

# COMPACT

Engaging local communities in stewardship of globally significant protected areas

**SGP** The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY  
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# COMPACT

COMPACT - Demonstrating how community-based initiatives can significantly increase the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in and around World Heritage Sites.

For the past decade, the Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation Programme (COMPACT) has been testing – in diverse settings – an innovative model for engaging communities in conservation. Working in nine countries, COMPACT is demonstrating that community-based initiatives can significantly increase the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in globally significant protected areas while helping to improve the livelihoods of local people.

COMPACT is an initiative of the UNDP/Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (SGP), the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and other partners. Launched in 2000, it aims to replicate the success of SGP at the national scale for protected landscapes, including natural UNESCO World Heritage Sites and overlapping Biosphere Reserves recognized for their Outstanding Universal Value. COMPACT's founding partners include the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, whose involvement ensures that COMPACT addresses the co-management priorities of communities within the governance models adopted by World Heritage Sites.

With an emphasis on complementing and adding value to existing conservation programmes, COMPACT uses small grants to support clusters of community-based activities that are intended to strengthen biodiversity conservation in and around protected areas. Now in its second phase of work, COMPACT focuses on eight globally significant protected areas (including one transboundary site), which are either current or proposed World Heritage Sites.



- \* Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System, Belize
- \* Morne Trois Pitons National Park, Dominica
- \* Mount Kenya National Park, Kenya\*
- \* Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, Mexico\*
- \* Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Philippines\*
- \* Mount Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania
- \* The Djoudj-Djawaling Transboundary Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site, Senegal and Mauritania\*
- \* A cluster of five protected areas in South-West Madagascar anticipating World Heritage listing between 2010 and 2012

\*Sites overlapping with Biosphere Reserves

## Responding to challenges facing globally significant protected areas world-wide

COMPACT was created in 2000 to respond to a number of challenges facing protected areas at the global level. A primary motive was that, while the importance of engaging local communities in conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity was widely acknowledged, there had only been limited prior success with Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs). COMPACT was established as a structured experiment with ICDPs in diverse settings – a response to the need for on-the-ground experience demonstrating linkages between improving local livelihoods and enhancing biodiversity conservation.

**Demonstrating constructive ways of involving local stakeholders in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in and around protected areas remains one of the most important challenges and priorities for nature conservation at the beginning of the 21st century.**

COMPACT's establishment addressed the growing recognition of the need to conserve biodiversity at relatively large ecosystem and landscape scales. Conservation across large landscapes, which encompass a mosaic of land types and uses, requires working with a diverse range of communities and stakeholders.

Further, it responded to the fact that biodiversity conservation efforts – and protected areas in particular – are under increasing pressure to demonstrate that they can contribute to economic development and poverty alleviation, in particular to achieving the 2015 Millennium Development goals. A watershed event was the 2003 IUCN World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa, which acknowledged the role of indigenous and local communities in protected areas – recognizing the role of these communities in collaborative management of protected areas and the importance of traditional conservation practices of these communities, as expressed in Indigenous and Community-Conserved Areas (ICCAs). Subsequently, the 7th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP7, Kuala Lumpur, 2004) produced an ambitious Programme of Work (POW) on Protected Areas, which included an element on “Governance, Participation, Equity, and Benefit-sharing. These and other developments have led to broad recognition in conservation policy arenas of the link between local livelihoods and reduced pressure on resources, the importance of traditional knowledge (TK) systems in resource

## The Small Grants Programme (SGP) – “The People’s GEF”

For almost two decades, the Small Grants Programme (SGP) has been working with communities around the world to combat the most critical environmental problems and has successfully demonstrated that supporting communities in their efforts to achieve more sustainable livelihoods is not only possible, but extremely important in bringing about change and achieving global environmental benefits. Launched in 1992, the year of the Rio Earth Summit, SGP embodies the very essence of sustainable development. SGP channels financial and technical support directly to community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and indigenous peoples' organizations in developing countries for activities that conserve and restore the environment while enhancing people's well-being and livelihoods. With presence in 122 countries and more than 13,500 grants awarded worldwide, SGP is showing that community action can maintain the fine balance between human needs and environmental imperatives.

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the other GEF Implementing Agencies. Through strategic partnerships, SGP has been able to match programme funding from the GEF (to-date approximately US\$400 million) with cash and in-kind contributions for a total financial impact of over US\$800 million since the programme's inception. The maximum grant amount awarded per project is US\$50,000, with an average of about US\$ 35,000. Projects are therefore relatively small in size, and intended to demonstrate innovative approaches of addressing environmental problems at the community level.

The SGP focal areas are in support of GEF priorities and include: conservation of biodiversity, climate change mitigation and resilience, protection of international waters, reduction of the impact of persistent organic pollutants, and prevention of land degradation. Its principal objectives are to:

- \* **Build partnerships and networks of stakeholders to support and strengthen community, NGO and national capacities to address global environmental problems and promote sustainable development.**
- \* **Ensure that conservation and sustainable development strategies and projects that protect the global environment are understood and practised by communities and other key stakeholders.**
- \* **Develop community-level strategies and implement technologies to reduce threats to the global environment if they are replicated over time.**
- \* **Gather lessons from community-level experience and initiate the sharing of successful community-level strategies and innovations among CBOs and NGOs, host governments, development aid agencies, GEF and others working on a regional or global scale.**

SGP links global, national and local issues through a transparent, participatory and country-driven approach to project planning, design and implementation. Grants are made directly to CBOs, NGOs and indigenous peoples' in recognition of the key role they play as a resource and constituency for environment and development concerns. The decentralized structure of SGP encourages maximum country, and community-level, ownership and initiative.

SGP is more than simply a fund that provides small grants to CBOs and NGOs for environmental conservation. By raising public awareness, building partnerships and promoting policy dialogue, SGP seeks to promote an enabling environment within countries for achieving sustainable development and addressing global environmental issues. SGP has helped CBOs, NGOs and countries to simultaneously support local, community-based initiatives while meeting national obligations and global commitments.

management, and the connections between biological and cultural diversity

A particular challenge is that World Heritage Sites (WHS) –despite their global significance and striking values – are often better known globally than locally. While World Heritage designation presents a tremendous opportunity because “the world comes to you,” the reality is that this potential is often poorly understood. COMPACT was launched in 2000 in recognition of the fact that, as priority conservation areas for humankind, World Heritage sites could provide “an ideal framework for boosting cooperation between intergovernmental agencies, governments, and civil society” in order to halt or reverse critical threats to globally significant biodiversity.” A decade on, COMPACT has successfully demonstrated that this vision can be achieved.

Since its inception, SGP has confronted very real challenges in working with communities to reconcile global environmental priorities with local community needs - challenges that have been met in different ways across the globe depending on particular economic, cultural, political and environmental conditions. In the process, SGP became known as "the people's GEF".



# The COMPACT model: Piloting the Landscape Approach in Diverse Settings

The COMPACT model builds on the tremendous experience of SGP and its established track record of achieving and, especially, sustaining environmental benefits over time. Like SGP, the COMPACT approach is based on fostering a strong sense of ownership and responsibility by local communities, and is rooted in principles such as:

- \* The importance of ownership and responsibility - Global environmental problems can best be addressed if local people are involved and there are direct community benefits and ownership.
- \* The cost-effectiveness of small grants – With small amounts of funding members of local communities can undertake activities that will make a significant difference in their lives and environments with global benefits.
- \* The crucial role of social capital – Thoughtful investment in local institutions and individuals can help build the capacity of communities for stewardship of their environments.
- \* Sharing power – Supporting community-led initiatives requires trust, flexibility and patience. Transparent processes and broad public participation are key to ensuring community engagement and contribute to strengthening civil society.
- \* Making a commitment over time – Community-driven processes take time and require a long-term commitment of support.

the results of the baseline assessments are discussed and finalized with stakeholders through regular meetings.

Once completed, each baseline assessment provides a “snapshot” of the site, useful in analyzing emerging trends. COMPACT has developed a conceptual model to ensure that this rich assemblage of information can effectively guide its planning. The conceptual model is a diagrammatic tool documenting site-level processes, threats and opportunities believed to impact biodiversity conservation. With these tools in place, each COMPACT team then develops a site strategy, highlighting major threats, opportunities and priority

COMPACT takes a landscape approach – one based on supporting local communities in their stewardship of protected areas and the broader landscape/seascape. Refined over a decade of work, COMPACT’s methodology is designed to pilot the landscape approach in a wide range of ecological and socio-economic situations. Rooted in science, this methodology is also highly participatory in nature, seeking to engage local people and other stakeholders in consultation throughout the process.

The COMPACT methodology relies on three closely linked elements: *a baseline assessment*, which serves as the foundation for the COMPACT *conceptual model* and *site strategy* in that particular COMPACT country. This approach was designed to give considerable flexibility to local decision-makers while ensuring that the overall goals of the conservation of globally significant biodiversity remain clearly in focus. This first stage of the process guides the grant-giving programme in the landscape surrounding the World Heritage Site, while providing the basis for future *monitoring* and *evaluation*.

At the outset, as part of the consultation process at each participating World Heritage Site, COMPACT conducts a thorough *baseline assessment* working closely with key stakeholders and local institutions. These assessments document the current knowledge of the biodiversity status and trends in and around each World Heritage site (or cluster of sites) identifying, for example, conservation objectives, economic activities, major threats, key management issues, existing programmes and relationships with local communities. Socio-economic, institutional and cultural questions are also explored, such as the livelihood sources for local communities and the capacities of local and national organizations. Consultations are held to ensure active participation by stakeholders throughout the planning process, and

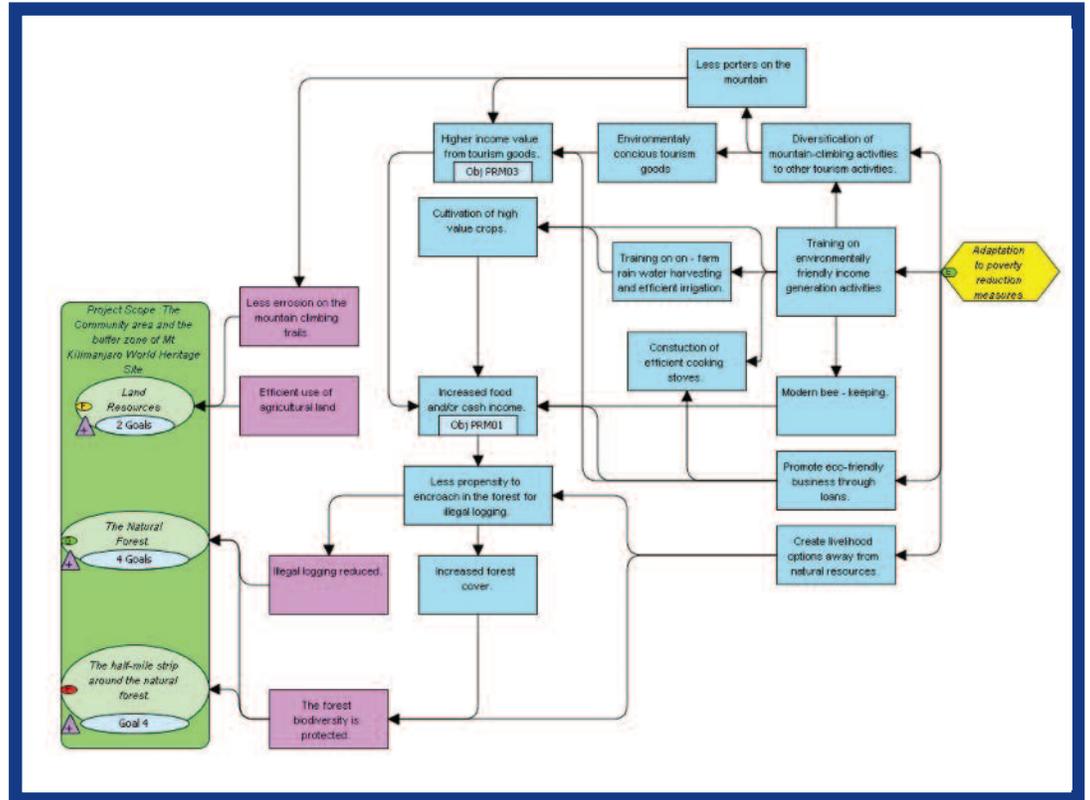
**COMPACT’s experience on the ground in nine countries tells the story of how the landscape approach can work in diverse settings, increasing the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation, while engaging communities in stewardship and helping to improve the livelihoods of local people.**

Legend Table	
	Project
	Conceptual Model
	Results Chain
	Target
	Direct Threat
	Contributing Factor
	Intermediate Result
	Threat Reduction Result
	Strategy
	Goal
	Objective
	Indicator
	Stress
	Text Box
	Group Box
	Task
	Method
	Activity
	Measurement

	The Natural Forest.
	1a. By 2015 there should be a 200% increase of community tree nurseries and woodlots.
	Diversified food and cash crops.
	Number of entities harvesting rain water.
	The number of fire breakouts in the forest per year.
	1b. By 2015 there should be a 50% decrease in illegal logging.
	Diversified food and cash crops.

actions. The site strategy provides an important framework for the allocation of resources; implementation of grants and other activities; and assessment of results.

In each site a Local Coordinator manages COMPACT under the direction of the SGP Country Programme, and a Local Consultative Body. The Local Coordinator is responsible for planning and implementing the COMPACT programme, and serves as a key link between communities, diverse stakeholders, and the SGP National Steering Committee. These dedicated and talented individuals know the local context well and play a critical role in facilitating community involvement and building local capacity for conservation.



COMPACT's governance structure at the local level parallels that of SGP, operating in a decentralized, democratic and transparent manner. The Local Consultative Body represents key project stakeholders, including the protected area management authorities, representatives of local communities, NGOs active in the region, local research institutions, local government, the private sector, and donors. The Local Consultative Body helps ensure that dialogue, coordination and consensus-building takes place among key stakeholders at the protected area level. It generally makes recommendations on grant proposals, with final project approval being carried out by the SGP National Steering Committee.

# BELIZE

Responding to a range of threats facing the **Belize Barrier Reef System (BBRS)**, the mission of COMPACT in Belize has been to focus on preserving the integrity and character of the BBRS by developing and supporting a range of conservation and sustainable livelihood activities through transparent and democratic partnerships with coastal communities and other stakeholders.

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996, the Belize Barrier Reef System encompasses seven marine protected areas (MPAs) with a total area of 116,148 hectares. It is the second largest barrier reef system in the world (after the Great Barrier Reef in Australia). Described by Charles Darwin in 1842 as “the most remarkable reef in the West Indies, it is Belize's top tourist destination, attracting almost half of its 260,000 annual visitors, and is vital to its fishing industry. The Belize Barrier Reef System is home to a large diversity of plants and animals, and is one of the

most diverse ecosystems of the world. Twenty-two coastal communities and a few inland communities live adjacent to the BBRS World Heritage Site and their coastal livelihoods depend on the health of the reef system for activities such as fishing and tourism.

Despite the protective measures put in place over the last two decades, the reef remains under threat from pollution, dredging and sand mining for construction, development in sensitive coastal areas, uncontrolled tourism, shipping, fishing and hurricanes. The inevitable and complex consequences of global climate change are a grave threat to marine biological processes worldwide, and the Belize Barrier Reef System is no exception. Climate change is having an impact on ecosystem goods and services and threatening human food security in the BBRS. Scientists suggest that over 40 percent of Belize's coral reefs have been damaged since 1998.

“*COMPACT empowers locals towards protecting the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System World Heritage Site.*”

*Ms. Christina Garcia  
Environmental Education Officer  
Southern Environmental Association*

COMPACT's establishment in Belize grew out of a year-long participatory process which brought together key stakeholders in a national forum to discuss the conservation and sustainable use of the Belize Barrier Reef System (members of this committee went on to serve as founding members of the Local Consultative Body for COMPACT.) As part of this process, the baseline assessment revealed the degree of alienation felt by the fishing community toward the MPAs, which they viewed as having been declared in order to restrict fishers' access to traditional fishing areas and favor tourism development. In response, COMPACT's site strategy prioritized helping fishers benefit from the

MPAs through co-management arrangements and alternative livelihood initiatives. Further, the assessment revealed a lack of awareness of the World Heritage Site among coastal communities. Thus emphasis was put on the need to help “enlighten local users about the global value of the resource for which they are stewards.”



Since COMPACT was launched as a pilot project in Belize in 2001, a total of 27 grants have been approved, totaling almost US\$1.5 million. These projects have supported a range of conservation and livelihood activities led by CBOs and NGOs working with coastal communities in the following areas:

- \* **Sustainable livelihoods (including skills and product development);**
- \* **Protection, conservation and sustainable management of resources; and**
- \* **Strengthening of management capacities for stakeholders that impact the Belize Barrier Reef World Heritage Site.**

In this current phase of work in Belize, a number of activities have focused on building the institutional and leadership capacity of community groups engaged in stewardship of the reef. For example, COMPACT-Belize is matching grantees in remote areas with mentors,

so that these grassroots groups have the resources they need to be successful.

Another excellent example is the Community Stewards project, which seeks to build the capacity of communities within the Maya Mountains Marine Corridor -- a ridge-to-reef conservation area -- for co-management of protected areas, including the Port Honduras Marine Reserve (part of the WHS). Led by the organization TIDE, the Community Stewards project has reached 15 resource-users in a year-long programme of training in marine and terrestrial laws, technical skills such as GPS, resource management and communication skills. An exchange with Guatemala introduced participants to the governance and management of protected areas by indigenous and local



communities in a different context. The project is seen as a stepping stone for further educational activities in these communities, with a master class in Catch Shares management and an exchange with Mexico planned for the near future.

One of the most important shifts has been in the attitude of fishermen and others in the coastal communities that depend on the health of the Belize Barrier Reef System. Fishermen once opposed to the MPAs have become among their greatest advocates. Many are leading efforts to expand the boundaries of MPAs within the Belize Barrier Reef System and to improve fisheries management policies within the reef.



Many of the community groups implementing projects supported by COMPACT are members of the advisory board and thus play a key role in decision-making. Other project highlights include:

- \* A marine tour guide training programme aimed at increasing appreciation and stewardship of natural resources within the barrier reef and improving compliance with Fisheries and MPA regulations in Gladden Spit, Silk Caye Marine Reserve and the Laughing Bird Caye National Park, particularly within Conservation (“No-Take”) Zones. It has reached 45 tour guides, reducing threats from tourism activities and facilitating the participation of local tour guides in monitoring of endangered wildlife, such as whale sharks. Project results include increased public understanding of the goals of the BBRRS World Heritage Site. In addition, it has resulted in enhanced communication, collaboration and partnerships among park managers and concerned groups at local, national and international levels.
- \* In Sarteneja village, a community largely dependent on harvest of marine resources (lobster, conch and finfish), COMPACT has supported a project to provide alternative livelihoods in order to reduce pressure on the declining fisheries resource. The project has focused on increasing local awareness of the value and unique attributes of the Bacalar Chico National Park and Marine Reserve, while training local tour guides and helping to market the eco-tourism and educational tourism potential of the area. The project culminated in the publishing of the first ever field guide on Bacalar Chico National Park and Marine Reserve. Also as a result, 19 tour guides from three fishing communities were trained and are now earning income by providing tours and study programmes.

“ *COMPACT in Belize is Supporting Preservation of the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System World Heritage Site for future generations.* ”

*Mrs. Linda Searle  
Project Manager  
Environmental Conservation Organization*



# KENYA

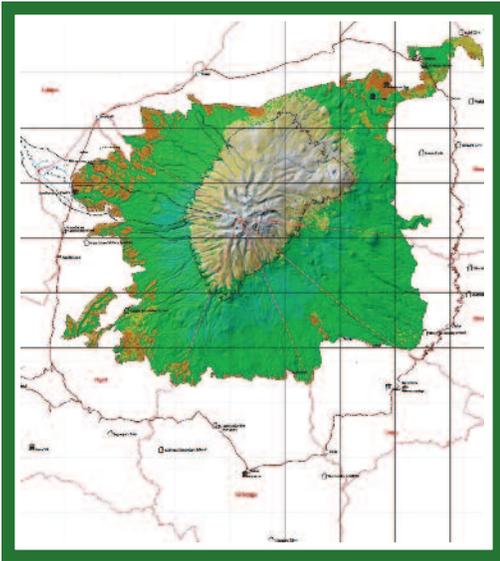
At 5,199 meters (17,057 Feet) above sea level, **Mount Kenya** is the second highest mountain in Africa after Mt. Kilimanjaro. Mt. Kenya straddles the equator and is a vital water catchment area with its rugged glacier-clad summits and forested middle slopes. Mt. Kenya has 13 endemic species, including the endemic mole rat and forest birds such as the green ibis (a local Mount Kenya race), Ayer's hawk eagle, Abyssinian long-eared owl, scaly francolin and numerous sunbirds. Traditionally, the mountain was sacred to the Kikuyu and Meru communities living in the peripheral zone who believed that Ngai (God) dwelled at the peak. Mt. Kenya has played an important role in Kenya's history, for example as a hiding place for Mau Mau freedom fighters and the site where the Kenyan flag was hoisted by Mr. Kiso Muniyau on Independence Day, December 12th 1963.

Mt. Kenya was gazetted as a National Park in 1949 and designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1978. In 1997, the combined National Park and surrounding Forest Reserve was declared as the Mt. Kenya World Heritage Site. Despite national and international recognition and protection, Mt. Kenya has been substantially degraded due to poor management and the weak implementation of government policies and laws. An aerial survey conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the Kenya Forests Working Group (KFWG) in 1999 showed the extent of destruction of the Mt. Kenya, Imenti and Ngare Ndare forests. Human activities including logging of indigenous trees, charcoal production, cattle grazing, landslides and marijuana cultivation contributed to the degradation.

“ *Since its inception in 2001, COMPACT has supported 67 projects through grants to community groups and NGOs amounting to over \$2 million* ”

In response to these challenges, the COMPACT programme was established in Mt. Kenya in 2001. In order to promote a common understanding of the linkages between destructive practices and the loss of biodiversity, COMPACT organized a series of workshops targeted at members of the surrounding communities, protected area managers, such as KWS and the Kenya Forests Service (KFS - formerly Forest Department) officers, international donors, research institutions and the private sector. Operating under the theme, *To contribute to the conservation of the Mt. Kenya World Heritage Site*, the stakeholders agreed to assist communities to

identify and develop income-generating activities to reduce the need to over-exploit the Mt. Kenya forests and to create awareness about the local, national and international importance of Mt. Kenya and its status as a World Heritage Site. The Mt. Kenya Donor/Partner Forum and the Mt. Kenya Grantees Network were created to promote the exchange of information and facilitate greater coordination of the activities of various stakeholders working in the region.



Since its inception in 2001, COMPACT has supported 67 projects through grants to community groups and NGOs amounting to over \$2 million, while the communities have contributed over \$1.1 million as co-financing in cash and in kind to the various projects. These projects have helped communities participate in forest restoration processes, protect endangered wildlife and develop alternative livelihood activities that reduce pressure on the resources within the Mt. Kenya forest. COMPACT has built partnerships with local stakeholders and communities to promote awareness that Mt. Kenya is a World Heritage Site. Through these partnerships COMPACT has initiated projects that reduce pressure on the mountain's natural resources while providing alternative income sources for the forest communities.

In addition, other communities are implementing eco-tourism ventures that promote positive cultural practices while enhancing conservation. COMPACT is also supporting various nature-based income-generating activities and the branding of farm products

that are responsibly produced around the Mt. Kenya World Heritage Site. Environmental education and capacity development activities are also being implemented targeting various age groups and socio-economic strata of the community. As a result of the activities supported by COMPACT, there is now greater consciousness of environmental issues in general and greater participation of local communities in the conservation of the Mt. Kenya World Heritage Site.

## Sample accomplishments:

- \* Over 600 hectares of indigenous forest have been rehabilitated and individuals who illegally harvested forest resources in the past have been converted to become protectors of the mountain and its resources.
- \* Clean and renewable sources of energy have been developed and promoted including micro-hydropower, wind energy and biogas. Further, these projects have created jobs while contributing to improving the living standards of rural communities.
- \* Communities have been facilitated to form Water Resource Users Associations and Community Forestry Associations that are engaged in managing these critical resources in collaboration with the relevant government agencies for the benefit of all.



# MEXICO

Land-sea linkages are important in the **Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve** in Mexico's eastern Yucatan Peninsula, which spans almost one-third of the Caribbean coast of Mexico. At over 650,000 hectares, the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve is the largest protected area in the Mexican Caribbean. Approximately 80% of the reserve is terrestrial, while 20% is marine. Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987, Sian Ka'an was first recognized as Biosphere Reserve in 1986, with a core zone composed of two terrestrial areas and 1 marine area. Its location on a partially emerged coastal limestone plain has resulted in unique geological features, such as sinkholes (cenotes) and underground rivers, important for their high biodiversity and species endemism. In addition to high floristic diversity and the presence of many endangered mammal species, the Biosphere Reserve supports the second largest community of aquatic birds in Mexico and is a key part of the migratory bird corridor between North and South America. It protects a portion of the Meso-American Barrier Reef, the second largest in the world. As part of the Sian Ka'an –Calakmul connector, it contributes to connectivity across the forested landscape within the Meso-American Biological Corridor.

The landscape is also rich in cultural values, an expression of the past and present Mayan communities living in the area. Located in the

ancient Mayan regions of *Cohuah* and *Uaymil*, the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve protects at least 40 archeological sites of pre-Hispanic culture. Today, small communities in and around the reserve are predominantly of Mayan origin and a number of indigenous languages are spoken in the area. The population inside the Reserve is estimated at 2,000 inhabitants, with most settlements concentrated in the coastal regions. The Mayan communities hold possession of the land in the form of *ejido* land tenure.

Although it is in the least developed part of Quintana Roo, the World Heritage site still faces a number of threats. These include: the cultivation of coconut, which has replaced up to 60 percent of the natural vegetation on the coastal dunes. Fires lit for agricultural clearance have affected a large area and soil erosion is increasing in deforested areas. Regular cyclones and forest fires also occur regularly in the region, highlighting the fragility of the ecosystem. Lobster poaching and illegal fishing also continue. Of particular concern is the rapid expansion of tourism along the coast in the north of the reserve since the arrival of tourists in the 1970s. Uncontrolled urban growth has led to inadequate sewerage systems, which discharge directly into the sea and threaten the reef. Industrial, agricultural and domestic pollution also affect the hydrographic basin of the reserve.

“Since *COMPACT* was launched as a pilot project in Mexico in 2001, a total of 85 grants have been approved, totalling almost US\$2 million.”

*COMPACT-Mexico* was launched in 2000, building on the substantial experience of the SGP prior decade of work in the Yucatan Peninsula. Following a participatory planning process to conduct the baseline assessment, and to develop the conceptual model, the following key challenge was identified: *to provide livelihood opportunities for local residents while resisting the negative effects of the very rapid rise of tourism along the coastline. This has underlined the importance of developing sustainable ecotourism approaches to benefit local communities as an alternative to 'selling out' areas of coastline to large-scale private developers.*

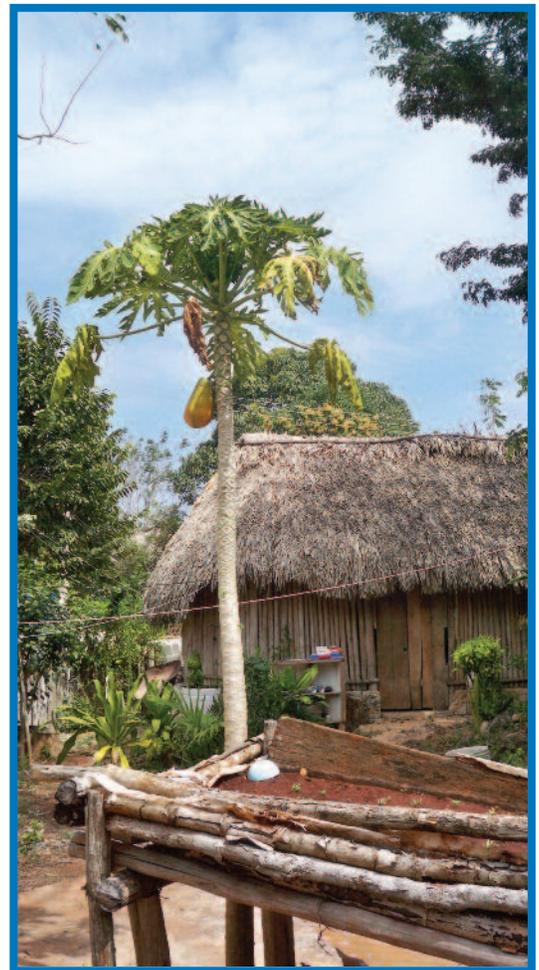


The COMPACT Local Coordinating Body works in close partnership with the Biosphere Reserve authorities to achieve its mission through objectives that include:

- \* **Helping communities living within the Reserve to understand, value, and protect Sian Ka'an and regional biodiversity;**
- \* **Understanding, valuing, and promoting Mayan culture, especially in terms of knowledge and management of biodiversity;**
- \* **Improving the quality of life of the communities through projects that sustainably use available resources;**
- \* **Supporting organizations, especially CBOs, through participatory planning, training, and technical assistance that fulfill the above objectives.**

Central to COMPACT's approach here has been the integration of Mayan culture, language and traditional knowledge in all aspects of its work. Publications are produced in the Maya Yucateco language and illustrated by Mayan artists. The Local Coordinator, a native Spanish-speaker, has learned Maya Yucateco and works closely with local communities on projects related to recovering traditional ecological knowledge, resource rights, and cultural revival, as well as capacity-building of local institutions. Since COMPACT was launched as a pilot project in Mexico in 2001, a total of 85 grants have been approved, totalling almost US\$2 million. It is estimated that at least 5,000 children and 5,000 adults have directly benefited from projects funded by COMPACT: one-third of the 30,000 residents of the area surrounding the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve have had direct access to information about Sian Ka'an.

*“ It is estimated that at least 5,000 children and 5,000 adults have directly benefited from projects funded by COMPACT. ”*



## A few highlights include:

- ✳ Disseminating knowledge about the biodiversity of the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve and surrounding landscape has been a principal activity. For example, the production of seven bilingual publications on the natural history of Sian Ka'an has helped raise awareness and provide environmental education for Mayan communities living within the Biosphere Reserve. The publications, distributed in schools near Sian Ka'an now form part of an 'indigenous syllabus'.
- ✳ Working with cooperatives in Punta Allen COMPACT has engaged fishermen in mapping and monitoring the impacts of their activities on local lobster and fish stocks. Through this process a series of "no take zones" for fishing have been established, the use of fishing nets has been banned and local coral reefs have begun to recover. Capacity-building of the cooperatives continues, along with exchanges linking fishers with counterparts in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama. COMPACT now supports three fisheries cooperatives, which have recently combined in a single project to protect seven key marine locations of economic and ecological importance.
- ✳ In partnership with local NGOs and the United Nations Foundation, COMPACT is strengthening the administrative capacity and business marketing skills of local community enterprises, and helping launch a unique line of local products under a collective brand ('Kuxtal') that clearly links them to the World Heritage Site. It is creating networks to connect artisans and other local producers with each other, and provides support with marketing. For example, a series of catalogues of local products is now distributed to hotels in the region. Over the course of 2010, the World Heritage Local Ecological Entrepreneurship Programme (WH-LEEP) – a partnership between UNF, SGP and Conservation International's Verde Ventures programme -- will further support community-based enterprises in World Heritage sites, including several groups identified by COMPACT Mexico.



In just nine years of implementation, COMPACT-Mexico has managed to strengthen public understanding of the importance of the biosphere reserve, improve the welfare and livelihood opportunities for communities living within the reserve, and enhance the status of Mayan culture and language. An independent evaluation found that the programme has rescued an extensive body of local Mayan knowledge relating to biodiversity, the continuum of

ecosystems that characterize the Biosphere Reserve, and the traditional use of flora and fauna in the region.

# TANZANIA

In the Mt. Kilimanjaro landscape, COMPACT is working in a context where increasing population and demand for natural resources pose serious challenges to efforts to balance conservation and poverty reduction.

At 5,895 metres, Mt. Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa. Known as “the roof of Africa” because of its spectacular height, it is the oldest national park in Africa. Mt. Kilimanjaro’s snow-capped summit stands almost five kilometres above the surrounding plains. In 1987 Mt. Kilimanjaro was designated a natural World Heritage Site, based on its superlative features as the world’s largest single free-standing mountain mass and its high biodiversity values. The montane forest is a unique feature of Mt. Kilimanjaro and is home to many rare and endemic plant and animal species. Along the forest floor humus-rich soil acts as a natural sponge, collecting rainwater and releasing it into springs, making Mt. Kilimanjaro’s montane forest the main source of water for the northern region of Tanzania.

The slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro within the altitudinal range of 800 m -1800m are highly productive. High soil fertility coupled with favourable climate along this part of the slopes, support agricultural development at all scales. The communities living on

the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro are highly dependent on its resources for their livelihoods, growing food on its slopes and gathering fuelwood, medicinal plants honey and forage foods from the mountain. Land ownership on the slopes follows customary law according to a system called kihamba in which land is inherited by a family’s sons. Family plots of land are subdivided over successive generations, a situation that contributes to overpopulation on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro

However, over the years, increasing demand for forest products and agricultural land has destabilised the fragile mountain ecosystem. The resource base is under unprecedented pressure from population growth that threatens the existence and sustainability of mountain resources. At the same time, these resources are critical to the livelihoods of mountain adjacent communities. Threats to the biodiversity of Mt. Kilimanjaro are many and include: overuse of natural resources by local communities, degradation of land and water resources due to climatic events such as drought and floods, and loss of natural habitat through indirect anthropogenic pressures such as poverty. Further, changes in land use and cultural practices, and the impacts of global climate change all pose further challenges to the Mt. Kilimanjaro landscape.

“**COMPACT empowers locals towards protecting the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System World Heritage Site.**”

**Ms. Christina Garcia  
Environmental Education Officer  
Southern Environmental Association**

In Kilimanjaro, the COMPACT site strategy has incorporated recent management changes within Kilimanjaro National Park, the Kilimanjaro outreach programme and the regional community development strategy, with a view towards reducing duplication of efforts and increasing community participation in the management of Mt. Kilimanjaro. In its second phase, a core objective of COMPACT’s work is to support poverty reduction, which is the main cause of natural resource overuse and degradation along the mountain. To this end COMPACT Kilimanjaro supports community-led projects that improve the returns on the existing assets of the poor while conserving biodiversity.



COMPACT Kilimanjaro is supporting projects in areas that include:

- \* **Promoting sustainable energy and the wide adoption of renewable energy practices to reduce fuel wood usage;**
- \* **Developing the technical capacity of NGOs to raise environmental awareness increase environmental literacy in communities who are dependent on the mountain resources;**
- \* **Achieving integrated natural resource management and conservation based on active participation and cooperation by local people, government institutions, and international agencies;**
- \* **Coping with climate variability, particularly in vulnerable communities on the dry lower slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro where increasing variability in weather patterns is resulting in problems with irrigation and increased competition for water between upstream and downstream users;**

- \* **Increasing communities' access to markets for local products, to help ensure the long-term sustainability of community projects.**

COMPACT has increased the active involvement of the local communities in planning and management of the Kilimanjaro World Heritage Site. In the last three years COMPACT's site strategy has informed the development of the overall Kilimanjaro National Park Strategy, and influenced the development of the Kilimanjaro National Park Outreach Programme strategy and the Kilimanjaro Regional Development Strategy. These inputs have led to conservation and development strategies that strengthen partnerships between stakeholders, and importantly, link communities with government planning processes.

An exciting result of COMPACT Kilimanjaro has been the creation of a vibrant network of grantees known as the COMPACT Kilimanjaro Network, or COMPAKIN. The intention is that the network will help grantees to support each other after COMPACT's support ends. This network of NGOs and CBOs has developed a strong joint voice that is enabling them to solicit funds and technical support from government and other donors. COMPAKIN provides a forum for grantees and other community groups to share information and knowledge with each other. Complementing this effort, close collaboration between the COMPACT programmes in Kenya and Tanzania has led to exchange visits and study-tours among communities on both sides of the border.

Further, COMPACT Kilimanjaro has demonstrated that conservation-led enterprises provide communities with economic incentives to conserve their natural resources – and treat wildlife not as a threat to their livelihoods, but rather as the basis of a sustainable livelihood.



## Sample accomplishments include:

- \* A project to introduce improved bee-keeping methods has dramatically reduced the incidence of bush-fires in the Kilimanjaro Forest. Working with a community association, COMPACT is helping to train local beekeepers and provide them with access to modern bee-keeping facilities. Forest fires had been a common consequence of traditional bee-keeping practices, which rely on open fires to harvest honey. The shift to improved bee-keeping practices has reduced forest fires and has improved overall forest management, on account of incentives to protect the forest to ensure an optimum environment for their bees. An increase in production, coupled with support in distribution of the honey (marketed under a “Mt. Kilimanjaro” label) has enhanced access to food, as well as income for the local communities.
- \* A project to introduce cultural and ecological tourism activities along the Rier Whona. Conservation of the river banks through tree-planting and introduction of cultural tourism options has made this area a popular tourism destination, bringing income to local communities. With COMPACT funding the project has constructed a “natural hall” under the shade of nearby trees to serve as a place where tourists can learn about the indigenous Chagga culture. Many visitors lodge at local Chagga farms, learning about local culture and contributing to the local economy. As a result of the project some 5,000 trees have been planted along the river bank and local farmers have been encouraged to plant trees on their farms. With the increase in eco/cultural tourism local communities are finding that it is actually more profitable in economic terms to conserve the river and waterfall than to divert the water for irrigation purposes. As a result, downstream water-flow has increased, with the benefit that lowland farmers are benefiting through reduced conflict over water uses and improved incomes.



Looking ahead, COMPACT activities will address the inevitable impacts of climate change, supporting communities in developing the adaptive capacity to cope with changes in water availability and other challenges. COMPACT Kilimanjaro will participate in the World Heritage Local Ecological Entrepreneurship Programme (WH-LEEP) to develop environmentally friendly businesses that will generate sustainable livelihoods and drive poverty reduction. In Tanzania, WH-LEEP will help support small businesses such as honey production using ecotourism, improved bee-keeping techniques, agro-forestry activities aiming at improving coffee production, and sustainable energy practices.

# DOMINICA

The first natural World Heritage site in the Eastern Caribbean, Dominica's **Morne Trois Pitons National Park** is characterized by luxuriant tropical forest and unique geological features. The site, which was established as a National Park in 1975 and given World Heritage recognition in 1977, is centered on the 1,342-metre volcano known as Morne Trois Pitons in the interior of the island. Its landscape is characterized by volcanic piles with precipitous slopes, and deeply incised valleys, hot springs, mud pots and sulphur vents as well as the world's second largest boiling lake. The park (6,857ha in area) protects the headwaters of most major rivers and streams in the southern part of Dominica as well as large tracts of almost intact tropical forest. Five natural vegetation zones have been identified, including cloud forest consisting of ferns, shrubs and stunted trees covered by lichens at the site's highest elevations. While a full faunal inventory has yet to be conducted for the World Heritage Site, previous surveys indicate that at least half of Dominica's 175

bird species can be observed in the park, including endemic species such as the Jacquot Parrot.

Almost 20% of Dominica's land-mass of 750 square kilometers is under some form of protection as National Parks or Forest Reserves. However a combination of economic and social pressures, as well as limited management capacity, are threatening the long-accepted view that this ambitious protected area system should be maintained. Among the threats to the integrity of the Morne Trois Pitons World Heritage Site include increased tourism, introduced species and a national hydroelectric and thermal energy development scheme. In addition, increasing poverty caused by global recession has combined with a significant decrease in banana exports to Britain is forcing Dominicans (and especially those living in rural communities surrounding the World Heritage Site) to seek alternative livelihoods.

“ *COMPACT Dominica has empowered grassroots NGOs and CBOs through access to training, equipment and materials that allow them to engage in sustainable livelihood activities.* ”

COMPACT Dominica was launched in 2001 with an initial focus on the communities surrounding Morne Trois Piton National Park. In 2005 it extended its target area to include the landscape and communities around the Morne Diablotin National Park, the Central and Northern Forest Reserves and the Carib Territory (home to Dominica's indigenous peoples). The relatively small population in these rural areas occupies villages and small settlements near the protected areas. In expanding its geographic focus, COMPACT's aim was to create a cluster that would eventually extend World Heritage status to the other locations.

Working in a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) such as Dominica presents a unique opportunity to explore the opportunities and limitations facing World Heritage Sites in the SIDS context.



The aims of COMPACT's programme of work have included:

- \* **Promoting greater awareness of conservation and the sustainable use of biological resources in the protected areas through capacity-building, demonstration projects and policy formulation;**
- \* **Reducing the vulnerability of communities to climate change through the introduction and use of renewable energy technologies;**
- \* **Improving the capability to manage the island's vulnerable land resources;**
- \* **Increasing public awareness of environmentally sustainable land-based practices, particularly targeting the reduction of use of agro-chemicals;**
- \* **Improving access for CBOs and NGOs to financial and other resources that can be invested in sustainable livelihoods.**

COMPACT Dominica has raised international and local awareness of the importance of the Morne Trois Pitons National Park as a World Heritage Site. It has empowered grassroots NGOs and CBOs through access to training, equipment and materials that allow them to engage in sustainable livelihood activities. In the long term it is anticipated that COMPACT projects will result in significant impacts for Dominica's environment as well as the livelihoods of beneficiary communities. The relationships established with national and international organizations augur well for the development of the human and institutional capacity of local community groups and NGOs. The empowerment of these groups will, in turn, contribute to formulation of sound national policy with respect to sustainable development, such as organic farming. The emerging partnership with the World Heritage Local Ecological Entrepreneurship Programme (WH-LEEP) promises to further support the development of sustainable community-based businesses near the World Heritage Site.

An important area of activity for COMPACT Dominica has been in helping local inhabitants develop alternative and sustainable livelihoods. Some examples include:

- \* A community-led initiative in Cochrane, adjacent to the World Heritage Site, to transform itself into an "Eco-Village," with the voluntary creation of a buffer zone on private lands and an array of income-producing activities. These include nurseries to cultivate tree seedlings and other plants for sale; cultivation of organic vegetables, and the commercial production of rabbits. Eco-tourism is being encouraged through tour-guide training and development of infrastructure including trails and a visitor's centre. The Cochrane Rabbit Festival, launched in 2003 to promote rabbit cultivation, has become one of the most popular festivals in the country.
- \* A women's association that has established a permanent site to propagate or ornamental flowers and preserve vulnerable and endangered plant species. As part of the COMPACT community mobilization and cultural awareness programme, the project regularly stages flower shows and hosts international visitors. The group is in the process of creating a Botanical Gardens for the conservation of endemic and other indigenous plant species.
- \* In the Carib Territory, an initiative to help indigenous Kalinago youth empower themselves through traditional knowledge and the creation of sustainable employment opportunities. The youth are involved in research and documentation on traditionally used herbs, and receive training in all aspects of creating small business enterprises producing herbal and fruit products. The project is helping to preserve the traditional ecological knowledge of the Carib people for future generations while also contributing to the diversification of the national tourism industry.

# PHILIPPINES

**Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPRSNP)** is rich in biological and geological features, including an underground river that emerges directly into the sea. Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1999, this site, which covers a total of 20,202 hectares, encompasses a full “mountain-to-sea” ecosystem and boasts some of the most important forests in Asia. It is located in the Saint Paul Mountain Range on the northern coast of Palawan Province in the South China Sea. The lowland forest is part of the Palawan Moist Forest, one of the WWF Global 2000 Ecoregions. The Saint Paul Range features a spectacular limestone karst landscape, beneath which flows an underground river that has attracted visitors since the middle of the nineteenth century. The World Heritage Site forms the core zone of the Palawan Island Biosphere Reserve, which was recognised under the UNESCO-Man and the Biosphere Programme in 1990. As part of the national Ecologically Critical Area Network, the site is central to the Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan. In 1993, a local Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), based in Puerto

Princesa, was created to manage the park.

Responding to threats to the biodiversity this protected area, COMPACT’s strategy in Palawan focuses on alternative livelihood and conservation projects, such as “low impact eco-tourism”, and biodiversity conservation through lowland farm agricultural intensification and crop diversification. The baseline assessment had identified a number of threats to the protected area stemming from increasing population and economic pressures. These included habitat destruction, alteration and deterioration; rapid population growth in certain areas; uncontrolled tourism development; and unregulated collection of wildlife (flora and fauna) in terrestrial, coastal and marine areas. In 2003, COMPACT’s Local Consultative Body also examined issues of encroachment and poaching by districts (barangays) adjacent to the World Heritage Site and subsequently proposed that these areas be included in alternative livelihoods activities to lessen the threat from illegal timber and non-forest timber product harvesting.

In conducting the baseline assessment and developing its site strategy for the area, COMPACT relied on extensive consultation with the communities surrounding the World Heritage Site. Early on the Local Consultative Body, comprised of a wide array of stakeholders from the area, worked in close partnership with the Protected Area Management Board to incorporate these findings into the general plan for Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park. COMPACT brought local communities and stakeholders together to agree on a common spatial vision for the area as a model World Heritage site through community-led biodiversity conservation and sustainable development’ with the aim of gradually increasing the percentage of the park “under strict protection” as originally envisioned when the national park was established.

The site strategy has also sought to provide sufficient time for many of the natural resources under high extractive pressure to rehabilitate, including those within the Tagbanua ancestral domains in the centre of the park. Other key activities to protect the ecological integrity of the World Heritage site have included captive breeding of selected species, the establishment of artificial wildlife nesting sites, and replanting of indigenous species.

Since it began working in Palawan COMPACT has funded a wide range of projects in areas including reforestation and ecological restoration, conservation of major river systems, protection of critically endangered



species, and monitoring of biodiversity. Working with the Protected Area Management Board and a national NGO, COMPACT is helping to develop maps and gather other baseline data to define the park boundary and establish management zones for effective protection and management of PPRSNP.

Emphasis on the welfare and engagement of Indigenous Peoples has characterized the COMPACT programme in the Philippines. A major focus has been on helping indigenous people secure tenurial claims to their ancestral lands. Working with communities in the Cabayugan, Tagabinet and Marufinas districts, COMPACT has helped these groups obtain Certificate of Ancestral Domain claims, ensuring that they now have rightful ownership to their traditional territory. It is also helping these communities to develop culturally appropriate livelihood initiatives, such as sustainable farming, agro-forestry, non-forest timber product-based handicrafts, and the establishment of an irrigation pipeline for paddy farms.

All of these activities are aimed at improving community welfare and income generation in the context of effective protected area management. Examples include:

- \* A project led by an indigenous people's organization to restore degraded forest habitat and river banks within two Ancestral Domain claim areas, while enhancing local livelihoods, community development and cultural integrity. The project includes involving community members in monitoring and protection of the forest in accordance with customary laws.
- \* Several projects aimed at protecting coastal areas and coral reefs from overfishing through activities such as introduction of more sustainable fishing methods, creation of no-take zones to allow fishing grounds to recover, and restoration of mangroves. In one initiative, community members have been trained, accredited and deputized to assist the local authorities in enforcing fisheries regulations as well as forestry regulations designed to protect the coastal mangroves.
- \* Assistance to a local farmers' cooperative in adopting more sustainable rice cultivation methods using organic fertilizers and pesticides, high-yielding rice varieties, fish cultivation in rice paddies, livestock and crop diversification. These combined approaches are expected to increase yields by over 60 percent while reducing pollution of the river. Members of the cooperative also planted bamboo and fruit trees to stabilize the banks of a major tributary of the underground river.



COMPACT's work over the past decade has engaged local and indigenous communities in stewardship of the natural resources and ecosystems within Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park and the surrounding landscape. It has helped them to recognize the threats to the natural resources on which they depend, and to see that opportunities exist for the communities themselves to guide and shape local management practices. COMPACT has fostered partnerships among stakeholders including local and national government bodies, local community groups and indigenous peoples, enabling them to work together on formulating strategies for management of the protected area that enhance biodiversity while encouraging sustainable economic development. As a result protected area managers from other parts of the country have visited the COMPACT programme in Palawan to learn from the experiences emerging from sustainable livelihood and resource management projects being implemented in the area.

# SENEGAL AND MAURITANIA

With a focus on the **Djoudj/Djawling Transboundary Biosphere Reserve**, the COMPACT programme in Senegal and Mauritania is testing how COMPACT's landscape approach can work in a trans-national setting. Situated in the delta of the Senegal River, the Biosphere Reserve, which is

641,768 ha in area, owes its diversity to a vast hydrographic network, and a complex system of wetlands and humid areas including many globally important nesting sites for migratory birds of which over 360 palearctic and afro-tropical species have been identified.

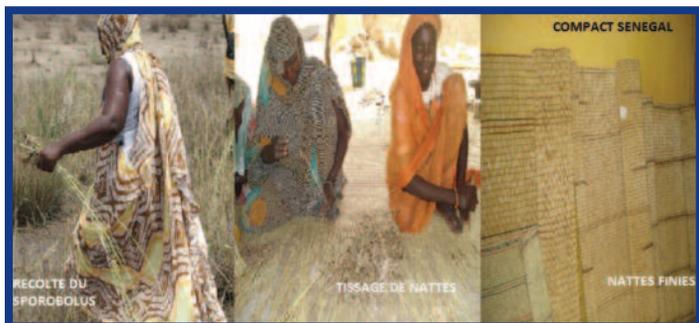
The Djoudj/Djawling Transboundary Biosphere Reserve encompasses a mosaic of different protected areas and buffer zone demarcations extending to the coastal zone. Its core areas include national parks and natural reserves that are part of national networks of protected areas, such as:

- \* *Parc National des Oiseaux du Djoudj (Senegal), a World Heritage site and Ramsar wetland;*
- \* *Parc National Diawling (Mauritania) a Ramsar site;*
- \* *Réserve de Faune de Guembeul and Réserve de Faune de Ndiol (Senegal), both Ramsar sites ;*
- \* *Parc National de la Langue de Barbarie, the Lac de Guiers, the the Réserve d'Eau de Diama (Senegal) ;*
- \* *Reserve Chat TBoul (Mauritania), a Ramsar wetland.*

The city of Saint Louis is registered on the list of historical sites and monuments of Senegal and is also a World Heritage Site. The Djoudj/Djawling Transboundary Biosphere Reserve includes a marine protected area, l'Aire Marine Protégée de Saint Louis. The partnership between the governments of Senegal and Mauritania represents an important international effort to plan and manage the Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site at the landscape level.

However, the construction of a dam to develop irrigated agriculture has had adverse environmental consequences. As a result, threats to the Biosphere Reserve include:

- \* **Substantial proliferation of invasive aquatic plants and obstruction of hydraulic axes;**
- \* **Space reduction affecting bird growth and disturbance of their habitats which affect navigational capacities and disrupt environmental monitoring sites;**
- \* **Reduced grazing areas leading to frequent incursions of cattle in the parks and reserves; and**
- \* **Deterioration of traditional fisheries causing increased illegal fishing practices.**





While COMPACT Senegal/Mauritania is one of the newest COMPACT programmes, having become operational in 2008, it has been able to build on SGP Senegal's history of projects and interventions in the northern zone of the country. On the basis of these now well-established SGP grantee networks, COMPACT has been able to promote a landscape approach and targeted conservation activities, linked in particular to improved sustainable land management practices.

To date, project activities in Senegal and Mauritania have focused on: (i) reduction of pressure on the natural resources of the park; (ii) promotion of sustainable livelihoods for local populations; (iii) improvement of amenities, and local level involvement, in protected area management; and (iv) extensive environmental education activities in all of the local level schools to raise awareness about the Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Sites. Examples include projects that target the rehabilitation of habitats for birds and wildlife through the reduction of pollution;

restoration of water flows to threatened wetlands; removing invasive species; and improving habitats for spawning sites in the Marine Protected Area through the use of artificial reefs. In addition, COMPACT projects have included the provision of access to butane gas and solar cookers for households living within the Biosphere Reserve, the reduction of livestock incursions within the protected area, along with a number of projects promoting sustainable livelihoods.

In keeping with the COMPACT strategy of synergy – in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts – a cluster of eight project grants has supported community-based efforts to reduce pressure on natural resources in the Parc National des Oiseaux du Djoudj. The eight participating communities are working together to improve conservation of this World Heritage site, through promotion of sustainable livelihoods, environmental education and capacity-building for park managers. Working with NGOs and community organizations, COMPACT has helped create a corps of “Eco-guards,” local residents who now patrol protected areas within the core of the Biosphere Reserve. This community-based approach draws on government regulations as well as traditional practices and knowledge related to natural resource management. In collaboration with the protected area authorities, the grantees are gaining experience in ecological monitoring techniques and implementation of development activities.

COMPACT Senegal/Mauritania further aims to create synergies among stakeholders by: developing a trans-boundary network for grantees in Senegal and Mauritania, ensuring effective collaboration among the COMPACT coordination mechanisms in both countries and enhancing cooperation between the COMPACT team and Djoudj/Djawling Transboundary Biosphere Reserve authorities.



## A few highlights include:

- \* A project to encourage more sustainable management of fisheries within the *Parc National des Oiseaux du Djoudj*. Construction of the Diama dam has led to a series of ecological disruptions that have had a major impact on traditional fisheries. Ponds, formerly used by fishing villages, have been eliminated or colonized by invasive species. The result has been an increasing in poaching and use of prohibited fishing gear. In an attempt to engage local villagers to participate in conservation of the national park, the project has established a framework for dialogue on sustainable fishing practices. As a result, stakeholders including people from all the villages bordering the park, government departments and local governments have agreed to a charter establishing rules of access to fisheries resources.
- \* Ecological restoration of important habitats in two wildlife reserves. In the *Réserve de Faune de Ndiaël*, which is located in the delta region, agricultural activities have led to the gradual drying of the basin, and a reduction in visitation by several species of migratory birds. A COMPACT project is supporting a local effort to restore streams and other water bodies and replenish the Ndiaël pond. Local people are also building nesting boxes to promote the return of important bird species. In *Réserve de Faune de Guembeul*, a project is removing invasive species and restoring the original habitat of this reserve, important to aquatic birds as well as Sahelian wildlife including gazelle, oryx and tortoise species.



COMPACT's work in this region has led to a more community-oriented approach to management of sites within the Djoudj/Djawling Transboundary Biosphere Reserve. Local communities are involved in most decisions regarding the use of local natural resources, and are directly consulted during the preparation of planning documents and protected areas management plans. In addition, communities now have a better understanding of conservation objectives, and the zones and functions of the Biosphere Reserve. The local community representatives now know which government departments are responsible for management of the protected areas they live within. As a result of COMPACT's work critical habitats for birds and other wildlife have been restored, and pressure on natural resources within the Biosphere Reserve is starting to ease - evident in reduced deforestation and the recovery of fish stocks. Local livelihoods and household incomes have improved through an array of income-generating activities, such as handicrafts. With support from COMPACT local communities have taken steps to improve the infrastructure of the Djoudj/Djawling Transboundary Biosphere Reserve, for example building observation posts and watch towers within the protected area. Finally, by building a regional network of grantees, partners and through cross-border exchanges, COMPACT is contributing to stronger bi-national cooperation in managing this trans-boundary Biosphere Reserve.

# MADAGASCAR

Of global importance as a “biodiversity hotspot,” Madagascar has been the focus of national and international efforts to expand its protected area system and safeguard the natural wealth of this island nation, home to 5 percent of the world’s plant and animal species. Over 90 percent of plant and animal species in Madagascar are endemic, meaning that they are unique to the island. At the 2003 IUCN World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa, the Malagasy President, Marc Ravalomanana,

announced a bold initiative known as the “Durban Vision” to more than triple the area of Madagascar under protection. This initiative would expand the approximately 17,000 km<sup>2</sup> managed by Madagascar National Parks to over 60,000 km<sup>2</sup> with a view toward covering about 10 percent of the Madagascar’s area. Within this expanding protected area system are a number of sites currently included, or anticipating inclusion, on the World Heritage Tentative List.

In Madagascar, COMPACT has a unique focus – engaging and empowering local and indigenous communities in their stewardship of key sites, *in advance of their designation as World Heritage Sites*. Launched in 2007, COMPACT Madagascar programme is focused on three zones in the Southwest of the country, each encompassing a cluster of protected areas anticipating World Heritage nomination:

- \* **The Tsimanampesotse National Park in the Mmahafaly Plateau, south of Toliara in Southwest Madagascar.** Tsimanampesotse is home to a unique saturated sulphate lake, and between 75-90 percent of local fauna and flora is endemic. The first Ramsar site in Madagascar, it is the only protected area within the limestone plateau and coastal area of the Southwest.
- \* **The Mikea National Park, a new protected area north of Toliara.** The national park is governed collaboratively with an inter-communal association of indigenous Mikean communities and populations living within the complex. This pilot collaborative governance model is being considered by Madagascar National Parks as part of the World Heritage nomination process.
- \* **Locally managed marine and coastal areas, including Andavadoaka village, which was awarded the Equator Prize in 2007.**

COMPACT Madagascar is working closely with indigenous communities who depend on the natural resources found in and around these protected area clusters. The communities are vulnerable to weather conditions and rely on rain-fed agriculture as their main livelihood. They attach great socio-cultural importance to their territories (ancestral land, burial sites, and traditions and customs). However, the persistence of poverty combined with unseasonal droughts and socio-demographic challenges, including high migration, have led to the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. Thus the emphasis of COMPACT’s work has been on enhancing local livelihoods and helping communities to manage their resources more sustainably. An important part of this strategy has been to recognize and support traditional conservation and management practices, including the presence of numerous Indigenous and Community-Conserved Areas (ICCAs).

A major challenge of working in these remote regions is the low level of organization of rural communities, and the lack of capacity of community-based organizations (CBOs) and local NGOs. The rate of illiteracy in the rural target zones is over 70%. Working closely with local and regional partners, COMPACT has focused on capacity-building of community groups, using a “learning by doing” approach and developing mentoring relationships between NGOs and community groups.



Building effective partnerships with other organizations has been central to COMPACT's work in Madagascar. A key partner is the Tany Meva Foundation, a national environmental trust fund whose mission is to support sustainable environmental management in Madagascar through the active engagement of local communities. COMPACT and the Tany Meva Foundation are working together in co-financing local projects, and in joint efforts of capacity-building of grantee organizations and other beneficiaries *to assure their role as co-managers of the protected areas and landscapes and promote the sustainability of projects*. In order to develop the baseline assessments in its target sites, COMPACT worked in partnership with Madagascar National Parks, World Wildlife Fund and other NGOs. Going forward, this partnership will facilitate monitoring of the impacts of the community projects on the protected areas.



In collaboration with the Tany Meva Foundation, COMPACT projects committed over the last three years support the sustainable management of wetland, forests, coastal and marine areas managed by communities living on the edges of the protected area clusters anticipating World Heritage designation. They also support sustainable agriculture, fisheries and other alternative activities that improve food security and livelihood opportunities.

**Looking ahead, COMPACT Madagascar aims to strengthen community involvement in the governance of Madagascar's protected areas and World Heritage Sites. Related goals include the development of alternative livelihoods and continuing to build capacity of community groups, with an emphasis on accountability, sustainability and sound management.**

## Highlights include:

- \* A series of community projects promote the empowerment of local communities living adjacent to the Mikea protected area and support community-led forest conservation and livelihoods based on sustainable agriculture. Capacity-building toolkits for communities have helped CBOs to undertake simple local diagnoses, prioritize community needs and formulate their project proposals. Through a mentoring project linkages have been made between community groups and a local NGO to help further develop the communities' capacity to implement their projects.
- \* A joint project with the Tany Meva Foundation seeks to engage and empower communities near Tsimanampesotse National Park in an innovative effort to move toward more effective collaborative management. Over the course of ten years, implementation of a 'conservation contract' will transfer natural resource management from the Ministry of Environment and Forests to local communities in the area, while promoting better land management. In collaboration with the Municipalities Association, tools have been developed to enhance the transfer process and reinforce efforts initiated in many communities to develop agro-ecology approaches that support conservation and sustainable use objectives while providing livelihood opportunities.
- \* COMPACT Madagascar is actively supporting Indigenous and Community-Conserved Areas within its target landscapes. It has been working directly with communities to identify and recognize ICCAs and has encouraged them to participate in a national ICCA network through which they can exchange experiences and contribute to policy dialogues at national and global levels.



COMPACT is a living, breathing people-oriented approach to working with communities in managing a protected area and the broader landscape

With a decade of experience in diverse settings, COMPACT is showing how community-based initiatives and improved livelihoods can have benefits for biodiversity conservation in globally significant protected areas. Among its signal achievements are:

- \* **Heightened community awareness of and support for World Heritage sites and conservation in general in the nine target areas where COMPACT has been working.**
- \* **More effective management of these globally significant protected areas because local communities and other stakeholders are engaged in their stewardship.**
- \* **Improved livelihoods for resource-dependent communities within and near these protected areas.**
- \* **Increased capacity of local institutions and leaders and improved cooperation among diverse interests, thus contributing to the development of social capital at all levels and to stronger civil society in the target countries.**

*“ Since its establishment, COMPACT has made over US\$10 million in small grants to community-based conservation projects in the nine countries where it is working. ”*



# WHAT MAKES THE COMPACT MODEL SO EFFECTIVE

## COMPACT takes a landscape approach

- \* Conservation is more effective across large landscapes, which encompass a mosaic of land types and uses. COMPACT is finding constructive ways to work with a diverse range of communities and stakeholders living in and caring for protected areas and the broader landscape.

## COMPACT uses a methodology that is rooted in science, while being highly participatory, engaging local people and other stakeholders at every stage of the process

- \* The COMPACT methodology, based on three mutually reinforcing elements – the *baseline assessment*, which serves as the foundation for the *conceptual model* and *site strategy* – ensures rigor as COMPACT pilots the landscape approach in a wide range of ecological and socio-economic situations.

## COMPACT harnesses the power of synergy

- \* COMPACT's approach of supporting a cluster of activities – including *inter alia* the provision of grants, capacity-building activities, networking and support with marketing – results in synergy. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts, but this is not by accident. Each COMPACT programme employs a strategic approach to “finding the niche for community-based interventions in the landscape,” and creating synergies among grantees/partners.

## COMPACT builds on the strengths of the SGP experience – at the scale of a protected area of international significance

- \* As noted earlier, the COMPACT model builds on the tremendous experience of SGP and its established track record of achieving and, especially, sustaining

environmental benefits over time. Small grants are visible and cost-effective. Like SGP, the COMPACT approach is rooted in principles such as the importance of local ownership and accountability, and the crucial role of social capital.

## COMPACT's institutional structures are based on principles of sharing power

- \* Supporting community-led initiatives requires trust, flexibility and patience. Transparent processes and broad public participation are key to ensuring community engagement and this underpins COMPACT's approach to planning and governance. COMPACT's Local Coordinators and Local Consultative groups play a critical role in facilitating community involvement and building local capacity for conservation.

## COMPACT's scalability offers tremendous potential for future initiatives

- \* In the current target sites, COMPACT's approach of “keeping your lessons close to the Protected Area,” makes it possible to track progress over time, and build outward from the protected area to local, national and regional levels. In several of the countries, COMPACT has extended its target areas over time to cover larger landscapes and seascapes.
- \* Importantly, this scalability and COMPACT's decade of experience from the field offers valuable lessons for a range of other kinds of protected areas, in developing strategies for more effective community engagement.

# LOOKING AHEAD

**COMPACT offers the GEF Small Grants Programme a model for how its country operations worldwide can maximize their impact.** In several other countries, the SGP national country programmes are taking on board elements of the COMPACT model – such as its emphasis on a landscape approach and strategic clustering of activities around a particular protected landscape. There is much potential for further application of the COMPACT model and methodology in other SGP countries.

**COMPACT offers valuable experience for involving communities in the governance of World Heritage Sites globally.** UNESCO should seize the opportunity to take on board systematically the COMPACT methodology and lessons learned for work with World Heritage sites worldwide. In particular, the COMPACT approach could be highly relevant to working with communities in and near World Heritage Cultural Landscapes.

**COMPACT's experience also has relevance for many other kinds of protected areas.** The COMPACT approach is relevant to the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA), particularly provisions concerned with community engagement, benefit-sharing and governance. As recognition grows of diverse governance regimes, in particular collaborative management and Indigenous and Community-Conserved Areas (ICCAs), the experience of COMPACT can help guide new strategies for engaging with and supporting community stewardship of protected areas.



## Supporting sustainable livelihoods through local entrepreneurship

In 2008 the World Heritage Local Entrepreneurship Programme (WH-LEEP) was launched in response to the need of nascent community enterprises for access to affordable credit with favorable payment conditions. A three-way partnership between SGP, the United Nations Foundation and Conservation International's Verde Ventures programme, WH-LEEP is complementing the capacity-building efforts of COMPACT and SGP by providing technical assistance and affordable capital directly to target enterprises. The WH-LEEP focus on innovative ways to leverage market mechanisms and promote private sector enterprise development across its portfolio reflects the evolution of COMPACT to address long-term sustainability through a market-based approach to community enterprise development in and around World Heritage sites. During the period 2009 – 2013, WH-LEEP will focus on four to seven of the COMPACT countries including Mexico, Belize, Kenya and Tanzania; as well as potentially Dominica, Philippines and Madagascar.

## THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITY

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) unites 182 member governments — in partnership with international institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector — to address global environmental issues.

Established in 1991, the GEF is today the largest funder of projects to improve the global environment. The GEF has allocated \$8.8 billion, supplemented by more than \$38.7 billion in cofinancing, for more than 2,400 projects in more than 165 developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Through its Small Grants Programme (SGP) active in 122 countries worldwide, the GEF has also made more than 13,500 small grants directly to nongovernmental and community organizations.

## UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION

The UN Foundation, a public charity, was created in 1998 with entrepreneur and philanthropist Ted Turner's historic \$1 billion gift to support UN causes and activities. Through a series of ongoing campaigns, UNF strives to connect people, ideas and resources to help the United Nations solve global problems.

## UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.

## COMPACT

The 'Community Management of Protected Areas for Conservation' (COMPACT) programme is a jointly funded project of the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and the UNDP/Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (SGP). The objective of COMPACT has been to demonstrate how community-based initiatives can significantly increase the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in globally significant protected areas by adding value to existing projects and programmes.

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## THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as a corporate programme, the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the GEF, and is executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Launched in 1992, the SGP supports activities of non-governmental and community-based organizations in developing countries towards biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, protection of international waters, reduction of the impact of persistent organic pollutants and prevention of land degradation, while generating sustainable livelihoods.

SGP is operational in 122 countries and provides funding up to \$50,000 per project for community actions. To date, SGP has channeled more than \$400 million to communities through more than 13,500 projects around the world, which have resulted in direct global environmental benefits and also influenced the formulation of national and local policies on sustainable environmental and development management.

**SGP** The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme

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