hence work together.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- **A brief description of the project’s scope including general ideas on strategic focus.**
- **If appropriate, a map of the project area (GIS file or hand sketch).**
- **A vision statement for the project.**
1.3 Targets

Identifying Target(s) is typically the next step. Targets define more precisely what the project ultimately wants to affect in a positive manner. Usually they are related to biodiversity but in some cases human wellbeing targets may be defined. Associated goals should be set that relate to both types of targets (even if WWF is not the primary actor for all the actions required to meet the goals).

Projects with a geographic scope generally select a limited number of specific targets (often known as conservation or biodiversity targets) – a combination of specific species and/or habitats (ecological systems) that are chosen to represent the full suite of biodiversity in the project area. In theory – and hopefully in practice – conservation of the selected targets will ensure the conservation of all native biodiversity within the project site. Most place-based projects can be well defined by eight or fewer well-chosen biodiversity targets - but this is not a hard and fast rule. Selection of biodiversity targets typically benefits from expert input and from the analysis of spatial data.

Many projects, especially those working with multi-sectoral groups, will combine a focus on biodiversity targets with responsibilities for human wellbeing. As defined by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, human wellbeing includes: necessary material for a good life, health, good social relations, security, and freedom and choice. Human wellbeing targets focus on those components of human wellbeing affected by the status of biodiversity targets via ecosystem services.
It is important that all projects are able to explain the link between their scope and biodiversity (via threat/footprint reduction/sustainable use). Note, however, that not all projects will need to define detailed conservation targets. For example, if the project is part of a larger programme, targets and goals may have already been defined at a broader or higher scale, in which case you could refer to them in your planning rather than creating new targets. Alternatively, projects with a thematic threat-based scope may have one general target labeled "biodiversity" or "sea turtles" (for a bycatch-focused project). In these cases, the extent to which the targets are tracked would be at the team’s discretion.

Where specific targets are defined, you should next determine the current condition or ‘health’ and desired future condition of each target. For biodiversity targets, a viability assessment should be conducted specifying key ecological attributes (KEAs) for each target. These KEAs are aspects of the target’s biology that, if missing or altered, would lead to the loss of that target over time. For example, the KEA for salmon might be the population size of salmon returning to a river to spawn.

Where human wellbeing targets are defined, they should be differentiated by gender and/or social group as relevant to context. The team may also want to define key attributes. You should make sure that these attributes are clearly dependent upon the status of the biodiversity target(s) and/or the ecosystem services they provide. For example, a conservation team would probably not have human wellbeing goals related to reducing HIV infection or decreasing cholesterol levels, even though these might be important for human health. It may, however, have human wellbeing goals related to access to food sources because the conserved biological targets are improving crop pollination services.

Typical outputs for the target step include:

- Selection of a limited number of conservation or biodiversity targets for the project, including a brief explanation of why they were chosen.
- Links identified to other programme targets and/or to generalized nature targets
- For thematically oriented scopes and where human wellbeing targets are set, an explanation of the links to ecosystem services and biodiversity (via footprint or threat reduction, or people related strategies)
- A (generally tabular) description of the current and future desired condition of each target

Tips on Targets

- Targets are often finer units of the Scope.
- The desired condition of each target should be defined
- Usually goals, and associated indicators of success, are developed in relation to targets.
- Targets also help to define the breadth and depth of the contextual analysis needed
- In a changing climate, refugia and habitat connectivity will be increasingly important
### Table 3. Examples of Project Scopes and their links to Biodiversity Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Scope</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Links to biodiversity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographic scope</td>
<td>Virunga National Park - the different ecosystems and the biodiversity contained within the park boundaries.</td>
<td>The link to biodiversity is direct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic scope with strategic focus</td>
<td>Yangtze River Basin - within this, the programme identifies priority landscapes of high conservation value.</td>
<td>The link to biodiversity is direct. Note that different actions will take place at different scales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic scope with geographic focus</td>
<td>Tiger NI - wild tigers, focusing on 13 landscapes that the world’s top tiger experts have identified as offering the best chance of growing the population.</td>
<td>The link to biodiversity is direct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illegal logging (EU) -- Timber produced and/or imported illegally into the EU, with a focus on imports that affect WWF priority ecosystems.</td>
<td>The project should identify ecosystems (and perhaps key species) that are being affected. These may be divided into those within and outside the EU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Palm Oil (Malaysia) -- High conservation value habitats/species in Malaysia that are liable to be affected by Palm Oil production. (Note this would have a clear relationship to some wider WWF programmes – Heart of Borneo Initiative and the Market Transformation Initiative).</td>
<td>The project should identify specific habitats and species that are affected by palm oil production in Malaysia. N.B. Some practitioners would argue that those specific habitats and species represent the scope; however the project team has already decided to focus on palm oil since they ‘know’ this is a major threat, so it is important to include this in the description of scope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic and geographic scope with strategic focus</td>
<td>UK Climate Programme: -- CO2 emissions in the UK, focusing on emissions due to transport, homes, food, and energy production.</td>
<td>The footprint issue is clear (CO2 emissions). The link to biodiversity, perhaps better expressed as ‘natural systems’ in this case, is direct but very broad (the global climate regime).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Thematic scope with geographic focus (more complex) | Canada Fisheries -- Seafood consumed in Canada and/or produced within Canadian Oceans, with a focus on consumption that affects key fish species and ecosystems as defined by WWF’s GPF. The scope has four distinct parts:  
- Canadian seafood production (wild caught fish)  
- Canadian seafood production (aquaculture)  
- Global seafood production that is consumed in Canada (wild caught fish).  
- Global seafood production that is consumed in Canada (aquaculture). | Mirroring the scope, the project should identify the relationships between the scope and biodiversity targets such as:  
a) Key fish species in Canadian Oceans  
b) Ecosystems and non fish species in Canadian Oceans  
c) Key fish species in oceans globally  
d) Ecosystems and non fish species globally  
Related to this, the project should identify its relationship to major WWF programmes such as the Smart Fishing Initiative, Coastal East Africa Initiative, Coral Triangle Initiative etc. Again, some practitioners would argue that the above four areas represent the scope. However the team has defined its boundary as ‘Seafood consumed in Canada and/or produced within Canadian Oceans’, and this is a more practical scope from which to plan. |
Box 3. Clarifying socially beneficial results and human wellbeing targets

Conservation teams often work on important social issues that have benefits beyond biodiversity (e.g., building capacity for good governance or promoting alternative livelihoods). In such cases, the conservation strategy provides social benefits. These benefits, however, are not equivalent to human wellbeing targets; they are benefits that are derived from a strategy that is done in service of conservation.

For example, a project team may implement an eco-certification strategy to improve forest conservation. Part of the logic of the strategy is to increase loggers’ income as an incentive to implement certified practices and improve forest conservation. The increased income is a direct (and necessary) result of that strategy, and is one that benefits humans.

In contrast, human wellbeing targets represent the interests of people within a region that will be enhanced as a result of the conservation of an ecosystem, habitat, or species and its associated ecosystem services. Human wellbeing targets should be informed by social analysis (see 1.4) and may differ according to the different needs and relationships with natural resources of the various social groups within a community / region. Some examples of ecosystem services linking biodiversity and human wellbeing targets are below.

For more detailed guidance on human wellbeing targets compared to socially beneficial results, including a consideration of trade-offs, unintended consequences, and feedback loops, go to: [http://cmp-openstandards.org/search/human+wellbeing](http://cmp-openstandards.org/search/human+wellbeing)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threat</th>
<th>Biodiversity Target</th>
<th>Ecosystem Service</th>
<th>Human Wellbeing Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial pollution and/or over abstraction of water</td>
<td>River tributary</td>
<td>Provision of fresh water</td>
<td>Access to sufficient clean water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting of mangroves for fuelwood</td>
<td>Mangroves</td>
<td>Flood regulation (tidal)</td>
<td>Personal safety/security from disasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Local) air pollution</td>
<td>Forests, Lakes</td>
<td>Cultural services (aesthetic and recreational)</td>
<td>Access to clean air and water, mental and emotional wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poaching</td>
<td>Rhinos, tigers</td>
<td>Cultural services (aesthetic and recreational)</td>
<td>Livelihoods through income from tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedimentation and pollution (due to agriculture)</td>
<td>Coral reefs</td>
<td>Provision of fish</td>
<td>Sufficient nutritious food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcapacity of fishing fleets</td>
<td>Whitefish</td>
<td>Provision of fish</td>
<td>Sufficient food and adequate livelihoods in the medium/long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear-cutting for timber</td>
<td>Forests</td>
<td>Climate regulation</td>
<td>All benefits associated with a stable climate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4 Context (Threats and Drivers) and Stakeholders

Overview:
This standard asks you to describe your current understanding of the project’s context – including the biological environment and the social, economic, political, and institutional systems. This involves carrying out a thorough situation analysis and stakeholder analysis, from which you will be better positioned to design effective strategies and activities. The systems of cause and effect that you need to analyse are often complex, so before you start this sub-step you should think carefully about how you will go about the process and which tools you will use. You should address the three areas described below, but your approach may well be integrated and iterative rather than linear. The challenge here is to make your logic explicit without spending too much time on trying to develop a perfect model of reality. A conceptual model is commonly used by teams to help develop and represent their thinking; generally this is developed from right to left (identify threats, rate/prioritise the threats, identify drivers).

Identify and prioritise the key factors (threats) affecting the targets – Situation Analysis
A situation analysis involves identifying and understanding the key factors affecting the scope and targets, including direct threats, drivers (indirect threats and opportunities), and enabling conditions (click here for basic guidance on situation analysis). In general it is good practice to involve key stakeholders in this process. These factors can range in scale from local to global. Within this analysis, it is important to prioritize the various factors that affect your targets so that you can concentrate your activities where they are most needed. In particular, you should try to determine which of the direct threats are critical threats – the ones that are most important to address. There are a number of tools that can be used to help in this prioritization process – the most common tool involves rating each threat on criteria such as scope, severity, and irreversibility and then combining these individual ratings to produce an overall ranking of the threat for each target and the project as a whole (click here for basic guidance on threat ranking).

Define key stakeholders
Each factor can typically be linked to one or more stakeholders – those individuals, groups, or institutions that have an interest in, or will be affected by, the project’s strategies. You need to consider both powerful and influential stakeholders, as well as those that might be disadvantaged or marginalized (click here for basic guidance on stakeholder analysis and on beneficiary accountability). Disadvantaged groups need to be considered not only in terms of how their actions affect project targets, but also in terms of how project strategies may impact them, so that where possible, measures are incorporated into project design that create benefits for these groups or at a minimum mitigate negative impacts from the project. As you review stakeholders, also keep in mind which stakeholders could become important strategic partners that you could involve in action planning.

Clarity the relationships between factors - Conceptual Model
As part of your situation analysis, you should describe the relationships between targets, direct threats, indirect threats, opportunities, and stakeholders. This description can be in text form and/or in a conceptual model, a diagrammatic illustration of these relationships (see Figures 3 & 4 for generic and actual examples). A good model shows quite clearly the situation in which the project will take place and illustrates the cause-and-effect relationships that you and your team assume exists with respect to the project’s scope. Good models are
also the result of a team effort and are as simple as possible while still including all necessary detail. It is also important to field test the model with key stakeholders and partners both inside and outside the project team to make sure that the model reflects their understanding of the situation (click here for basic guidance on conceptual models).

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- An analysis and prioritisation of the critical direct threats/factors affecting the targets.
- An analysis of key drivers - indirect threats and opportunities – and an explanation that shows the cause-and-effect relationships among factors (e.g. conceptual model)
- An analysis of key stakeholders - including an initial strategy for how you will involve and be accountable to them (e.g. beneficiaries, partners)

**Box 4. Context and Stakeholders: think carefully about the process and tools you will use**

1) **How much do you know already?**

How you go about this step needs to be tailored to your project. A situation analysis can involve anything from a cursory review of existing information and a relatively brief discussion with key informants to an in-depth analysis of documents and a more lengthy process of consultation. For example, a project team that is just beginning to work in a site will generally need to dedicate several months to their situation analysis before planning their project interventions. By contrast a team that has been working in a place for several years on forest management may already have a good idea about the current condition of the forests and the threats affecting them.

2) **Consider who to involve and when**

Recognise that there is a close and dynamic relationship between a situation analysis and stakeholder analysis. Who you choose to involve in your situation analysis (and when) will affect the time it takes, stakeholder ownership of the analysis, and the content of the analysis itself. When identifying communities as stakeholders, recognise that there are differences (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic wellbeing, religion etc) within groups. Meanwhile if your project is focused on policy change, think about how the policy may have an impact at the local level and find ways of accessing representatives of these groups. Where deep systems change is required, extensive multi-stakeholder engagement may be necessary to build a shared understanding of the situation and hence develop effective strategies.

3) **Use tools to help manage complexity and dynamic change**

There are many possible tools and analytical methods. To support your analysis and manage your information, use of a conceptual model is recommended but not compulsory. Conceptual models help you to organise and communicate the information from your situation analysis, allowing you to articulate and make explicit assumptions about cause and effect relationships. They can help you to reduce the effects of complexity by helping you (and others) to understand it. In addition to the 'root cause analysis' type of conceptual model, it may be useful to develop other types of models to show the relationship between factors and help identify strategies, for example a commodity value chain diagram, a global/regional trade map, or a policy decision process flowchart. Scenario planning may be another helpful tool.

4) **Include different disciplines and analyse multiple levels as necessary**

You should integrate perspectives from social sciences, policy, economics and the natural sciences. You may also need to look at issues at a range of levels, from local through to subnational, national and international. At a local scale, you may explore such issues as livelihood needs and concerns of local people and institutions. At a national or international level, you may analyze the relationship of local issues with such major drivers as national debt, trade policies, government or private investments, and poverty reduction strategies.

5) **Consider climate change**

As part of this step you may decide to carry out a vulnerability assessment. The PPMS climate adaptation guidelines provide guidance on this, and suggest a way to identify and include the components of climate change in your conceptual model and threat ranking. This makes it easier to prioritize climate impacts and to see how climate may exacerbate existing and future threats.
Figure 4. Example of a Relative Whole-Site Threat Ranking
Below is an example of a threat ranking applied at the level of the whole site using a relative ranking method. This is based on a real-world ranking for a WWF project in a tropical forest site. Three criteria (scope, severity, and urgency) are used to evaluate nine direct threats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT THREAT</th>
<th>SCOPE</th>
<th>SEVERITY</th>
<th>URGENCY</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>CLASSIFICATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture frontier expansion</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial fishing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshwater turtle and turtle eggs over-harvesting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Logging</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paiche (Invasive fish species)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm exploitation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsustainable Brazil nut management</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5. Table for a Stakeholder engagement and accountability strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Roles and responsibilities</th>
<th>Level of participation: when and how you will engage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Design
Once you have described the scope, targets, threats and drivers for the project, the next step is to design the specific strategies you will undertake to achieve conservation. The Design step has three sections, all of which are tightly linked, and most project teams go through this as an iterative process.

- **Action Plan** in which you set the project’s goals, objectives and strategies.
- **Monitoring Plan** in which you will use to guide the project and assess its effectiveness
- **Operational Plan** that outlines how the project will develop the financial, human, and other resources needed for the project to achieve results that last over the long-term.

All your work in the Define and Design steps should be compiled in a single document - your Strategic Plan. Click here for a Strategic Plan/ Proposal template and here for example Strategic Plans.

### 2.1 Action Plan: Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Assumptions

**Overview**
As your team moved through Steps 1.3 and 1.4, you perhaps began to identify potential strategies. In this section you will test and clarify these strategies, and develop an action plan that describes what you are trying to achieve, how you plan to achieve it, and how the resulting impacts will be sustained. The Action Plan should include:

(a) A summary of the goals, objectives and strategies/ activities.
(b) An explanation of why you selected these strategies.
(c) Formal descriptions of your overarching theory of change and any core assumptions.

Again these elements are closely linked and are often best developed as an iterative process. In the case of longer-term projects, it often makes sense to develop results chains before you define your objectives.

**Tip – think about the process for designing your Action Plan**
For larger projects with longer-term goals, a common approach is to draft Goals first (based on your targets and viability analysis), then identify potential strategies (informed by a conceptual model), make the theory of change explicit (using results chains), and finally define your objectives.
On the other hand for a smaller project, you may be able to quickly move from defining goals to identifying some 3 year and 1 year objectives, and the necessary activities may be obvious. You should still make the theory of change explicitly clear.

**Goals and Objectives**
Developing a clear idea of what you would like to accomplish is the essential first part of putting together your action plan. As a starting point, you may want to revisit the vision statement for the project that you developed in Step 1.2 that describes what you ultimately would like to accomplish. Goals are linked to the project’s targets and represent the desired status of the targets over the long-term – they are formal statements of the ultimate impacts you hope to achieve. A good goal meets the criteria of being linked to targets and SMART (specific, measurable, ambitious and achievable, relevant, and time limited). Where specific targets have been identified, the goals come from your analysis of the desired future condition of each target in Step 1.3, based on key attributes. Objectives are linked to specific threats and opportunities that the project has identified and specify the desired condition of these factors that you would like to achieve in the short and medium-term – they are formal statements of the outcomes necessary to attain the goals. A good objective meets the criteria
of being *outcome oriented and SMART*. If the project period is known, you may find it useful to specify objectives which are to be achieved at the end of the project period. Together, the goals and objectives represent what you need to accomplish, and as such, become the ultimate measure against which you will gauge the progress of the project (click here for basic guidance on Action Plans). You may also want to specify intermediate results that, as their name implies, represent the milestones you expect to accomplish en route to achieving your final goals and objectives – these can be helpful in adaptive management.

**Box 5 - SMART Goals and Objectives**
A good goal meets the criteria of being SMART and linked to targets, while a good objective should be SMART and outcome-oriented. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable and Ambitious, Relevant and Time limited.

One of the most challenging aspects is finding a good balance between *achievability* and *ambition*, especially for Goals which are longer-term. Most practitioners are faced with the challenge of managing differing expectations, both internal and external, with respect to whether goals be more ambitious or tend towards being more realistic (i.e. achievable with a high degree of certainty).

**Strategy/ Activity selection**
Once you have determined what you want to accomplish, you need to think about how you will do it. Your analysis of context and stakeholders helps in determining the key factors where you will intervene, and also where you will not. You can then determine strategies – the prioritized interventions that you and your partners will undertake to reach these ends. Descriptions of these strategies can range in scope from broad strategies (for large projects) to more specific activities used to accomplish each strategy. Good strategies/ activities meet the criteria of being *linked, focused, feasible, and appropriate*. Your challenge is to select the most appropriate and cost-effective strategies that have the highest likelihood of achieving success (click here for basic guidance on Action Plans). You may need to brainstorm a list of potential strategies and then narrow them down via discussion with your team and key stakeholders or through a ranking exercise. These strategies can range in scale from local to global, depending on the situation. It is also important to ensure that your strategies complement other private and public sector programmes and are designed in conjunction with and meet the needs of local stakeholders.

**Box 6 - Tips on selecting strategies**
Apply criteria to rank strategies. You can devise a rating scale to compare potential strategies to deliver a desired result. Commonly used criteria are effectiveness, feasibility, affordability (cost), and sustainability.

Consider WWF’s ‘added value/ niche’. To help decide whether it makes sense for WWF to implement a particular strategy, it can be useful to carry out a simple SWOT analysis e.g. define WWF’s particular strengths and weaknesses in relation to delivering strategy, and any external opportunity and threat if WWF delivers this strategy. Also, ask questions like:

- Who else could do this? Could they do it better?
- Is anybody doing something similar? Should we partner with them?
- What would happen if we didn’t do this?

**Strategies and Activities - hierarchy of terms for actions.** The recommended hierarchy of terms to describe actions (from largest to smallest) is Strategy>Activity>Task>Subtask. There can be overlap in the use of these terms, but in general:

- ‘Strategy’ tends to be used by larger projects and programmes only
- ‘Activities’ are fine enough that you can assign staffing levels to them
- ‘Tasks’ define specifically what will be done when.
The essence of this step lies in making explicit and testing your overarching theory of change, including the logical sequences that link your strategies to your targets – your project’s core assumptions. Once you have decided on the strategies that you will include in the project, a results chain is a useful tool that provides a graphical depiction of these logical sequences (click here for basic guidance on results chains). Results chains show the combination of all the major strategies and associated activities necessary to achieve your objectives/goals - including those that others may need to undertake (see Figure 5).

**Box 7 - Theory of Change and the use of Results Chains**

A Theory of Change is a narrative and/or diagram that explains the underlying theory that links what you will do (your strategy) to what you want to achieve (long-term objectives and goals). It is often expressed in the form of a diagram such as a Results Chain that helps to make a project’s specific assumptions explicitly clear, combined with a statement of an overarching approach or philosophy that the project considers to be ‘true’ (and for which there is good supporting evidence). Examples of theory of change statements include the following:

- **CBNRM (Community Based Natural Resource Management):** If people are given control over the management of their natural resources along with adequate support, they will manage those resources (more) sustainably.
- **Linking Policy and Practice:** If a policy framework is developed at National level combined with on the ground examples of practice, this will lead to rapid magnification of project results.
- **Participatory Processes:** Innovation strategies are most likely to be effective and sustainable when they are co-created and implemented by a multi-stakeholder process.

As well as helping to identify specific assumptions, Results Chain can help a project to define or refine its goals, set objectives at the most critical points in the intervention logic, and hence focus monitoring around the core assumptions.

For larger projects, it may be helpful to have a hierarchy of results chains, with one master chain that shows how the strategies link together, and more detailed chains for each strategy. Note that some practitioners like to work from relevant sections of their conceptual model, addressing each driving factor in turn – while others simply complete their chains and check back with the situation analysis/conceptual model to see that all factors have been addressed.

As with Conceptual Models, Results Chains are a tool that can help you to manage the complexity of the project situation. It is recognized that in practice, change is unlikely to occur in such a linear fashion.

You should capture the final versions of the goals, objectives, and strategies/activities and the logic behind them in your formal *Action Plan*. A tabular logical framework (logframe) matrix can be used to help summarize and record the goals, objectives, and activities, as well as your monitoring indicators and methods (see Figure 6; click here for basic guidance on logical framework analysis).

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- **Goals for all of your targets** (or refined Goals if they were defined in Step 1.3).
- **Objectives for critical threats and other factors that your project will address.**
- **One or more strategies/activities that will achieve conservation objectives, and a rationale for selecting these.**
- **Results chains and/or other formal descriptions of both your overarching theory of change and core assumptions, plus the detailed logic of your strategies/activities**.
Overall Action Plan that compiles the goals, objectives, strategies and theory of change.

**Figure 5. Generic Results Chain Showing Goals, Objectives, & Activities**
See [basic guidance on results chains](#) for a detailed explanation.

**Figure 6. Generic Logical Framework Matrix**
See [basic guidance on logical framework analysis](#) for a detailed explanation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logical Framework Matrix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Plan (Intervention Logic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Box 8. An Overview of Terms Used to Describe Results

There is a great deal of confusion over the different terms used to describe the results of a project. What one person calls an “outcome,” another calls a “result,” and yet a third person calls an “impact.” The following figure shows the terms as they are most commonly used by evaluation experts in different fields such as development and public health, as well as in the conservation sector.

- **Impact** – The desired future state of a target. A goal is a formal statement of an impact.
- **Outcome** – The desired future state of a threat or opportunity factor. An objective is a formal statement of an outcome.
- **Output** – The desired product of an activity or task.
- **Strategies** – The actions (strategies) that a project implements.
- **Result** – A generic term used to describe the desired future state of a target or factor. Includes impacts, outcomes, and outputs.

The above terms refer primarily to a sequence of results in a logical sense. There is also a sequence of results in a temporal (time-based) sense:
- **Final result** – The ultimate desired result over time, to be sustained beyond the life of the project.
- **Intermediate result** – A milestone along the way to that final result.

Example of Goals, Objectives and Planned Intermediate Results

**Objective 2:** By 2009, at least 50% of artisanal fishermen fishing with 5 km of the Marine Reserve are using at least one of the new, sustainable fishing techniques promoted by the project.

**Planned Intermediate Result (Milestone) related to Objective 2:** By 2007, at least 10% of artisanal fishermen fishing with 5 km of the Marine Reserve are using at least one of the new, sustainable fishing techniques promoted by the project:

**Goal 1:** By 2015, at least 80% of the coral reef habitat in the northern bioregion & 60% in the western bioregion are ecologically functioning* & contain healthy populations of key species**

**Planned Intermediate Result (Milestone) related to Goal 1:** By 2013, at least 65% of the coral reef habitat in the northern bioregion & 40% in the western bioregion are ecologically functioning* & contain healthy populations of key species**

* Ecologically functioning = will have live coral coverage of at least 80% and contain a representative diversity of coral species
** Healthy populations of species at the top of the food chain, such as sharks, and an abundance of other key species, such as lobster, black coral, etc. Project team to work with university scientists to define “healthy”.
Box 9. Developing strategies to achieve transformational and sustainable change

Many WWF programmes, especially at broader scale (e.g. large-scale landscapes and ecoregions), try to address multiple drivers of environmental change at local, subnational, national, and international levels. In such cases, it is important to develop strategies that are clearly linked or ‘vertically-integrated’, for example influencing behaviours, policy processes, and institutions at these multiple levels. WWF’s diversity, global outreach, and international character give us unique potential to achieve such links and hence achieve ‘transformational’ results.

When building your action plan, as well as transformation you should think about what needs to be in place to ensure the sustainability of the project’s results - and allow WWF to exit from the project or transition to another role. Below are some factors to consider for transformation and sustainability. For more on sustainability see Step 2.3 Operational Plan, and click here for basic guidance on Sustainability and Exits.

Shared ownership with Key Stakeholders - Conservation strategies that are developed with key stakeholders and also deliver wider socioeconomic value to those stakeholders will be more readily adopted and are more likely to be sustainable. For more information on socioeconomic valuation see the Basics section on the Biodiversity Economics website.

Involvement of Strategic Partners - Engaging one or more strategic (influential) partners, typically from the public or private sector, can lead to bigger changes, especially where they derive significant benefit from being involved. They may also be willing to continue the project. For more on partnerships see 3.4 Partnerships and Partnership Management Arrangements.

Enabling policy environment - Are there policies and resources in place that will support the strategies that you are proposing? For example, if CBNRM is a key strategy is this recognized in national and decentralised policies and planning processes, and has Government allocated resources to support it. If not the project should include a strategy to address this.

Demonstrate Good Practices and link them to policy change – Real examples of successful projects or good practices provide models that can be adopted by other practitioners (for example, other NGOs, government agencies). Indeed it is crucial that a good demonstration is associated with a strategy for its wider adoption. Conversely, when linking between levels the creation of supportive policy at the national or international level allows strategies to be employed locally that would otherwise be very difficult. For more information see Linking Policy and Practice.

Coordinate Advocacy, Communication, and Programme Work. A further dimension – communication – can be combined with field and policy/ advocacy actions to deliver achieve greater results. (For more on communications strategy, see Conservation Strategies: Awareness and Communications. See also Advocacy and Lobby module from WWF College).

Finances – What level of funding will be required beyond the lifetime of the project to sustain results and how will this be met? e.g. trust funds, debt swaps, mobilisation of Government funds (national and local), payment for environmental services, new donors / private sector / community investment. Click here for basic guidance on Conservation Finance as a strategy.

Address Climate Change
Climate adaptation approaches need to be integrated with strategies intended to address existing threats or drivers. We also want to avoid maladaptation at all costs. Various types of adaptation can be distinguished, including anticipatory, autonomous and planned adaptation (IPCC 2007).

(i) **Anticipatory adaptation.** Adaptation that takes place before impacts of “climate change” are observed. Also referred to as proactive adaptation.

(ii) **Autonomous adaptation.** Adaptation that does not constitute a conscious response to climatic stimuli but is triggered by ecological changes in natural systems and by market or welfare changes in human systems. Also referred to as spontaneous adaptation.

(iii) **Planned adaptation.** Adaptation that is the result of a deliberate policy decision based on an awareness that conditions have changed or are about to change, and that action is required to return to, maintain, or achieve a desired state.
2.2 Monitoring Plan

Overview

In this step you specify your core monitoring needs and define a process for gathering and assessing the associated data. The majority of your monitoring resources should normally be focused on effectiveness monitoring - monitoring of Goals and Objectives to help answer questions like: Have we made any difference and can we demonstrate it? Is our theory of change working? If the project has developed a clear Action Plan as described above, you are well placed to define useful indicators for monitoring effectiveness.

You also need to allocating some resources to Status/ Context and Risk monitoring: to help answer questions such as: Are our strategies and activities the right things to do, given wider contextual developments? These types of monitoring can be particularly important for projects that are operating in a dynamic context; this is often the case for policy work and where there may be conflicting views between different stakeholders.

Finally you should plan to monitor your Activities (in a simple, light way against your workplan) and your Resources/Finances (via your finance system) to help answer questions like: Have we done what we said we would do?

A mix of quantitative and qualitative methods is encouraged.

Audiences and Information Needs

The first part of developing your Monitoring Plan involves specifying your information needs that you will monitor over time. Effective monitoring uses the minimum amount of financial and human resources to provide you with the minimum information needed to determine if your project is on track and what to do if you are not. All too often project teams either collect no information or too much information because they are unsure of what is needed.

Monitoring and evaluation systems often need to serve multiple accountabilities. As a first step, you should be clear about for whom you are monitoring, and recognize that it is primarily for the project itself – to help the team to learn from experience and integrate lessons. The following table list some common audiences and their information needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Typical Information Needs/ Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Team</td>
<td>How the project is progressing against goals and objectives. What is and what is not and why. How to improve the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Partners</td>
<td>How the project is progressing against goals and objectives. What is and what is not and why. How to improve the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>How the project is progressing against goals and objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities or stakeholders</td>
<td>General information on the project’s progress. How will the project impact them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation community</td>
<td>What is working, what is not, and why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics and students</td>
<td>What is working, what is not, and why.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once you know for whom you are monitoring, you need to then identify what you and your key audiences want to know (your learning questions) and use this to guide what you should monitor. By focusing your monitoring efforts squarely on the core assumptions that link the goals, objectives, and strategies, you are more likely to collect only the information that will
be useful to you as you manage your project (click here for basic guidance on Monitoring Plans). Your logical framework and/or results chains should be useful here (see Figures 5 and 6).

Where relevant, you should identify information needs that contribute to the Global Conservation Programme, specifically to the goals and outcomes of the Global Practices and associated priority projects; these may be defined as Critical Contributions for your office. Whenever possible you should also show linkages to shared objectives with partners and to any relevant donor or country targets (e.g., those from Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers or from Sustainable Development Goals).

**Indicators and Methods**

Once you have clarified your information needs for your project, the next step is specify the indicators and the methods that will be used to collect and analyze the data required to meet your information needs. Good indicators meet the criteria of being measurable, precise, consistent, and sensitive. Methods vary in their accuracy and reliability, cost-effectiveness, feasibility, and appropriateness. The key is to select the most cost-effective method that will give you data that is reliable enough to meet your management needs. For many information needs, you may not have to collect primary data. For example, one method for collecting data about a given fish population would be to “download harvest records posted by a government agency on the internet.” Finally, you should also determine roughly when, where, and by whom data will be collected, and how data will be analyzed and used (see Step 4.2). In developing your Monitoring Plan, it is best to test and adjust indicators and methods before using them, to plan for the storage and processing of each type of data in advance, and to budget for monitoring activities and build this into your overall financial planning.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include a formal monitoring plan that contains:

- **Audiences and their associated information needs clearly defined.**
- **Finalised monitoring plan (includes indicators; methods for collecting data; when, where, and by whom data will be collected; plans for baseline data collection).**
- **A description of how data will be stored and analyzed.**

**Figure 6 – Monitoring plan template (as per Annex 2 of the WWF Proposal template)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information needs (from the action plan)</th>
<th>Indicators (what will you measure?)</th>
<th>Method/source of data (how will you measure?)</th>
<th>Location (where will monitoring be done?)</th>
<th>When (timeframe &amp; frequency of data collection)</th>
<th>Who to provide (who will provide and analyse the data?)</th>
<th>Baseline data (most recent figure and date)</th>
<th>Planned intermediate result</th>
<th>Planned final result (value and date)</th>
<th>Cost (estimate for monitoring the indicator)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 If no baseline data is available, state when the baseline will be defined.
7 For objectives, annual measurement is recommended. Goals are likely to be measured less frequently.
Box 10 - Tips on developing monitoring plans

1) Define a manageable number of indicators based on your Action Plan
   By developing results chains, setting good (SMART) goals and objectives, and defining learning questions, you can narrow down a nearly infinite set of potential indicators to a manageable set.

2) Consider use of both quantitative and qualitative methods
   Qualitative methods can supplement quantitative data to bring a deeper and richer understanding of a project's effectiveness and context. For example, the use of informal reviews and simple questions can support beneficiary feedback by helping to capture people's experiences, opinions, attitudes and feelings. You can also use semi-qualitative ranking methods (e.g. ask participants to ranking the effectiveness of training on a scale from 1 to 5). To understand human wellbeing and social benefits, methods should allow data to be disaggregated by gender and other relevant social groups.

3) Allocate some resources to monitoring status/ context and risks
   Tracking of risks and external context is important but may be kept simple, for example by checking with relevant information sources and networks whether changes have occurred. In the case of policy or advocacy work in dynamic situations, it is critical to carry out frequent reviews of the external context. Click here for Monitoring Advocacy guidelines

4) Think ahead to Analyse/ Adapt and Share steps
   You can already start thinking about who will be involved in analysis, how you will use this to inform adaptive management (Step 4), and any information that you will need to support an effective evaluation (Step 5.3).

5) Establish your baseline early
   Collection of baseline data is the first step in the actual use of the monitoring plan. It is critical that baseline data is collected early, since all subsequent data gathered over the life of the project will be compared against the baseline. The use of already existing data for a baseline is strongly encouraged. Data may be available backwards through time, in which case it will be possible to compare trends before and after the start date for the project.

6) Be realistic about 'impact' monitoring (monitoring Goals)
   In WWF, true 'impact' concerns the effect of our actions on biodiversity, footprint and human wellbeing. However change at this impact level may be observable only after several 3 year phases of a project, so resources may need to be allocated to monitoring beyond the life of the project. (Note, however, that in common speech the term 'impact' is often used to refer to changes that strictly speaking are 'outcomes' in PPMS terminology).
2.3 Operational Plan
Conservation projects are ultimately implemented by people and institutions. Even if you have the best action and monitoring plans in the world, they will be useless unless you also have the necessary financial, human, and other resources to implement these plans over the life of the project. Although you may not have all necessary resources in hand when you start the project, you should at least have an idea of what you need and how you will go about attaining them. You also need to assess the risks to the project and develop governance mechanisms. In other words, you need to have an Operational Plan for the project (click here for basic guidance on operational plans). Key components include:

- **Human & Other Resource Requirements** – A broad analysis of the human capacity and skills required to implement your project, and your current and potential sources of these resources (see Step 3.3 for more specific details about developing your human resources). Also, other resources and enabling conditions required to implement the project (such as partners, infrastructure, and a supportive legal framework).

- **Financial Requirements** – A broad analysis of the funding required to implement the project, your current and potential sources of these funds (i.e. your anticipated income and expenditure any gap between the two). These analyses often look at both best and worst-case scenarios and link to your fundraising activities (see Step 3.2).

- **Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategy** – An analysis of what risk factors exist for the project and how they can be addressed.

- **Estimate of Project Lifespan and Sustainability Strategy** – A discussion of how long the project will last, how you will ensure sustainability of the project’s achievements, and WWF might from the project or transition to a different role. Click here for basic guidance on Sustainability and Exits.

The level of detail and formality of your operational plan will vary depending on the size and level of complexity of the project. Small projects may only briefly touch on each of these topics whereas large, complex ones (Priority Programmes and projects over €250K per year) might have an extensive and formal treatment of each. However, all projects should have thought through the items included in an operational plan.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include an operational plan that contains:

- **Estimates of human and other resources required to implement the project and your current and potential sources of these resources.**

- **Estimates of financial resources required to implement the project and your current and potential sources of these resources.**

- **An assessment of potential risks to the project and how you might mitigate them.**

- **An explanation of how the project is designed to deliver sustainable results and an exit strategy, if appropriate.**

At the conclusion of Step 2, you should ensure to compile the work you did in Steps 1 and 2 into your overall Strategic Plan (click here for examples of Strategic Plans). The output here is:

- **An overall Strategic Plan.**
Figure 8: Example financial plan for large programme in graph form:
Mesoamerican Reef Protected Area Network - Expenditures, Income and Gaps

![Graph showing financial plan for Mesoamerican Reef Protected Area Network]

Figure 9 - Factors to be considered when assessing capacity, risk, and sustainability

Note that some dimensions are the same or are closely related, so one combined analysis may be appropriate, at least for your initial design.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of capacity</th>
<th>Dimensions of Risk</th>
<th>Factors for Sustainability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Ownership by key stakeholders/partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared vision, goals and strategy</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Political commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems</td>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Economic forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Policy and legislative environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Financially feasible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Organisational, community and individual Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>Appropriate technology and methodologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power and influence</td>
<td>Leadership/Management</td>
<td>Ecologically sustainable and climate resilient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Societal benefits/costs and equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Socio-cultural Issues and gender</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box 11 Consolidating your Sustainability and Exit Planning

In the previous Design steps you will already have planned with sustainability in mind. You should have identified specific objectives and strategies to support sustainability (e.g. capacity building of key partners, long term financing etc) and developed indicators to monitor progress towards these. As a section within your strategic plan, it is useful to pull all this information together in one place, perhaps in a table as per below, so that you can consider whether this is sufficient and then monitor how you are progressing towards sustainability. These specific objectives are in effect your exit criteria since they define the conditions that need to be in place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective supportive of sustainability</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Method or source of verification</th>
<th>Assumptions and Risks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Implement

This is the most important step in the entire adaptive management cycle process. In the Implement step, you turn your general plans from the define and define steps into action. This step involves:

- Developing and executing specific workplans and budgets
- Ensuring sufficient funding to meet short and longer-term needs
- Building the necessary capacity to deliver results
- Establishing strong relationships with partners to implement strategies

3.1 Workplans and Budgets

In the previous steps of the project cycle, your project team developed your general action, monitoring, and operational plans. In this phase of the cycle, you need to turn these general plans into more specific ones and then implement these plans on an ongoing basis.

The first part of this step is to take your overall plans and work with your project team and partners to develop much more specific short-term workplans. Teams generally prepare annual (one year) workplans, but the time frame can vary from a few months to two or three years. These workplans take your overall action, monitoring, and operational plans and specify the following in much greater detail:

- **What** specific tasks are required to complete each planned activity, monitoring step, or operational function,
- **Who** will be responsible for helping to complete each task,
- **When** each task will need to be undertaken and the sequence of linked tasks, and
- **Cost**: How much money and other resources will be needed to complete each task.

These workplans can be recorded in a table, Gantt chart, and/or project calendar.

Working closely with finance/operational staff from your office, you should then develop and refine your project budget, working from your initial analysis of funding that you developed in your Operational Plan Step 2.3. The timeline for corresponding workplans and budgets should be the same i.e. typically one year.

For many projects, your most expensive resource needs will be staff time. In addition, you should consider what other major expenses such as physical infrastructure, vehicles, boats or machinery are needed. You should also consider the related functions or logistical support that the project might need, ranging from monitoring and management expenditure, to administrative or logistical support. The WWF Budgeting Standard explains what is expected in terms of budget detail, format, and quality. (Click here for basic guidance for workplans and budgets, here for the Budgeting Standards and a budget template, and here for cost recovery guidelines). Typically the development of workplans and budgets will take place in the organizational planning and budgeting context of the office that has oversight of the project (click here for WWF-US procedures and for WWF International procedures as applicable).

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- **Detailed short-term workplans for the project showing tasks, who will do them, and when.**
◆ Gantt chart and/or calendar of project activities.
◆ Project budgets.

The next and most important part of this step – and indeed this entire process – is to implement your work plans according to schedule and within budgets. In subsequent years, you should then update your workplans and implement them. The output here is simply:

◆ Implementation of strategic plan (action, monitoring, and operational plans).

**Figure 10 - simple Gantt chart format for a Workplan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy/Activity/Task (number and description)</th>
<th>Who (individual responsible and staff to support)</th>
<th>Duration (man days required to complete the task)</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Cost (Estimated cost and corresponding budget line)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>Q2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.1</td>
<td>MM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1.1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1.1.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1.2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.2</td>
<td>WB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1.2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1.2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1.2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Fund Raising
Perhaps the first part of the strategic plan that you need to implement is to secure funding for the project. There is often a long lead time between developing funding proposals and having money in the bank that you can spend and as such, it is important to get a jump on this work early in the project work.

The starting point here is to look at your resource needs in the general project budget you developed in Step 2.3 and the specific budgets you develop in Step 3.1.

Once you have identified your resource needs and assessed what you currently have available, the next steps involve identifying potential funding sources, writing funding proposals, and meeting with potential donors. Click here for the internal proposal template. The many potential sources of project funding include the following:

**Box 11 - Sources of funds**
- Direct government appropriations or public funds
- User fees and payments for environmental products or services
- Fines or penalties for illegal use of natural resources
- Debt reduction and debt-for-nature swaps
- Grants or contracts from government and aid agencies
- Institutional, foundations, or private individual support
- Funds raised through or generated by conservation trust funds
- Corporate support and partnerships
Traditional fundraising involves soliciting donors such as PSPs, foundations, corporations and individuals for grants that support some part of the project (the partnership may include additional aspects, especially in the case of corporates e.g. HSBC). These sources are excellent short to medium term sources of income, but it may not be possible to count on their long-term support over the entire expected lifetime of the project. It may therefore be necessary to develop sustainable long-term financing mechanisms, examples of which are trust funds, debt swaps, payments for services and government budgeting processes. Such mechanisms can also help ensure that project results are maintained after WWF has exited from the project.

Your team can begin developing ideas or proposals, and begin meeting with key donors or officials while you are still creating your action and operational plans. After completing Steps 1 and 2 (define and design), you will find that the logical and visual nature of a comprehensive strategic plan helps to make a strong case for support.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- **Project budget refined, if necessary.**
- **Potential funding sources identified.**
- **Funding proposals developed and submitted.**
- **Meetings with donors and other supporting work completed.**
- **Financial resources obtained**

**Box 12 - What makes a good proposal?**

Whatever precise format has been used for your proposal, keep in mind that the criteria against which Donors (both internal and external) typically appraise or assess Proposals/ Strategic Plans can be summarized quite concisely (as below). Clearly-written responses to each section of a proposal template will help a proposal to be seen as responding well to these criteria:

1) **Relevance** of the project to wider goals and initiatives, especially to WWF’s Global Conservation Programme (for internal donors)

2) **Transformational potential.** Does the project have the potential to ‘make a real and significant difference’ e.g. through linking policy work with practice, linking ‘local to global’ actions, engaging ‘strategic’ partners, adopting or piloting innovative approaches.

3) **Feasibility.** Does the project have a clear and credible (i.e. evidence-based) ‘theory of change’, setting out how change is intended to take place and clarifying any underlying assumptions. And does the project have the capacity to deliver?

4) **Sustainability.** Are the expected results of the project likely to be sustainable, for example financially, institutionally, politically and ecologically?

5) **Sound Monitoring and Evaluation processes** - to support adaptive management and impact assessment, and to demonstrate progress.
3.3 **Capacity Building**

Capacity building is the process of developing the project’s ability to deliver the level of strategies and results required. Your initial assessment of human capacity in Step 2.3 may have been relatively high level, and you may decide to now carry out a more detailed assessment. In any case, you now need to address any needs that have been identified.

You should seek to build the capacity of your own staff, structure and systems, and that of your core partners as well. You need to feel confident that you and your partners will have enough people with the right skills, knowledge and availability to deliver the project and ensure its longer term sustainability. You also need to make sure that the management and operational support functions of your office will be able to take on the additional workload.

Each project will differ in the level and detail of needed capacity assessment and building, but in general they might include core programmatic skills, leadership and managerial abilities, financial management and accounting skills, technical skills and others (click here for guidance on assessing and building capacity). From your assessments, you may decide that you or your partners need to conduct training, hire consultants or recruit and train new staff. Funding, people and the time to do this should be built into your operational plan. Your office’s human resources staff can be a good source of support and advice in recruiting staff, conducting performance appraisals, and assisting people with their professional development. You may be able to draw on the support and advice of colleagues in the WWF Network and outside.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- **Capacity assessments completed.**
- **Strategies developed and implemented to address capacity shortfalls.**

3.4 **Partnerships**

Successful conservation depends on forging effective partnerships with key stakeholders. Most conservation projects will probably not have sufficient expertise or internal resources to do all the work that needs to be done. Furthermore, most if not all projects need to ensure that the work that they start will continue after the initial project ends. To ensure sustainability of the work you must mobilize effective participation and information-sharing with partners both throughout the life of the project and after “the project” is over. You should jointly agree with partners how they will be involved, information will be shared, progress will be monitored, and how decisions about the direction of the work will be made.

At different points in the project cycle, you will need to revisit your team composition and structure to ensure that you have the right complement of people as staff, consultants, volunteers or other working arrangements that make the project possible and sustainable.

At the implementation stage if not before, it is usually important to formalize your partnership arrangements. Key actions that can help ensure the development of good partnerships include:

- Review your stakeholder analysis from Step 1.4 and your approach to stakeholder involvement and accountability - to make sure all key stakeholders are engaged appropriately.
Redefine the project team and roles and responsibilities as needed and agree on accountabilities. Traditionally we have thought of accountability as being upward to donors, but it is also important to be accountable to the project’s beneficiaries and partners.

Allocate resources for the participation and information sharing needed to strengthen current/potential partnerships and ownership.

Review existing and/or create new partnership arrangements and governance structures as needed to ensure that all partners have an appropriate voice in how the project is managed and how decisions are made.

Execute informal or formal management arrangements such as contracts, grants, memoranda of understanding, Programme Implementation Agreements (PIAs), or similar means (For templates for some of these arrangements, see basic guidance on Partnerships, Governance and Managements Arrangements).

Set up a process for monitoring the progress of all partners and your relationships with them. This should include a formal, accessible and safe feedback mechanism for partners and project beneficiaries.

For large projects, a typical partnership system has three parts:
1) A project oversight team or steering committee. This includes high level representation from your team and your closest and most important partners.
2) A project coordination or work team. This smaller unit is responsible for coordinating the day to day work of the project and reports up to the oversight team or steering committee. This role can be assigned to one of the partners on behalf of the overall project.
3) Internal or external project management or technical assistance (staff, consultants, or both). This function typically reports to the project coordination or work team.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- Project team composition revisited.
- Key stakeholders identified and brought into project as appropriate.
- Information sharing strategies developed and implemented, including a feedback mechanism for partners and project beneficiaries (where relevant).
- Formal arrangements with partners developed and implemented as appropriate.
4. Analyze & Adapt
Regardless of how well a project is planned and managed, the team must make a consistent effort to gather and analyse relevant performance and contextual data, assess what it means for the project, and adapt plans accordingly. The amount of time needed to complete this step is often underestimated by project managers, leaving them with lots of data that they have collected, but have not analyzed or used. By making this a deliberate step, you should find it easier to observe and understand changes, solve problems, and make improvements to the project. Involving key partners and beneficiaries in this process can strengthen the analysis, promote transparency and accountability and is likely to lead to more effective adaptive management decisions.

4.1 Manage Incoming Data on an Ongoing Basis
Analysis is a process of transforming raw data into useful information. Analysis should not happen at only one point in time during the life of the project. To continuously understand what is going on in the project – and to be able to change things in a timely fashion – it is essential to capture and analyze your monitoring data as part of routine project work. In particular, it is important to systematically check, clean, and code raw data as soon as you get it; store and back-up your data, and then analyze and discuss your data to check if you are on track (click here for basic guidance on managing data). This work should be done for both programmatic data as well as operational and financial data. You should also upload your data to the Insight CPM database.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- Development and regular use of systems for storing, processing and backing up project data.
- Uploads of data to Insight CPM database.

Table 5 - Different Types of Data and Where They Come From and Are Stored

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Examples of Sources</th>
<th>Examples of Databases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>Biological censuses or transects of species, counts of poaching incidents, household / key stakeholder opinions (disaggregated by social groups and recorded on a 4-point scale), numbers of tourists visiting a site</td>
<td>Paper logbooks, simple spreadsheet tables (<em>Excel</em>), relational databases on desktop computers (<em>Access</em>) or online servers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>Stories from stakeholders or focal group interviews (N.B. consider gender and diversity in interviewees and groups)</td>
<td>Word processor documents, relational databases, folders of audio or visual clips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial</td>
<td>Locations where animals have been poached recorded on a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit, boundaries of a national park</td>
<td>Paper maps in a file cabinet, Geographic Information (GIS) systems (<em>Arc software products</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Business records, project</td>
<td>Spreadsheet tables (<em>Excel</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
quantitative data that contain financial information | operations | accounting software (ACCPAC or QuickBooks software)
--- | --- | ---
**Pictures & Images** – photos, drawings, and other images | Before & after photos of a specific site, stakeholder drawings, conceptual models | Photo albums, slide files, computer file folders, album software
**Video & Audio Clips** – film, video, and audio materials | Recordings of stakeholder meetings, film clips of key project events | video library, computer file folders, archive software
**Metadata** – data about your other data; the documentation that accompanies any dataset | Lists of all your databases, descriptions about fields in a database, information about pictures in a photo album | Paper list, spreadsheet file

### 4.2 Analyze Project Results and Assumptions

One of the most important aspects of adaptive management is that it allows you and partners to systematically assess whether you are on track to achieve the stated goals and objectives. Your monitoring data should provide you with the information needed to see whether you have achieved your expected intermediate results and whether you are on track to achieve long-term success. In addition, adaptive management also allows you to determine why certain strategies have succeeded or failed. Your monitoring data provide you with the opportunity to see whether the core assumptions you laid out in the planning steps above hold true in reality. By testing these core assumptions, you are in a better position to adapt and change the project activities accordingly (click here for basic guidance on analysis).

To check if you are on track or why something may have succeeded or failed, you should undertake the following tasks:

- Consider the results in the context of your model, results chains, and/or logframe.
- Review your assumptions and assess if you are on track to meet the goals and objectives and if your strategies are having the desired impact.
- Assess the utility of your indicators.
- Determine if the goals and objectives were set at an appropriate level and if the timeline was appropriate.

Depending on the type of data that you have and your information needs, these analyses can range from formal statistical studies to simple qualitative assessments. The most important thing is that the right people be involved in and made aware of the results of your analyses. As a general rule, analyses should involve members of the project team. However, input from partners and outside experts during the analyses can often be useful, and helps the team think through from other perspectives. Either way, a critical part of this analysis work involves communicating the results to the project team and key partners. In communicating within a team it is best to provide: clear management recommendations to all the right people based on your analysis, all necessary details to help interpret results, alternatives and contingencies based on the results, and regular reports to all team members (click here for the internal technical report template).

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- **Appropriate scheduled analyses of project results and assumptions.**
- **Documentation of discussions and decisions.**
- **Regular reports to project team members and key stakeholders.**

**Box 13 - Purpose of the TPR (Project/ Programme Technical Progress Report)**

The main purposes of the WWF TPR template and associated process are:
- To facilitate adaptive management by projects and programmes,
- To provide inputs to priority programme and network management decision-making processes; and
- To provide accountability and transparency to internal and external donors and other stakeholders.

Learning — and quality reporting — depend on good monitoring and analysis, and the template should be completed based on the information obtained from regular monitoring and analysis/evaluation. To the extent possible, all team members should be involved in reviewing progress and producing technical and financial reports.

### 4.3 Analyze Operational and Financial Functions/Performance

In addition to analyzing your conservation results and core assumptions, it is also important to analyze your operational and financial data to make sure things are on track and that you are not going to run an operational deficit (click here for basic guidance on analyzing operational and financial performance and here for the financial report standard and template.) For example, periodic and full-term forecasting should be undertaken to ensure that changes in work plans are adequately translated into changes in financial needs, and vice versa. Significant variances between planned, actual and forecasted figures should be clearly explained in your financial report.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:
- **Appropriate scheduled analyses of operational and financial data.**
- **Regular financial reports linked to technical reports including financial forecasts.**

### 4.4 Adapt Your Plans and Budgets

Collecting and analyzing data as part of routine monitoring activities allows you to determine how effective your interventions are and what you need to do to adjust the project to reach the goals and objectives more efficiently. As the final part of this step, you need to use what you have learned during the analysis and, in discussion with key stakeholders, modify and optimize your activities. This is the essence of adaptive management.

All the planning that you did earlier was not meant to be a one-time event, never to be revisited or used again. Instead, in order to learn over time and to continue to improve the effectiveness of the project, you must revise your project parameters and core assumptions, conservation action plan, monitoring plan, work plans and budgets, and operational plan. Therefore, you may need to update all sections of your strategic plan to reflect what you have learned. As you make changes, you should also document the rationale behind them so that others will understand what you learned and why you made these changes. Click here for basic guidance on adapting your plans and budgets.
When updating your plans, you should also respond to findings from outside the project team. For example, if your project has undergone a formal evaluation or audit (see Step 5.3), you should examine the findings and see how you can use them to adapt and improve the project.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- **Revised project documents** work plan, and budgets.

**Box 14 - Managing (for) change**

Successful adaptation relies primarily on the quality of four main factors:

- Preparing in advance to adapt, knowing when the opportunities to adapt are likely to arise and scheduling around those.
- Clear definition of the change required and why it is required;
- Maintaining strong relationships and communication with partners and stakeholders (where appropriate, involve them in decisions); and
- Effectively implementing the change.

Most donors will be sympathetic to, or even impressed by, the need to adapt – provided that the rationale is clear and they have been kept informed.
5. Share
This step involves sharing lessons, information and formal products with key internal and external audiences. It also involves giving and receiving feedback, conducting evaluations and audits, and promoting a performance and learning culture. When initiating a project, some practitioners prefer to start with this step, making a deliberate effort to learn from previous relevant experiences and reflection before starting to define and design their project.

5.1 Lessons
As you go through the process described in these standards, you should make sure you regularly harvest the lessons that the project team and key partners are learning. Lessons can take the form of formal statistical results or anecdotal stories and can focus on something as large as the core project assumptions or something as specific as a new and improved way of tracking project expenses. One of the keys to harvesting lessons is to keep track of learning questions that emerge as you go through the project management process and then try to answer these questions when data become available to do so. Another key is to provide time and incentives to do this work. Harvesting lessons requires a balance between art and science – and will require patience and making time in any work plan for these tasks. Click here for basic guidance on sharing lessons.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:
- **Identification of learning questions.**
- **Harvesting of key results and lessons.**

5.2 Formal Communication Products
Communication can be an important conservation strategy in its own right (see Step 2.1). In addition, if you capture what you have learned in written or recorded documents, you will be able to remember from year to year what you have done, what you found worked and what didn’t, and what you plan to do in the future. This will help the current project team over the long term and more importantly, once current project staff have moved on, will ensure that new project staff will have a record of what you did and what you learned. Production of formal documents will also help you communicate your findings to practitioners around the world – both within and outside the WWF Network – who could benefit from what you have learned. Documenting and sharing what you have learned will help practitioners working under similar conditions, dealing with similar threats, and using similar tools to benefit from your successes and avoid any pitfalls or problems you may have encountered during the implementation of the project. In effect, it creates a magnification or leveraging of good results and findings to other places around the world.

In order to create documents that a variety of audiences will understand, internalize and use, you must understand how they typically receive messages, and what they would be interested in learning. Developing a clear communication and dissemination strategy provides you with a systematic way of identifying your audiences most effectively. For example, many projects distinguish between their internal audiences (the project staff, partners and other stakeholders) and their external audiences (donors, other practitioners). Next, identify the lessons you wish to communicate to these priority audiences, determine the best format and language to reach each key audience, and then develop and distribute your communication products. Communication products can encompass many different forms ranging from
formal academic papers to stories and videos. It is important to evaluate each product to see if it worked to communicate your messages as intended and to learn what you might do to improve similar efforts in the future.

Finally, it is worth noting that sharing documents does not just mean providing them to other people. It also means obtaining and using documents from other people yourself. Some of the best sources of lessons are the experiences of others. Click here for basic guidance on formal communications strategy and products and here for guidance on awareness and communications strategies.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- Identification of key audiences.
- Development of a communications strategy.
- Development and distribution of appropriate communication products.
- Use of other people’s communication products.

**Box 15 – Communications work as a ‘project’**

Step 5 of the WWF Standards is about formally and informally communicating conservation results and achievements to both internal and external audiences. In this respect, it is about being transparent and sharing with others what has worked, what has not worked, and why.

Communications, however, is often a conservation strategy in and of itself (see Step 2.1). For example, a project might use an awareness raising campaign to discourage the killing, harvesting, or trafficking of threatened and endangered wildlife species.

But whatever the purpose of the communications work, its development and implementation can be handled as a ‘project’. The suggested steps below are similar to the PPMS cycle.

**Define and Design:**
- Context – (Including issue, statistics, principles)
- Who - is leading the communication work?
- Desired Outcome (Objective) - (Measurable)
- Target Audience (involvement, awareness, attitude, demographics, lifestyle)
- (Flexible) Key Message (Including benefits)
- Call to Action – what you want the audience to do

**Implement:**
- Communications Plan (Players, Activity/ies, Resources, Tone of voice)
- Measurement and Monitoring

**Analyse/ Adapt and Share:**
- Evaluation
- Results
- (Lessons Learned)
5.3 Feedback, Evaluations and Audits

For any project to be effective and to be able to adapt, the team members will need feedback on their findings, progress, and lessons learned. Although feedback in many organizations is limited to formal performance reviews, some of the best feedback can happen on an informal basis if people take the time to ask questions of their peers and colleagues and then listen to what they have to say. This informal feedback can take place in face-to-face meetings or through exchange of documents and e-mail and telephone calls. It is vital to remember that feedback is a two-way process; though you may be busy with your own work, it is important to take the time to regularly give feedback to your colleagues, especially when they request it.

It is also important to build in more formal feedback mechanisms into the project’s lifecycle. Two common kinds of formal mechanisms are evaluations, which assess a project against specific performance criteria (see Box 16), and audits, which assess a project against an external set of standards, such as the ones outlined in this document. Both evaluations and audits can be conducted at various phases of the project cycle. They can be conducted either internally or externally. Internal evaluations and audits, which are done by project team members and close partners, have the advantages of being relatively easy and cheap to conduct and that the people involved in the assessment can make direct use of the findings. External evaluations and audits, which are done by outside parties, have the advantage of providing an outside and unbiased perspective to the project team (click here for basic guidance on feedback, evaluations and audits and here for the WWF Evaluation Guidelines). External evaluations are normally considered a mandatory requirement for larger projects and programmes (above €750K over 3 years).

Feedback from key stakeholders and beneficiaries can be gathered informally through meetings and discussions or more formally through external evaluation processes. When working extensively with local communities, you should also establish a project grievance mechanism\(^8\) that provides a fair, accessible, safe and responsive process for those affected by the project to give feedback.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- **Regular feedback session – both give and take.**
- **Evaluations and/or audits at appropriate times during, and after, the project cycle.**

\(^8\) WWF has a formal Projects Complaints Resolution Policy. However it may be difficult for local stakeholders to access this process. Establishing a localized system to allow beneficiaries to feed back is good practice.
5.4 Performance and Learning Culture

This standard of practice involves creating a performance and learning culture within the project team and partners, across your organization, and among conservation practitioners around the world. To effectively apply these standards, you need to work in a project environment that promotes learning and adaptation over time and encourages improvement in the quality of work. This process is not an easy one. It requires leaders and donors who understand the need to reallocate scarce resources from immediate action to the long-term work of adaptive management. It often requires enabling practitioners to take some chances and question the conventional wisdom related to specific conservation tools and strategies. It requires providing project teams with the institutional security and context that affords them the knowledge that innovation and questioning assumptions are valued in their organizations. And it requires a commitment to openness and transparency, with a willingness to share both successes and failures with other practitioners around the world – to create true communities of practice. Click here for basic guidance on performance and learning culture.

Typical outputs for this standard practice include:

- Demonstrated commitment from leaders to learning and innovation and ultimately improving the quality of work through adaptive management.
- A safe environment for encouraging experimentation and questioning the status quo.
- A commitment to share success and failures with our partners and practitioners around the world.
Iterate Through the Cycle

The standards of practice outlined in this document are presented in the form of a cycle. A typical project team might go through Steps 1 & 2 in the cycle fairly quickly (perhaps over a 3-4 day workshop) to sketch out the basic strategic plan for their project. They may then circle back and fill in the details over the next few months for Steps 1 & 2 while they are also beginning the implementation work in Step 3. The team might then conduct its first analyses in Step 4 after six months and then use this work to develop their first communication products in Step 5.

As shown in Fig. 1, once you complete Step 5, the arrow then takes you back to Step 1. The intent behind this cycle is not to put you and the project team in an endless loop of work. Instead it is to remind you that adaptive management is a dynamic process that requires you to constantly learn and change over time. Based on your analysis of your data, should you revisit the vision and targets? Are there new factors or relationships that you had not previously considered that you believe should be incorporated into the model or addressed by a specific goal or objective? Do you need to change the Monitoring Plan? Do you need to adapt your operational plan? Iteration is about repeatedly going through the steps in the project cycle to determine if you need to augment or further develop any of them over time. It is the essence of transforming ordinary management into true adaptive management.

---

Box 17 - Characteristics of a Performance and Learning Culture

1) **Shared Vision, Goals and Objectives.** All team members understand how their work contributes to goals and objectives, at both project and organizational levels. Accountability for results and good adaptive management practice is clear.

2) **Adaptive Management practices are consistently used** i.e. it's the way we do things round here. The practices themselves are regularly modified and improved, and help to answer key questions such as:
   i. Are we doing what we said we would do?
   ii. Have we made any difference and can we demonstrate it?
   iii. Are our strategies the right things to do, given wider contextual developments?

3) **Openness to challenge.** There is an openness to internal and external challenge, and a willingness to take tough decisions and tackle difficult problems. There are few (if any) subjects that cannot be discussed by team members and the wider stakeholder group.

4) **Reflection and Learning are given adequate resources.** At both project and organizational levels, learning is seen as an integral part of each team member's responsibility. Staff are recognised for the contribution they make towards the project's learning – whether a project itself 'succeeded or failed'. Internal politics and power relations are not allowed to get in the way of sharing experience and knowledge.

5) **Review and Evaluation Outputs are used to make a difference.** Staff and senior management central to implementation of evaluation/review recommendations are involved throughout the process, and ensure that the key recommendations are implemented.
Responsible Exits / Transition
Most conservation projects should be designed to achieve lasting and sustainable results and should aim reach a point when WWF is able to responsibly exit / transition from the project. This may be when the project has succeeded in achieving its goals and / or strategic partners are able to carry the project forward. Alternatively a change in strategic direction or funding availability may mean that WWF needs to exit a project. Box 18 shows some of the types of responsible exit common to WWF.

Box 18. Types of responsible exit
- “Full stops” – where a project or programme comes to an end;
- WWF-Donor exits from other WWF Network projects/programmes that continue to be supported and delivered by others in the Network.
- “Internal spin-offs” or transfers to other teams or departments;
- “External spin-offs” – projects that become independent entities in their own right – often charities under national law;

Source: Delivering Responsible Exits, WWF UK 2015

The preferred situation is sustainability objectives for the project were set during the Design phase. In this case, when you reach a point where you and your partners estimate that the project is roughly two years away from achieving its sustainability objectives, together you should to plan how WWF will responsibly exit / transition from the project. Click here for basic guidance on sustainability and delivering responsible exits.

Figure 11. Sustainability in the Project Cycle
Acronyms Used in this Document

CAP  Conservation Action Planning (TNC’s Project Management System)
CMP  Conservation Measures Partnership
EAP  Ecoregion Action Programme
GCP  Global Conservation Programme
GIS  Geographic Information System
HR  Human Resources
PCM  Project Cycle Management
PIA  Programme Implementation Agreement
TNC  The Nature Conservancy
TOR  Terms of Reference

References for Additional Material and Guidance

Most of the documents referenced are available on WWF-International’s website (panda.org) and on the WWF Network’s intranet (OneWWF). To have access to documents on OneWWF, you need to be registered; if you are WWF staff but are not registered on OneWWF, please contact the administrator at: onewwf@wwfint.org.

The following documents are available at www.panda.org/standards and on OneWWF in the relevant subfolder at: https://sites.google.com/a/wwf.panda.org/ppms/

- WWF Programme Standards Overview (this document – including some translations)
- WWF guidelines and tools to each PPMS substep (1.1, 1.2 etc.)
- WWF key templates (Concept, Proposal/ Strategic Plan, Evaluations etc.)
- WWF guidelines for other key tools (e.g. Conceptual Model, Results Chains etc.)
- WWF guidelines integrating Climate Adaptation in PPMS
- WWF Evaluation Guidelines (OneWWF only, see Step 5)
- Examples of strategic plans and of application of particular PPMS substeps
- Miradi download instructions and access code (OneWWF only, see Step 0)

Other important WWF references include:
- WWF Global Conservation Programme
  http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/our_global_goals/index.cfm
- Insight CPM database
  http://insight.panda.org/cpm
- Operational Network Standards (includes Budgeting and Financial Reporting, and full Network Standards terminology)
  https://sites.google.com/a/wwf.panda.org/ons/home
- PSP (formerly GAA) Standards
  https://sites.google.com/a/wwf.panda.org/psp-share/standards
- Technical Reporting instructions  www.panda.org/standards (step 4.2)
- PPMS good practice self assessment tool www.panda.org/standards (Step 5.3)
- Social Development for Conservation (SD4C)
  https://sites.google.com/a/wwf.panda.org/social-development/
- Climate Change Adaptation portal
  https://sites.google.com/a/wwf.panda.org/climate-change-adaptation-portal/home
https://intranet.wwfus.org/policy/tableofcontents/index.htm. Users will need an ID & password which they can obtain from Joy Patterson at WWF-US.

WWF-International Policies and Procedures (Field Operations Manual)
https://sites.google.com/a/wwf.panda.org/pom/standards-policies-procedures.

Other useful external references include:

- CMP Open Standards.
  http://cmp-openstandards.org/ Note especially the supporting guidance materials at http://cmp-openstandards.org/using-os/guidance/. Many of these have been peer reviewed and rated with participation from WWF.

- Foundations of Success
  http://www.fosonline.org/resources.

- Detailed guidance on human wellbeing targets compared to socially beneficial results, (including a consideration of trade-offs, unintended consequences, and feedback loops): http://cmp-openstandards.org/search/human+wellbeing

- The Nature Conservancy conservation action planning
Glossary
There is an endless debate among planners as to the relative meaning of technical terms such as goals, objectives, strategies, targets, milestones, outputs, and results. Every office, project, and even individual seems to have their own preferred set of terms. And things become even more confusing when terminology gets translated across different human languages – for example in English, a goal is broader than an objective whereas in Spanish, an objetivo is broader than a meta. The technical terms in this document were carefully selected based on current usage of words by the WWF Network, other conservation organizations, and planners in other disciplines. Whilst it is preferable to use the standard terms to the extent possible, it is even more important that the members of your project team, and the people with whom you work, have a clear and common definition of whatever terms you choose to use.

Click here for a broader glossary of terms across the WWF Network.

Action Plan – A description of a project’s goals, objectives, and strategies that will be undertaken to abate identified threats and make use of opportunities. It should include an explanation of why you selected these strategies, and also formal descriptions of your overarching theory of change and any core assumptions. A WWF action plan outlines what WWF’s contribution is to a joint project’s overall action plan.

Activity – A specific action or set of tasks undertaken by project staff and/or partners to reach one or more objectives. A good activity meets the criteria of being: linked, focused, feasible, and appropriate. Sometimes called an action, intervention, response, or strategic action.

Adaptation: In human systems, the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In natural systems, the process of adjustment to actual climate and its effects; human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate (IPCC, 2014).

Adaptive Management – The incorporation of a formal learning process into conservation action. Specifically, it is the integration of project design, management, and monitoring, to provide a framework to systematically test assumptions, promote learning, and supply timely information for management decisions.

Adaptive Capacity: The ability of a system to adjust to climate change (including climate variability and extremes) to moderate potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, or to cope with the consequences (IPCC).

Assumption – A project’s core assumptions are the logical sequences linking project strategies to one or more targets as reflected in a results chain diagram – see also theory of change. Other assumptions are related to factors that can positively or negatively affect project performance – see also risk factor.

Audit – An assessment of a project or programme in relation to an external set of criteria such as generally accepted accounting principles, sustainable harvest principles, or the standards outlined in this document. Compare to evaluation.

Beneficiaries - Groups of people consisting of: those who have benefited (whether this was intended or unintended), those who have been negatively affected by the project’s
activities, and individuals in the institutions and organisations that the project works with e.g. civil servants/ NGO employees receiving training.

**Biodiversity Target** – An element of biodiversity, which can be a species or habitat/ecological system, that a project has chosen to focus on. Strictly speaking, biodiversity targets refer to all biodiversity elements at a site, but typically the term is used as a shorthand for a specific element of biodiversity that a project has chosen to focus on. Synonymous with conservation target.

**Climate vulnerability** – The degree to which a system is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, adverse effects of climate change, including climate variability and extremes. Vulnerability is a function of character, magnitude, and rate of climate variation to which a system is exposed, its sensitivity and its adaptive capacity (IPCC).

**Community of Practice** – A group of practitioners who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.

**Conceptual Model** – A diagram that represents relationships between key factors that are believed to impact or lead to one or more biodiversity targets. A good model should link the biodiversity targets to threats, opportunities, stakeholders, and intervention points, capturing the logic of the intended change behind planned strategies. It should also indicate which factors are most important for measures.

**Conservation Target** – A synonym for biodiversity target.

**Critical Threat** – Direct threats that have been prioritized as being the most important to address.

**Direct Threat** – A human action that immediately degrades one or more biodiversity targets. For example, “logging” or “fishing.” Typically tied to one or more stakeholders. Sometimes referred to as a “pressure” or “source of stress.” Compare with indirect threat.

**Driver** – A factor identified in an analysis of the project situation that is affecting, or could affect, a direct threat. It can be an indirect threat, opportunity, or enabling condition. Also known as contributing factor.

**Enabling Condition** – A broad or high-level opportunity within a situation analysis. For example, the legal or policy framework within a country.

**Evaluation** – An assessment of a project or programme in relation to specific performance criteria: quality and relevance of design, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and adaptive capacity. Compare to audit.

**Factor** – A generic term for an element of a conceptual model including direct and indirect threats, opportunities, and associated stakeholders. It is often advantageous to use this generic term since many factors – for example tourism – could be both a threat and an opportunity.

**Forecasting** – A method for assessing the financial performance of a project or programme.

**Gender** - the socially constructed roles, responsibilities and opportunities associated with
women or men in a society at a specific time and place.

**Goal** – A formal statement detailing a desired impact of a project, such as the desired future status of a target. A good goal meets the criteria of being linked to targets and ‘SMART’.

**Indicator** – A measurable entity related to a specific information need such as the status of a target/factor, change in a threat, or progress toward an objective. A good indicator meets the criteria of being: measurable, precise, consistent, and sensitive.

**Indirect Threat** – A factor identified in an analysis of the project situation that is a driver of direct threats. Often an entry point for conservation actions. For example, “logging policies” or “demand for fish.” Sometimes called a root cause or underlying cause. Compare with direct threat.

**Information Need** – Something that a project team and/or other people must know about a project. The basis for designing a monitoring plan.

**Intermediate Result** – see planned intermediate result.

**Iteration** – The process of repeating the steps in the project cycle, each time refining and adjusting project plans and hopefully coming closer to the project’s vision and goals.

**Logical Framework** – Often abbreviated as logframe. A matrix that results from a logical framework analysis that is used to display a project’s goals, objectives, activities, and indicators in tabular form, showing the logic of the project.

**Magnification** – Taking lessons learned from one project and applying them to others, thus increasing the impact of the first project.

**Monitoring Plan** – The plan for monitoring the project. It includes information needs, indicators, and methods, spatial scale and locations, timeframe, and roles and responsibilities for collecting data.

**Method** – A specific technique used to collect data to measure an indicator. Methods vary in their accuracy and reliability, cost-effectiveness, feasibility, and appropriateness.

**Objective** – A formal statement detailing a desired outcome of a project such as reducing a critical threat. A good objective meets the criteria of being outcome oriented and SMART. If the project is well conceptualized and designed, realization of a project’s objectives should lead to the fulfillment of the project’s goals and ultimately its vision. Compare to vision and goal.

**Operational Plan** – The operational plan for the project. Key components include analyses of financial, human, and other resource requirements and risk assessment and mitigation, governance and communications, and project lifespan/exit strategies.

**Opportunity** – A factor identified in an analysis of the project situation that potentially has a positive effect on one or more targets, either directly or indirectly. Often an entry point for conservation actions. For example, “demand for sustainably harvested timber.” In some senses, the opposite of threat.
Planned Intermediate Result – A benchmark or milestone that a project is working to achieve en route to accomplishing a final goal or objective. (In this case, “intermediate” typically refers to a temporal dimension, but it can also be used to refer to a causal dimension).

Practitioners – All people involved in designing, managing, and monitoring conservation projects and programmes.

Programme – A group of jointly-managed, interdependent projects which together aim to achieve a common broad vision. In the interest of simplicity, this document uses the term “project” to represent both projects and programmes since these standards of practice are designed to apply equally well to both.

Project – A set of actions undertaken by a defined group of practitioners – including managers, researchers, community members, or other stakeholders – to achieve defined goals and objectives. The basic unit of conservation work. Compare with programme.

Project Area – The place where the biodiversity or footprint issue of interest to the project is located. It can include one or more “conservation areas” or “areas of biodiversity significance” as identified through ecoregional assessments. Note that in some cases, project actions may take place outside of the defined project area.

Project Team – A specific core group of practitioners who are responsible for designing, implementing, and monitoring a project. This group can include managers, stakeholders, researchers, operations staff and other key implementers.

Resilience: The ability of a system and its component parts to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, or recover from the effects of a hazardous event in a timely and efficient manner, including through ensuring the preservation, restoration, or improvement of its essential basic structures and functions (IPCC, 2014).

Result – The desired future state of a target or factor. Results include impacts which are linked to targets, outcomes which are linked to threats and opportunities, and outputs which are linked to activities. See the Action Plan section for more explanation.

Results Chain – A graphical depiction of a project’s core assumption, the logical sequence linking strategies to one or more targets. In scientific terms, it is equal to a “hypothesis.”

Risk Factor – A condition under which the project is expected to function, but which can cause problems for the project. Often, a condition over which the project has no direct control. Killer risks are those that when not overcome, will completely stop the project from achieving its goals and objectives.

Scope – The broad geographic or thematic focus of a project. Projects that are focused on a specific place will have a geographic scope or project area. Projects whose boundary is defined by specific species, threats, opportunities or enabling conditions will have a thematic scope. Where the scope is thematic, there may also be a geographic focus.

Stakeholder – Any individual, group, or institution who has a vested interest in the natural resources of the project area and/or who potentially will be affected by project activities and have something to gain or lose if conditions change or stay the same. Stakeholders
are all those who need to be considered in achieving project goals and whose participation and support are crucial to its success.

**Strategic Plan** – The overall plan for a project. A complete strategic plan includes descriptions of a project’s scope and vision, targets, analysis of project situation, *Action Plan*, *Monitoring Plan* (monitoring plan), and *Operational Plan*.

**Strategy** – A group of activities with a common focus that work together to reduce threats, capitalize on opportunities, or restore natural systems. Strategies include one or more activities and are designed to achieve specific objectives and goals.

**Target** – What the project ultimately wants to affect in a positive manner. Sometimes used as shorthand for *biodiversity/conservation target*. Usually targets are related to biodiversity but in some cases human wellbeing targets may be defined as well.

**Task** – A specific action in a *workplan* required to implement activities, *Monitoring Plan*, or other components of a *strategic plan*.

**Theory of Change** – A narrative description and/or diagram linking a project strategy to what the strategy wants to achieve (long-term objectives and goals). Often expressed in the form of a diagram such as a Results Chain that clarifies the project’s logic, combined with a statement of an overarching approach or philosophy that the project considers to be ‘true’ (and for which there is good supporting evidence). See also *assumption*.

**Threat** – A human activity that directly or indirectly degrades one or more targets. Typically tied to one or more stakeholders. See also *direct threat* and *indirect threat*.

**Vision** – A description of the desired state or ultimate condition that a project is working to achieve. A complete vision can include a description of the biodiversity of the site and/or a map of the project area as well as a summary *vision statement*.

**Vision Statement** – A brief summary of the project’s *vision*. A good vision statement meets the criteria of being *relatively general, visionary, and brief*.

**Workplan** – A short-term schedule for implementing an action, monitoring, or operational plan. Workplans typically list tasks required, who will be responsible for each task, when each task will need to be undertaken, and how much money and other resources will be required.

---

**Criteria for Key Terms**

**Vision Statement**: A general statement of the desired state or ultimate condition that a project is working to achieve.

- **Relatively General** – Broadly defined to encompass all project activities
- **Visionary** – Inspirational in outlining the desired change in the state of the targets toward which the project is working
- **Brief** – Simple and succinct so that all project participants can remember it
Goal: A formal statement detailing a desired impact of a project such as the desired future status of a target. A good goal should meet the criteria of being ‘linked to targets and SMART’ as follows:

- **Linked to Targets**: Directly associated with one or more of your targets, representing the desired future status of the target over the long-term.
- **Specific**: Clearly defined so that all people involved in the project have the same understanding of what the terms in the goal mean.
- **Measurable**: Definable in relation to some standard scale (numbers, percentage, fractions, or all/nothing states).
- **Ambitious yet Achievable**: Describes a highly significant aim that has a realistically possibility of being achieved.
- **Relevant**: Clearly related to the WWF’s mission and priorities, and the priorities of other organisations and stakeholders.
- **Time Limited**: Achievable within a specific period of time, generally 10 or more years.

Objective: A formal statement detailing a desired outcome of a project. A good objective meets the criteria of being ‘outcome-oriented and SMART’

- **Outcome Oriented** –Represents necessary changes in critical threats, opportunities, or other factors that affect one or more project goals.
- **Specific** – Clearly defined so that all people involved in the project have the same understanding of what the terms in the objective mean.
- **Measurable** – Definable in relation to some standard scale (numbers, percentage, fractions, or all/nothing states).
- **Achievable**: Practical and appropriate for the project context, and with a strongly possibility of being achieved.
- ** Relevant**: Clearly related to delivery of the project goals, and the priorities of other organisations and stakeholders.
- **Time Limited** – Achievable within a specific period of time.

Strategy: A group of activities with a common focus that work together to reduce threats, capitalize on opportunities, or restore natural systems. Strategies include one or more activities and are design to achieve specific objectives and goals.

- **Linked** – Directly related to achieving a specific goal or objective.
- **Focused** – Outlines specific courses of action that need to be carried out.
- **Feasible** – Accomplishable in light of the project’s resources and constraints.
- **Appropriate** – Acceptable to and fitting within site-specific cultural, social, and biological norms.

Indicator: A measurable entity related to a specific information need such as the status of a target, change in a threat, or progress toward an objective.

- **Measurable** – Able to be recorded and analyzed in quantitative and qualitative terms.
- **Precise** – Define the same way by all people.
- **Consistent** – Not changing over time so it always measures the same thing.
- **Sensitive** – Changes proportionately in response to the actual changes in the condition being measured.
### Annex 1. Summary of Standards of Practice and Outputs

Numbers denote steps and sub-steps, and diamond bullets (♦️) denote outputs. Of course, not all standards or outputs are appropriate under all conditions and for all projects, so you should adapt as necessary.

#### WWF Conservation Project and Programme Management Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0. General Practices</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.1 Involve Stakeholders and be Accountable to them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.2 Embrace Learning and Share Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.3 Consider the Changing Climate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Define…</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Initial Team Composition and Operations</td>
<td>♦️ Selection of initial project team and designation of project leader&lt;br&gt;♦️ Charter outlining how the project team will function&lt;br&gt;♦️ Concept paper outlining some initial thinking on the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Scope and Vision</td>
<td>♦️ A brief description of the project’s scope including general ideas on strategic focus&lt;br&gt;♦️ If appropriate, a map of the project area (GIS file or hand sketch)&lt;br&gt;♦️ A vision statement for the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Targets</td>
<td>♦️ Selection of a limited number of targets and a brief explanation of why they were chosen&lt;br&gt;♦️ Links identified to other programme targets and/or to generalized nature targets&lt;br&gt;♦️ For thematically oriented scopes and where human wellbeing targets are set, an explanation of the links to ecosystem services and biodiversity (via footprint or threat reduction)&lt;br&gt;♦️ A (generally tabular) description of the current and future desired condition of each target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Context and Stakeholders</td>
<td>♦️ An analysis and prioritisation of the critical direct threats/factors affecting the targets&lt;br&gt;♦️ An analysis of key drivers - indirect threats and opportunities – and an explanation that shows the cause-and-effect relationships among factors (e.g. conceptual model)&lt;br&gt;♦️ An analysis of key stakeholders - including an initial strategy for how you will involve and be accountable to them (e.g. beneficiaries, partners)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Design…</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Action Plan: Goals, Objectives and Activities</td>
<td>♦️ Goals for all of your targets (or refined Goals if they were defined in Step 1.3).&lt;br&gt;♦️ Objectives for critical threats and other factors that the project will address.&lt;br&gt;♦️ One or more strategies/activities that will achieve conservation objectives.&lt;br&gt;♦️ Results chains and/or other formal descriptions of both your overarching theory of change and core assumptions, plus the detailed logic of your strategies/activities&lt;br&gt;♦️ Overall Action Plan that compiles goals, objectives, strategies and theory of change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Monitoring Plan</td>
<td>♦️ A list of the indicators the project will measure to track the effectiveness of each activity&lt;br&gt;♦️ Finalised monitoring plan (includes indicators; methods for collecting data; when, where, and by whom each kind of data will be collected; plans for baseline data collection)&lt;br&gt;♦️ A description of how data will be stored and analyzed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Operational Plan</td>
<td>♦️ Estimates of human and other resources required to implement the project and your current and potential sources of these resources&lt;br&gt;♦️ Estimates of financial resources required to implement the project and your current and potential sources of these resources&lt;br&gt;♦️ An assessment of potential risks to the project and how you might mitigate them&lt;br&gt;♦️ An exit strategy, if appropriate&lt;br&gt;♦️ An overall Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Implement…

3.1 Workplans and Budgets
- Detailed short-term workplans for the project showing tasks, who will do them, and when
- Gantt chart and/or calendar of project activities
- Project budgets
- Implementation of strategic plan (action, monitoring, and operational plans)

3.2 Fund Raising
- Project budget refined, if necessary
- Potential funding sources identified
- Funding proposals developed and submitted
- Meetings with donors and other supporting work completed
- Financial resources obtained

3.3 Capacity Building
- Capacity assessments completed
- Strategies developed and implemented to address capacity shortfalls

3.4 Partnerships
- Project team composition revisited
- Key stakeholders identified and brought into project as appropriate
- Information sharing strategies developed and implemented, including a feedback mechanism for partners and project beneficiaries (where relevant).
- Formal arrangements with partners developed and implemented as appropriate

4. Analyze & Adapt…

4.1 Manage Incoming Data on an Ongoing Basis
- Development and regular use of systems for storing and backing up project data
- Uploads of data to Insight CPM database

4.2 Analyze Project Results and Assumptions
- Appropriate scheduled analyses of project results and assumptions
- Documentation of discussions and decisions
- Regular reports to project team members and key stakeholders

4.3 Analyze Operation and Financial Functions/Performance
- Appropriate scheduled analyses of operational and financial data
- Regular financial reports linked to technical reports including financial forecasts

4.4 Adapt Your Plans and Budgets
- Revised project documents and work plans

5. Share…

5.1 Lessons
- Identification of learning questions
- Harvesting of key results and lessons

5.2 Formal Communication Products
- Identification of key audiences
- Development of a communications strategy
- Development and distribution of appropriate communication products
- Use of other people’s communication products

5.3 Feedback and Evaluations
- Regular feedback session – both give and take
- Evaluations and/or audits at appropriate times during, and after, the project cycle

5.4 Performance and Learning Culture
- Demonstrated commitment from leaders to learning and innovation, and ultimately improving the quality of work through adaptive management.
- A safe environment for encouraging experimentation and questioning the status quo
- A commitment to share success and failures with partners and practitioners around the world

Iterate Through the Cycle