



Environment Program Highlights

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Protecting Wildlife in the Okavango Delta

Responding to recent research indicating potentially significant wildlife declines, USAID/SA's Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program (SAREP) brought together over 100 regional, national and local conservationists, researchers, and representatives from non-governmental organizations for a workshop entitled "An Urgent Call to Define an Improved Adaptive Management and Research Strategy for the Okavango Delta."

The workshop, held on January 26-27, 2012 in Maun, Botswana and organized in collaboration with the Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), focused on identifying monitoring actions to address the region's declining biodiversity. Two working groups were formed to develop a robust research strategy and define activities to continually monitor the region's wildlife and preemptively identify any threats to populations and species.

The event united a body of experts with the knowledge and commitment to ensure critical actions to protect the delta's biodiversity are incorporated into national policy. The conference highlighted the need for urgent action, provided a long-term strategy for wildlife researching and monitoring, and offered a roadmap for strengthening conservation practices.

U.S. MISSION TO SA CELEBRATES EARTH DAY

In commemoration of Earth Day, USAID hosted a Mission-wide gathering to raise awareness about sustainability and environmental stewardship. Over 100 partners and staff from of multiple USG agencies attended the event, the first celebration of its kind at USAID/ Southern Africa. The U.S. Ambassador to South Africa delivered opening remarks, calling attention to the range of steps the Mission is taking to reduce energy use and improve efficiency, but also opportunities to make further improvements.



The USAID Green Team with our implementing partners.

Mission staff organized a variety of interactive displays around sustainable food production and transportation, while a partner organization, the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), highlighted its work to promote climate adaptation and sustainable technologies such as solar cookers and rain water harvesting systems.

The event generated sparked many ideas for improving operational efficiency and putting sustainable practices into action. To advance some of the ideas presented on Earth Day, the U.S. Ambassador announced that the U.S. Mission in South Africa would be joining the League of Green Embassies. An immediate first step already in motion is the planning for USAID to establish a demonstration garden on its property.

Biodiversity "Hotspots" Identified in Angola



In the Okavango River Delta, which stretches across Namibia, Botswana, and Angola, climate change is altering the water cycles on which wildlife and communities depend.

After finalizing an Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with the Angolan Ministry of Environment, SAREP conducted a series of workshops to identify threats to biodiversity, completed a biodiversity action plan, and developed plans to conduct detailed surveys of wildlife within the Angolan portion of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin.

Specifically, SAREP held a series of workshops with government counterparts and sector experts to discuss and identify "hot spots" - areas (or communities) where the convergence of threatened biodiversity, limited access to water and sanitation, and unsustainable livelihoods necessitates focused attention and intervention - primarily in the Cuando-Cubango province but also in the peripheral areas of the basin covered by small portions of the Huila, Bie, Huambo and Moxico provinces.

The program also prepared a biodiversity action plan for the GoA, prescribing numerous measures to mitigate biodiversity risks in Angola, such as training ministry staff and developing protected area management plans.

PROVIDING DRINKING WATER TO COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN NAMIBIA

In March, SAREP formalized a collaboration agreement with the Denner Foundation, an NGO funded by the Roman Catholic Church Diocese of Mainz in Germany, and the Government of Namibia to jointly improve water supplies for approximately 20,000 people in four rural communities in the Kavango region.



Providing clean drinking water to communities.

Through this agreement, on-the-ground technical assistance, environmental impact assessment, project management, and water quality testing support from SAREP will leverage N\$ 2.25 million (US\$280,000) from the Denner Foundation for the costs of design and construction of water supply systems. SAREP is working closely with the Denner Foundation on the ground to install and commission all of the above schemes by June 30, 2012.

USAID AND PARTNERS ATTEND IMPROVED COOKSTOVE FORUM

USAID participated in a roundtable of the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves. Kris Balderston, U.S. Special Representative for Global Partnerships, led the forum, which focused on opportunities for scaling up distribution and uptake of clean cookstoves in Southern Africa.



The WESSA team showcasing one of their cookstove inventions at the Earth Day event held at USAID offices.

The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves is a new public-private partnership led by the United Nations Foundation with over 300 partners, including over 30 countries, working together to help overcome the market barriers that currently impede the production, deployment, and use of clean cookstoves in the developing world. A USAID partner, the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), participated in the discussion in line with its plans to undertake research on the sociology of cookstove adoption.

Marine Protected Area Workshop

In February, USAID hosted the Climate Change Adaptation in Marine Protected Areas of the Western Indian Ocean workshop where marine protected area managers from the eight countries, including South Africa, shared perspectives on the challenges of managing marine and fisheries resources in the face of climate change.



Identifying climate change capacity building needs for coastal and marine protected areas in the WIO region.

Researchers from UCT, CSIR and others presented state-of-the-art models and participants developed a collaborative framework for capacity-building to address climate change in coastal and deep water marine protected areas. The workshop report and poster presentations are available on the new Adaptation Partnership website at <http://www.adaptationpartnership.org/activities>.

New Sustainability Commons Launched

USAID attended the launch of the Sol Plaatjie Sustainability Commons launch, held at the Kimberly Library on the 14th February 2012. With USAID support,



The WESSA team at the launch of the Sustainability Commons in Kimberly.

WESSA is establishing eleven 'Sustainability Commons', which are which are interactive social learning centers that host a variety of trainings and workshops and provide an opportunity for South Africans to learn about climate-adapted technologies. Sol Plaatjie municipality, working with WESSA and USAID, is developing an innovative urban sustainability commons at the Kimberly municipal library. Visitors to the library, as well as trainees on capacity building courses, are now able to try out more than twenty sustainability technologies, from water filtering to rain water capture.

The U.S. Agency for International Development provides economic, development and humanitarian assistance worldwide. USAID supports people's efforts to develop themselves and their countries. In Southern Africa, the United States seeks to increase trade and strengthen economic ties within the region, address the HIV/AIDS crisis, mitigate recurrent food insecurity, and strengthen democracy to reduce the risk of conflict in the region. USAID/Southern Africa, located in Pretoria, South Africa, complements and enhances USAID's bilateral programs, supporting unique and innovative regional activities and providing a range of services to assist USAID missions in the region.

USAID/SA, P.O. Box 43, Pretoria, 0027. Tel: 27 (012) 452 2000, Fax: 27 (012) 460 3177, Website: <http://sa.usaid.gov>

For more information about USAID/Southern Africa Environmental projects, go to: http://sa.usaid.gov/southern_africa/node/70