Project description

National and local conservation organisations in biodiversity-rich developing countries require institutional capacity in conservation leadership and systemic organisation. This includes areas such as strategic planning, governance, fundraising, monitoring and evaluation and financial management.

To provide the affordable self–sustained institutional capacity development needed, this collaborative project will:

1) Assess organisational capacity gaps in a trial group of conservation NGOs
2) Harness and adapt the best of available training guides and tools
3) Enable a process for practical self-guided application of these materials
4) Enhance learning and leadership within the sector

Shared international support platform and tools will be created for the first time, and methods for measuring progress developed, specifically for institutional capacity development for conservation NGOs. The methods and tools developed by this project will initially be sent to over 150 collaborating partner organisations, before being made available universally.

Aims

The aim of this project will be to provide a self-sustaining institutional capacity development support network for conservation organisations in biodiversity-rich developing countries.

Key activities

- Create a Capacity Development and Conservation Leadership Learning Forum
- Develop, test and share a web-based capacity self-assessment system
- Assemble a web-based resource sharing support community
- Research and test a demand-led mentoring framework
- Research, develop and test a system of measuring and evaluating progress in organisational capacity development of conservation NGOs

Thematic Area:
Capacity building and leadership

Start date: 1st July 2011
Status: Active

Key contacts
Marianne Carter
Fauna and Flora International
Marianne.Carter@fauna-flora.org

Hazell Shokellu Thompson
BirdLife International
hazell.thompson@birdlife.org
Outputs

1) A workshop was held in September 2011 for all project partners to share experiences on NGO capacity development and to feed into the project's outputs.

2) A draft institutional capacity self-assessment framework, with an automated scoring system, has been developed based on consultation with all partners and comprehensive review of existing assessments available.

3) A comprehensive set of organisational development resources have been reviewed and the most relevant selected to be included in the online toolkit and tested by in-country partners.

4) The Capacity for Conservation website, which will guide users through self-assessment, development planning, institutional strengthening and monitoring, is in development.

5) A student on the Masters in Conservation Leadership has completed research into a demand-led mentoring framework.

6) A capacity development forum has been established between project partners.

7) A brief good practice guide on establishing, facilitating, monitoring and evaluating effective networks and discussion forums has been produced.

Conservation impact

Responding to requests and shared development needs of conservation organisations, this project has resulted in the creation of an online resource supporting self-led institutional assessment, development planning, institutional strengthening (using tools selected, shared and tested by conservation organisations) and monitoring (through repeat self-assessment and monitoring against recommended measures of institutional capacity) designed specifically for conservation organisations. Once fully online, this will better enable conservation organisations to design, achieve and sustain their own conservation goals and organisational development, independently.

The project has increased collaboration and information sharing on issues of organisational capacity development between all the participating organisations.

Longer term, we aim to demonstrate that the participating organisations that have used the capacity development resources developed through this project have improved their stability (governance), sustainability (financing and good management), and that this is in turn contributing to threat reduction and improved species and site management.

CCI partners involved:

- BirdLife, FFI, RSPB, and the Tropical Biology Association (TBA)
- The Department of Geography in the University of Cambridge

Other organisations

- Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity in Kazakhstan
- Bird Conservation Nepal
- Foundation for the Philippine Environment
- Society for Conservation of Nature in Liberia
- Ya’axché Conservation Trust, Belize
- Nigerian Conservation Foundation
- Te Ipukarea Society, Cook Islands

Photo credits: Front page - A screenshot of the 'Capacity for Conservation' website, this page – Jacqueline Garget