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Tracking National Progress in Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity's *Programme of Work on Protected Areas*: Report of the first application of a scorecard

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Summary

A scorecard developed to track progress in implementation of the CBD *Programme of Work on Protected Areas* was tested in 17 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and West Africa. The scorecard collects key data along with qualitative expert analysis of progress against a selected set of targets: measuring both rate of implementation and quality of work. Experience shows that there is some further work to be done in ensuring correct appliance of the tool but test results were nonetheless clear enough to identify some trends. The results showed that there has on average been good progress on a range of targets including gap analysis, inland freshwater protection, threat reduction, increasing public awareness and development of regional protected area systems. Less progress has been made on a range of other targets. Serious gaps in the most urgent targets (those that should be completed by or before end of 2009) relate to **national-level assessments of ecosystem services** provided by protected areas; adjusting policies to assess costs and benefits to **indigenous and local communities** and establishing and implementing sustainable **financing plans** for protected area systems. Policy implications of these findings are discussed.

Background

WWF has developed and applied a simple tracking tool to measure progress in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) *Programme of Work on Protected Areas* (POWPA).

The tracking tool aims to:

- ✓ Collect **key data** on the status of protected area networks in a region or country
- ✓ Assess the **extent** to which the various elements of the *Programme of Work on Protected Areas* has been implemented
- ✓ Assess the **quality** of the response

The assessment is largely qualitative and is intended to be repeated several times during the period of the POWPA to track progress and quality of implementation. It is a simple tool that does not replace more detailed assessments but aims to produce a rapid overview. Its main use will be to measure progress over time and plan responses within a particular country rather than to compare between countries; for this reason and because the first implementation is in the nature of a test results from individual countries are not identified in the current draft. The tracking tool was developed in association with the countries taking part in the WWF MAVA project.

Rather than measure every action in the POWPA (over 90) the tracking tool identifies 21 key elements and summarises progress in each by using a multiple choice questionnaire to make application as simple as possible. The box overleaf outlines the main data and assessment issues addressed by the scorecard.

Data sheet: *collecting quantitative information on the following*

- ✓ Existing protected area coverage
- ✓ IUCN management category (I-VI)
- ✓ Governance type (government, co-management, private and community conserved area)
- ✓ Finances

Scorecard: *collecting qualitative estimations of progress and quality of work on*

- ✓ **By 2006:** Establish time-bound and measurable national and regional level protected area **targets**
- ✓ Address the under-representation of **inland water** ecosystems in protected area systems
- ✓ Conduct national and regional **gap analyses** (including terrestrial, inland water and marine ecosystems)
- ✓ Conduct **national-level assessments of ecosystem services** provided by protected areas
- ✓ **By 2008:** Have effective mechanisms in place for mitigating the negative impacts of key **threats**
- ✓ Adjust policies to assess costs and benefits to **indigenous and local communities**
- ✓ Establish and begin to implement sustainable **financing plans** for protected area systems
- ✓ Increase **public awareness**, understanding and appreciation of protected areas
- ✓ **By 2009:** Address **legislative and institutional gaps and barriers** that impede protected areas
- ✓ Complete national and regional systems of **terrestrial and freshwater (in-land) protected areas**
- ✓ Establish where appropriate **regional networks** of protected areas
- ✓ Establish where appropriate new **transboundary** protected areas
- ✓ Develop or update **management plans** for protected areas
- ✓ Comprehensive **capacity building programmes** are in place to develop knowledge and skills
- ✓ Assess needs for and develop **appropriate technologies, tools and innovative approaches**
- ✓ Implement **management effectiveness** evaluations at national level of at least 30% of protected areas
- ✓ Establish effective national and regional **monitoring systems** for protected-area coverage
- ✓ **By 2012:** Complete establishment of national and regional systems of **marine protected areas**
- ✓ All protected areas to have **effective management** in existence including monitoring and best practices
- ✓ **By 2015:** **Integrate** systems of protected areas into broader land/seascape
- ✓ Promotion of different **governance types** for protected areas, including participatory governance

A national 'score' for both progress and quality can be calculated as an average that omits questions irrelevant to a particular country (e.g. questions about marine protection in Switzerland). This is achieved by *dividing the overall score for the two questions types by the fraction of questions answered* (note: assessors should justify why any question is omitted).

Score on progress: scoring is on a five point scale

4	= completed (this can include progress made before PoWPA was agreed)
3	= well underway
2	= started but still some important work needed
1	= just started but not moving fast enough to meet target date
0	= not started or recognised (in this case quality should also be scored 0)

Quality of progress: scoring is on a three point, colour coded scale

4	= high quality
2	= medium quality
0	= low quality

Results

The scorecard was applied in a range of countries (see appendix) and one region. In some countries alternative views from government and NGOs were collected. All these provide rich material for planning implementation of the MAVA project and more generally for strategic responses within WWF and governments to the POWPA on a national and regional level. For the purposes of this preliminary assessment, government views have been taken when there was a choice and only full national assessments have been included in the analysis. Table 1 below summarises the range of scores for implementation and quality of response

Table 1: Summary of scores

Question	Columns give number of countries gaining a particular score									
	Implementation						Quality			
	0	1	2	3	4	n/a	0	2	4	n/a
Targets	0	3	4	1	9	0	1	11	4	1
Inland water systems	1	0	3	9	3	0	1	11	4	1
Gap analysis	0	6	4	7	2	0	3	9	4	1
Ecosystem services	6	4	4	3	0	0	12	4	2	0
Threat reduction	0	1	8	6	2	0	1	14	2	0
Indigenous/local com	1	9	4	3	0	0	11	5	1	0
Financing plans	1	6	7	1	2	0	7	9	1	0
Awareness / education	0	3	10	3	1	0	4	10	3	0
Enabling environment	0	0	5	11	1	0	3	13	2	0
Terr. & F/water system	1	2	8	4	1	1	3	12	1	1
Regional PA networks	0	5	6	5	1	0	5	9	0	2
Transboundary PAs	1	2	5	5	2	1	3	9	1	3
Management plans	0	5	5	5	1	0	2	9	6	0
Capacity building	0	6	8	2	1	0	8	5	3	0
Tools & approaches	2	7	5	2	1	0	6	8	2	1
Mgt effectiveness eval	1	7	4	3	2	0	9	4	3	1
Monitoring systems	0	9	4	3	1	0	5	9	3	1
Marine PAs	0	4	4	0	2	7	3	4	2	8
Mgt standards	1	3	9	3	1	0	4	11	2	0
Ecosystem approach	1	5	4	2	4	0	7	5	5	0
Governance	4	3	5	1	3	0	4	8	2	1

Results in terms of implementation of key targets and implications for WWF

The table shows that results between countries are extremely variable and virtually every target has responses ranging from countries that have completed the action to others that have failed to start or only made modest progress. Nonetheless, some trends emerge. Governments and/or NGOs believed that implementation of the POWPA had generally been successful in terms of:

- ✓ Progress towards conservation of inland water systems
- ✓ Gap analysis to identify new protected areas
- ✓ Threat reduction (e.g. illegal exploitation of resources, invasive plants and animals etc)
- ✓ Public awareness and education programmes
- ✓ Creating an enabling environment by removing perverse incentives etc
- ✓ Developing terrestrial and freshwater protected areas systems
- ✓ Promoting regional protected area networks including transboundary protected areas

Conversely, implementation had been on average much less successful with respect to:

- ✓ Valuing and addressing ecosystem services within protected area networks
- ✓ Addressing needs of indigenous and local communities
- ✓ Developing and implementing financing plans
- ✓ Capacity building in terms of training, development etc

- ✓ Developing new tools and approaches to help improve management
- ✓ Management effectiveness evaluation of protected areas
- ✓ Application of monitoring systems to track progress over time
- ✓ Progress with marine protected areas
- ✓ Implementing the ecosystem approach within and between protected areas
- ✓ Using new governance approaches such as participatory approaches

However, these “low scorers” need further evaluation as some have relatively distant target dates and governments are understandably and legitimately addressing the targets with the closest deadlines first. When the targets with deadlines for 2006, 2008 and 2009 are extracted from the list, those where many countries report zero or slow progress include the following:

- ✓ Conduct **national-level assessments of ecosystem services** provided by protected areas and integrate the use of economic valuation and natural resource accounting tools into national planning processes
- ✓ Adjust policies to assess costs and benefits to **indigenous and local communities**, review access and equitable sharing of positive benefits and avoid negative impacts
- ✓ Establish and begin to implement sustainable **financing plans** for protected area systems

WWF already has undertaken considerable work on all of these issues including development of guidelines and tools for policy-making and assessment. Further promotion of these and liaison with active POWPA countries could help to increase progress in these areas.

Results in terms of quality

Quality scoring was generally less successful and in some cases did not make sense (countries scored themselves high quality for actions that had not yet begun for example) and further explanation of this element may be needed within the scorecard. Nonetheless, some general lessons emerge, including in particular some key areas where quality of response was judged to be low by most participating countries, which included in particular:

- ✓ Valuation of ecosystem services provided by protected areas
- ✓ Policies to assess costs and benefits to indigenous and local communities
- ✓ Management effectiveness evaluation
- ✓ Capacity building for protected area managers and staff
- ✓ Integrating protected areas into wider landscapes/ seascapes with the ecosystem approach

This list closely mirrors the areas where countries reported slow progress on implementation but even more countries reported poor quality of response, which may infer that lack of tools and understanding of best practice was a key problem here.

Conclusions and recommendations

Preliminary results suggest that the scorecard is a good way to gain a rapid overview of how well the POWPA is being applied and to track progress over time. There is however a need for further work on explaining implementation; assessors in some countries clearly failed to understand parts of the assessment system and our judgement is that some scores were also more optimistic than progress in the country merits. WWF will continue to use the scorecard and to refine and improve reporting and extend the countries in which it is applied. Specific country analysis will be used to help prioritise programmes in individual countries in which WWF is active. In general terms, results suggest that WWF should use its existing capacity to focus on some key areas where countries report that responses to the POWPA are often falling short of targets, in particular:

- ✓ Valuation of ecosystem services provided by protected areas
- ✓ Integrating the needs of indigenous and local peoples into protected areas
- ✓ Developing sustainable financing plans for protected areas and systems
- ✓ Implementing management effectiveness evaluations