

Mid-term Review

Sustainable and Integrated Management of Mbebiling Forest on Flores, Indonesia – Phase II

Final Report



Conthur Environment

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1. Introduction

This report presents the result of the Mid-Term Review mission (MTR) that visited Flores, Indonesia, on 15th April – 23rd April 2013 with the objective to review the status of the “Sustainable and Integrated Management of Mbeliling Forest “ which is financed by a grant of 9,470,986 DKK by Danida, and implemented by Burung Indonesia (BI), who also provides co-funding amounting to 1,541,659 DKK, in partnership with Dansk Ornitologisk Forening (DOF). The total budget is thus 11,541,659 DKK.

The 4-year Project started its first phase in 2008, followed by an extension as a second phase starting in 2011, and the Project will be finalised at the end of 2014. Thus, by April 2013 the second phase of the Project has been under active implementation for 2 years, which is the focus of this report. The main body of the report highlights the mission’s assessment of the project performance and the key issues meriting attention, according to TOR (Annex 1).

The MTR wishes to express its sincere appreciation of the assistance provided to it by the Project, Burung Indonesia and DOF (please see Annex 2 for people met).

2. The purpose of the of the Review

As stated in the TOR, the purpose of the Mid-term Review is to assess the

- progress and challenges towards the Project’s set indicators and efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability in its implementation;
- recommendations and lessons learned for the remaining part of Phase II from the project and its main approaches (such as LKM and RNCA) that may be used as a model for other similar projects, mainly in terms of the three immediate goals.

The methodology used for data collection and analysis involved desk reviews and a field visit to Flores, where main stakeholders (communities around Mbeliling) in west Manggarai were met according to a prearranged field program (see Annex 3). The District line “agencies” (Forestry, Agriculture, Education, Planning) were met in Labuan Bajo as the very first interviews of the field program. This unfortunately precluded using these interview opportunities to confront the District civil servants with any of the field findings.

3. Key Findings

3.1 Assessment of Project design and relevance

Project implementation is guided by the Project Document (PD) which presents the major challenges and objectives to be achieved by the Project as described in the introduction: *“Serious challenges for forest dependent communities in Mbeliling”*: *“The Mbeliling Forest is still under pressure from encroachment for new agricultural land, and its crucial function as water catchment area for the wider West Manggarai area is already threatened. There are 27 forest adjacent communities around Mbeliling whose livelihoods depend heavily on a reliable supply of fresh water and a sustainable use of natural resources. “*

The Project overall development objective is stated as: “*Participatory forest management improves sustainable livelihoods in communities around Mbeliling*”

The PD presents the three immediate objectives as an integration of three policy orientations (or goals): empowerment of local communities, poverty reduction through livelihood improvement and biodiversity conservation:

Immediate objective 1: Local communities are able to participate in the decision making process for the management of the Mbeliling landscape

Immediate objective 2: Local communities have improved their incomes through sustainable economic activities

Immediate objective 3: The Mbeliling area is developed environmentally sustainable by using an integrated landscape management approach

With respect to the problem statements and objectives the MTR finds that it is partly misleading to use the terms “forest dependent communities” and “Participatory Forest Management”, as none of the communities live inside the forest area (i.e. the officially gazetted forest area) or can be said to be heavily dependent on the forest, and that “Participatory Forest Management improves the sustainable livelihoods in communities ...” is also not a likely option, since none of the Project activities concern Participatory Forest Management properly speaking. Also, it seems exaggerated to state that the forest is still under pressure from encroachment for new agricultural land - the Project is in fact indicating that the extent of encroachment as well as the use of the forest by the people living adjacent to the forest is probably limited to Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) extraction, as people are aware of the status of most of the forest being under some level of protection, and according to the Project most people obey those restrictions. Our own limited observations seem to confirm this as well. Even trapping and hunting may be more limited than indicated in the PD, although it is probably still occurring. Judging by a Phase I report from 2009¹ “no sign of traps or snares were found in any of the 5 villages” visited during the field work for that report.

The MTR thus finds that the Project objective and partly the problem analysis is misleading - on the other hand, the MTR has chosen to interpret the *de-facto* Project Document purpose and problem analysis as concerning the achievement of sustainable management of the productive lands *outside* of the forest as managed by the communities living there, and that the strategy adheres to the ecosystem based approach. In that sense it is more than just Integrated Forest Management, or Participatory Forest Management. Indeed, if the section in the PD on problem analysis the term “forest” were changed to “landscape” in most places where reference to forest is made, it would immediately be much more meaningful. The MTR has therefore decided to interpret the problem analysis accordingly for this review.

Interpreted in this way, the potential for the Project to make a valuable contribution to West Manggarai is high. The Project design incorporates a wide ranging vision in relation to supporting empowerment, sustainable development, agro-biodiversity and strategic planning.

¹ Erik Buchwald & Mikkel Kure Jakobsen, Burung Indonesia & DOF/BirdLife Denmark, 2009, Low Key Monitoring in the Mbeliling forest. P.3

The MTR considers that the Project remains highly relevant for the main beneficiaries (farmers and their communities in the Mbeliling landscape, local government officials, and agencies responsible for agriculture and natural resources conservation and sustainable use), because the Project is in line with the strategic policies of Indonesia. It is highly relevant for the members of the rural communities, both men and women, whose livelihood depends directly on access to development potentials from sustainable use of natural resources within their customary areas.

In this context, the strength of the Project is its clear focus on the combined objectives of empowerment, income generation and biodiversity conservation. Being implemented by an NGO– and working through partners with an open-ended advocacy strategy and with the creation of role models – gives the Project the flexibility to pilot innovative actions and test approaches in the field which have the potential to be fed into policy making processes supporting its goals. Coordination and facilitation are key to the success of the strategy to link partners and share knowledge and information.

The potential weakness of this design in comparison with a bilateral project lies in the need to establish good coordination and cooperation among stakeholders to successfully implement biodiversity related actions, which are not necessarily directly attributable to Project activities, but a voluntary result of advocacy work with partners. A point in case is the lack of clear ownership of objectives, i.e. some objectives cannot be attributed to the Project alone (e.g. the outputs on strategic planning) or are not accepted by partners, or the institutions simply have not agreed who has responsibility for a given output.

This requires both a strong vertical cooperation between levels and cooperation among different departments, agencies and sectors, in reconciling a biodiversity conservation focus with economic development stemming from natural resource use.

The log-frame is commendable in the sense that it includes SMART indicators – however, it includes a large number of very detailed and somewhat overly ambitious indicators, which are difficult to achieve given the above mentioned open-ended advocacy based strategy. Also, the lack of baselines and possibilities of measuring indicators such as e.g. “Cash income of min. 20 selected households per village is increased by min. 10% within the Project period” implies inherent difficulties for the Project to comply with.

3.2 Empowerment goal

In accordance with TOR, it is analysed how the Project has supported the processes associated with each of the goal areas (empowerment, livelihood improvements, conservation) which are envisaged to lead to the empowerment and eventual sustainability of development activities, and how the advocacy role of the Project has influenced local government institutions in pursuit of the objectives.

3.2.1 Community-based Conservation and Development Groups

Under the empowerment goal (output 1.3 and 1.4), Community-based Conservation and Development Groups (CDGs) must be established in all villages, “to contribute to the sustainable

management of the Mbeliling landscape” and as a basis for this, “The CDGs in the villages around Mbeliling forest have developed Rural Nature Conservation Agreements (RNCA)”.

The process used to establish CDGs in villages follows a participatory intervention strategy defined in specific TOR prepared for the purpose, which have been adapted from Phase I, and is based on processes supported elsewhere by BI. They aim at creating potential role models for other groups to follow.

It involves several steps (see Annex 4) involving identification of a motivated group (among existing farmer groups), socialisation of the CDG concept, democratic election of members and one group head. The selection criteria are based on existing group initiatives and motivation, including to be self-financing. After group selection, a decree at village level is made. The facilitation process includes introduction of conservation issues. Following this, work planning is initiated and internal rules developed. Capacity building follows covering themes contributing to strengthening the groups, organisational (leadership) and technical skills (e.g. organic fertiliser training). Facilitators provide close support during formation of the CDG, during implementation facilitators only monitor, and after that a participatory evaluation is made based on the group’s own indicators and a discussion on achievement of indicators is conducted. Women are always asked to join meetings, in CDG groups women are always appointed as a committee. In one case (1 village out of the 27) a women’s group is constituted as CDG, while others are mixed. So far in Phase II, 31% women are participating.

During Phase II until present, CDGs have been created in 11 additional villages so that all 27 villages around Mbeliling have been covered, thus fulfilling the output 1.3 (“Community-based Conservation and Development Groups (CDGs) established in all villages, to contribute to the sustainable management of the Mbeliling landscape”).

Rural Nature Conservation Agreement (RNCA) preparation (which is an agreement to regulate all resources in the community) followed a long process including facilitation of village agreement of community aspirations built into a document. The agreement also helps to reduce conflicts, ensures strong action plans, and common vision of village goals. The intention is for it to be integrated with existing village level political mid-term planning.

BI helps to articulate the vision goal of landscape management at the operational level, the intention being to show villagers alternatives and apply them in daily work.

RNCAs have been signed and approved in 15 villages at end of Phase I, while all RNCAs in Phase II (11) are signed within villages but not yet approved by District authorities. Thus it can be said that output 1.4 (“The CDGs in the villages around Mbeliling forest have developed Rural Nature Conservation Agreements (RNCA)”) has been fulfilled.

However, some villages have been split into two (see Annex 5a), based on how well they can be supported by the Government. There remains therefore a task to revise the RNCAs and adapt them to the new situation. It is unclear what this means in terms of scope and eventual advocacy elements of the Project activities and Project resource use in daily work as well as in connection with the District linkages.

Judging from the village level interviews, the aim of creating role models seems to be working, although there seems to be variation in the groups' coherence and motivation. The RNCAs are strong agreements which have demonstrated their advocacy function in several cases as evidenced by examples provided during village interviews (e.g. putting pressure on local government to comply with promised infrastructure). This is also hinting at the prospect of the CDGs being sustained after Project termination. The role model concept of CDGs having skills, organisation and work planning implies that others may be motivated to learn from them. Therefore it can be concluded that the CDG formation and RNCA concept has brought awareness and contributed to building capacity and strengthening local civil society.

3.2.2 Forum Peduli Kawasan Mbeliling (FPKM) and Mbeliling Committee

The main output of Phase I was the establishment of the FPKM representing all 27 villages. It was however not functional as originally envisaged because the District issued a decree that civil servants could not participate. The main output expected from Phase II is that it continues to operate without District Government participation. The Mbeliling Committee concept was instead introduced to assume the role of a landscape level planning committee with representation of all stakeholders.

While the CDG revolves around technical issues, the Forum (FPKM) is more concerned with strategic issues. The CDGs are providing inputs for the strategic area in the Forum, the intention being that the Forum is to bridge the gap between community and government.

The government programs have normally been implemented and funds disbursed in villages without having correlation with the development needs of the villages. Village development planning meetings *mus rem bang* only concern physical infrastructure, church, and mosque, with little or nothing on Income Generating Activities (IGA) or empowerment. Thus with the establishment of the Forum, hopefully development aspirations can be better met for villagers. The Project supports the villagers to increase the bargaining power of the community with the establishment of the Forum. According to the Project, all inputs from CDGs are now brought up to the Forum and then the Mbeliling Committee to discuss. It should be noted that the Forum is not reserved for CDGs only, it also accepts inputs from non-CDGs.

The Forum organisation and operational procedures have been modified during the course of Project implementation and has been divided into landscape and cluster level (4 clusters of villages). The Forum at landscape level deals mostly with organisational issues while technical issues are dealt with at cluster level. Only representative members from cluster level now participate at the higher level, resulting in more efficient meetings.

The agenda for meetings at landscape level is to compile issues from cluster level, and to decide how these issues should be addressed and directed to what agency, with proposals for how to tackle the issue.

The Mbeliling Committee is acting as discussion forum between district authorities and communities with regard to landscape level planning, especially formulation of the Integrated Management Planning (KPH). 9 members of the Forum were involved in signing the Committee decree, it is thus

legalised at District level. It is constituted with Heads of District, Industry & Trade Agency, Education-, Agriculture-, Forestry-, Public Works-, and Environment Agencies, and civil society organisations.

The MTR found that the FPKM is operational and functioning, judging by reviewed Minutes of Meetings and other documents, and from information from villages where discussions were held with Forum representatives. It has also conducted one Lessons Learned or sharing of information workshop at the end of December 2012, (part of Project indicators). Trainings have been conducted for FPKM members as required in the LFA. Thus it can be said that outputs 1.1 (*“An Mbeliling Committee is established with representatives from District Government, Forum Peduli Kawasan Mbeliling (FPKM) and civil society organizations”*) and 1.2 (*“The Forum Peduli Kawasan Mbeliling (FPKM) continues to operate without District Government participation”*) of the empowerment goal have been achieved.

The challenges for the Project have been to transfer responsibilities to the Mbeliling Committee through the FPKM-CDG empowerment process. Operationally it has been difficult to set up meetings with officials and motivate officials to take the lead in conducting Committee activities. Until now the Project is hosting and guiding the meetings. So, while the Committee is conducting meetings, it has not fulfilled the Project indicator of *“...overseeing project progress and providing advice after the first 6 months”*. It is difficult to speculate if the Committee will be fully hosted by local government even after Phase II.

Regarding Forum sustainability, it is difficult to find any documents at local government level addressing Mbeliling directly – however the Project is of the opinion that now there is more awareness that conserving the Mbeliling landscape is important. If principles of sustainable management could be incorporated into government planning and if the overall plan can be legalised it would be a good achievement – the fact that the RNCAs are signed by local government institutions is seen as goodwill from government side. Some positive indications of the Project’s advocacy work which is hinting at sustainability prospects are particularly related to eco-tourism development and environmental education.

The overall appreciation is that the prospect of having success with creating a multi-stakeholder planning framework is still very challenging but that the attitude of the local government and political system is changing in favour of Project initiatives.

3.3 Poverty reduction goal

3.3.1 Income Generating Activities

The outputs of the poverty reduction goal concern the identification of new/improved Income Generating Activities through a comprehensive assessment of existing economic activities, and assistance to increase of villagers’ incomes through more sustainable economic activities. Some indicators are “Cash income of min. 20 selected households per village is increased by min. 10 % within Project period” and “Feasible existing sources of income improved and 1-3 new income-generating activities identified, developed and implemented by the end of Project”.

Concerning the output related to identification of opportunities for developing IGA, consultants on agribusiness, microfinance, and joint marketing produced 3 reports in 2012 (in Bahasa):

Study 1: Value chain and opportunities for joint marketing for top agricultural commodities in Mbeliling landscape, covering:

- Candle nut, clove, coffee, e.g. *tuk bam bam* (local coffee) production: it was realised that middlemen take a lot of profit, so it is better to process coffee to powder and sell it in coffee shops. This was however found difficult so it was proposed instead to sell through shops in CDGs, and also in ecotourism villages.
- Candle nut joint marketing opportunity: the idea is to send product to Java markets, but so far financial obstacles make it difficult to collect and sell collectively resulting in only local level sales.
- Cloves: recommendations are similar to candlenut joint marketing, low prices in market, and risky for local level involvement.
- Effect of joint marketing realised by villagers: learning was done through study visit to other operator who markets coffee in US via partner in Surabaya.

Not surprisingly, increasing production and marketing potential is difficult in the Mbeliling landscape, due to the decentralised nature of agriculture smallholdings, tropical conditions, poor infrastructure and capital demands. The Project has tried to engage with local government to access funds in Government of Indonesia (GoI) programmes (which are usually not sufficiently supported). A GoI farmers' group fund exists for farmers to be disbursed with 100 mill. IDR granted per village for agricultural purpose, but even though local government realises the importance of joint marketing it has been difficult to gain access to use funds to buy up commodities in support of joint marketing. Experience sharing through the Forum with joint marketing in Sumba shows however that it can work.

Study 2: Development of perennial plant agricultural business in Mbeliling landscape.

Focus was on:

- Intensification: planting of second crop in paddy fields, e.g. green bean or mung beans, in support of diversification.
- Encourage pilots in vegetable growing and replicate if successful

This is popular with growers and there is large demand for vegetables. It is seen by the Project as a good and viable opportunity for the local market. There are some cultural obstacles, in that people are seen as poor if they do not plant rice. The proposal is to sell vegetable to buy rice instead. Also it is risky to plant in rainy season, and the market will become saturated quickly if others take it up in large scale. The Project facilitators have written a "success story" detailing the economic benefit of growing vegetables as second crop.

Study 3: Comprehensive assessment of microfinance practice and its potential of development in the Mbeliling landscape

The study showed that there is experience with micro-finance in the region, with groups already established and managing capital. The study recommended that seed capital should be provided for farmers to be able to scale up their business, that funds can be distributed through Revolving Funds, not only CDGs, and that schemes of microfinance also support joint marketing, and productive schemes in a business context. Further the microfinance study recommended to increase assistance to the microfinance groups that are scattered in the villages to strengthen administration and management.

The Project has its own small grant mechanism established with a process with criteria and steps for accessing funds through proposals presented by a community application, and a selection process decides who will get seed capital based on assessment of a business plan. The expectation is that eventually this can evolve into village cooperatives that can access grants coming from the government. The Project small grants are not only reserved for CDGs. All village groups can access BI funds. Of the Project budget of 400 million IDR, 135 million has been allocated to 13 groups, in 11 villages with 101 business plans, which will be disbursed in the coming months. The Project will use the disbursement event as part of a transparency process with village meetings to formally disburse the money, and information of the event will be disseminated through different media (Forum, Committee). The Head of Village signs on behalf of the group.

The MTR has compiled an overview of villages, CDGs and microfinance engagements shown in Annex 5a+5b. The Project has already followed up on the study recommendations and conducted training at cluster level in administration and management with invited groups. Also included was support to proposal development and business plan preparation.

The microfinance scheme seems to be well implemented and working, although we did not yet see any productive activities undertaken by savings and loans groups. The one microfinance group visited had a well-functioning membership structure with 87 members and collected quite high membership fees as part of a savings and loan package. By Nov 2012 they were managing 34 mill IDR. Most disbursements go to education and consumption, and are not productive. They are considering to move into candle nut joint marketing, but for that they have calculated a capital need of 320 mill. For the time being there is high demand for loans. They have clear regulations, good loan records and bookkeeping.

All studies have provided valuable and relevant information on IGA opportunities, which is being used for implementation. Overall, the Project has been quite effective in fulfilling the outputs related to increased income generation, but they are not able to document a 10% increase in income levels for the villages. They have not calculated yet the effect of CGD income generating activities, and have only a rudimentary baseline stating that the average income per household/month is 866.000 IDR. Indications are that with more diversified production and with less expenses producing their own vegetables, they are raising income somewhat. So far this can only be judged by “success stories” prepared for singular cases. E.g. 6 persons in Jumbi gained additional 6000 IDR for vegetable productions, by intensifying from rice to paddy and vegetables with “significant gains”. They conclude that there is a 1:2.4 ratio gain by combining crops temporally over the cropping year. They also indicated that other CDGs became interested. However, it requires more dedicated studies to measure a sustained 10% income increase from IGAs.

It is therefore recommended that the Project embarks on a more systematic assessment of the CDGs economic situation as a result of Project activities.

An opportunity to do such an assessment may arise shortly. The village facilitators are mostly involved in PRA until May, but once RNCAs are finalised, more time will be allocated to monitoring CDGs and microfinance activities.

3.3.2 Agro-forestry, nurseries and tree crops

The Forest and Landscape Department (FLD) of the University of Copenhagen is providing technical assistance support mainly addressing the income generation goal based on agriculture, agro-forestry and tree crops, although it does span into both the empowerment and conservation goal.

The inputs delivered have been through a local consultant (10 months) guided by an international consultant (6 months). The activity areas have covered:

- Development and implementation of Training of Trainers and technical training (corresponds to log-frame activity 2.2.4)
- Improving supply of better quality seed and seedlings of currently used priority species for production and protection purposes through support to existing private and community nurseries (activity 2.2.2)
- Increasing and improving the use of native species in tree planting programmes for protection and production (activity 3.2.1)

The FLD has worked according to a well prepared “Strategy Plan for Improvement and Diversification of Tree Planting”, which includes an activity overview, descriptions and an implementation plan. An additional input concerning the establishment of an arboretum has been included in the work plan.

The FLD has delivered 3 inputs plus the work plan:

- i. November 2011 : work plan prepared
- ii. Feb-march 2012: Planning mission, present ideas to encourage government to be involved in work plan
- iii. 21-25 May 2012: Training of Trainers: Conservation effort through tree planting (nursery & land rehabilitation)
- iv. 13 December to 22 December 2012: Tree Nursery Survey in Mbeililing Forest Area, West Manggarai, Flores

The Training of Trainers has been a continuation of Phase I activities, aiming at building primarily the capacity of the village facilitators to undertake training for the village level activities in agroforestry and tree planting. The outputs related to training have largely been met, with village level training course materials developed and distributed, in connection with the above mentioned ToT courses. These have been well received and course results with new knowledge on nurseries tree planting seem to have been incorporated in the facilitators’ daily work. It appears that most of the output indicators of “Min. 20 villagers in min. 20 villages have embarked on productive tree crops planting” has been achieved but that “a total of min. 50.000 tree seedlings planted by the end of year 3” will

likely not be achieved – the Project indication is that only about 6500 seedlings have been planted at this time.

The conservation related activities seem to have been quite successful and are seen as important by the villagers. The continuation and improvement of tree planting around water springs and other important sections of the upper catchment areas seem to have been included as standard in most if not all RNCAs.

The tree nursery survey gave a good overview of the tree nursery capacity, species used and potential. In general, the quality of plants produced in the district are of average quality. Only two nurseries have good knowledge of native tree species production (for catchment planting). The nursery operators have limited technical knowledge on seed technology, nursery and business management.

Government produces about 500.000 seedlings a year, but these are distributed freely so prices are low, and in general there seems to be little market potential for seedlings produced by groups or individuals to feed into this supply chain. There is a higher demand for clove seedlings due to higher price potential and thus business opportunity for clove nursery development, but it has not been quantified. The potential demand for forest trees for planting for community needs has not been estimated, nor the commercial potential for e.g. cloves.

As a conclusion, seedling production does not seem to have much potential for income generation based on seedling sales, but improved plant material plays an important role in enhancing farm incomes in the longer term. Tree cropping is important for fulfilling individual farmers' need for construction materials and for protection of water resources. More importantly perennial cropping is an integral part of the agricultural system applied by most farmers in the region, as elsewhere in Indonesia. The traditional home gardens with their multi-storey structure favour intercropping, supply productive employment, reduce erosion and provide environmental amenities and security of yield. The farming systems in Mbeliling can be seen as extended home gardens combined with paddy cultivation. The villagers already use a fairly complex agroforestry system to derive their livelihood e.g. with candlenut, coffee, paddy rice, fruit trees etc., and in these smallholdings there is scope for improving incomes based on improved plant material, better husbandry of the perennial component of the system, and selection of crops with a good value to weight ratio.

Tree cropping and agroforestry has had limited impact in the district due to low numbers planted and small number of villagers participating so far, but shows good prospect for initiatives being adopted and carried on also after project termination. **Therefore it is important to focus on replication in the remaining Project period both with CDGs acting as trainers (role models) and continuation of the FLD support as planned. Specifically it is recommended to continue the ToT courses and technical trainings as planned.**

The Project has not focused on farming systems development and land use in a wider planning context. This perspective is missing in Project documentation (focus has been on individual smallholdings to develop examples and role models), but it is crucial for placing sustainable agricultural development in the Mbeliling landscape planning context (see also section 3.4.2 on the Landscape Management Plan).

Of the remaining FLD consultant man months (about 3 months international, 3 months national) some could be converted, or the technical themes in the training adapted, to support spatial planning and assistance to develop spatial inputs as examples for the strategic planning. Specifically, **it is recommended to aggregate the village maps into an overview map of land use and forest categories, protected areas etc. It should show agricultural systems and land uses reflected in the RNCAs, i.e. including forest/agricultural land, land boundary resolution, proposals for land allocation for different purposes etc.**

This could play an important role in strengthening the Projects' s advocacy power in relation to the envisaged Strategic plan which is currently not so promising.

3.3.3 Eco-tourism

The MTR visited Liang Ndara eco-tourism group which has evolved since Phase I, where the Project became aware of the need to develop the concept further and involve all villagers in one eco-tourism organisation. This resulted in the Liang Ndara group and Sano lake (Wei Sano village) and others in pipeline. The work is facilitated through workshops, multi stakeholders consultations and visits to potential areas. This is followed by training, creation of sub-groups with activity differentiation per group (home stay in one group etc) and general strengthening of plans and skill levels, including how to be a good guide. Testing was carried out in Liang Ndara with 28 Canadian tourists handled (cultural show, handicraft, trekking etc.), with a very good evaluation, showing potential for expanding further this concept.

The facilitator reported these successes to the tourism agency as part of a socialisation of concept campaign, and held meetings with travel agents, for linking communities with travel agents to obtain a better bargaining position. According to the facilitator, and confirmed by the MTR visit to the Tourism Agency, the Head mentioned that in the new tourism plan under preparation they will consider more aspects of eco-tourism to be included in the 25 year plan for 3 districts, with Wae Sano included as one district tourist destination. However, presently financial support is needed, and there is no guarantee that they have funds during the next 2 years. It appears that there is good rapport between the BI facilitator and the agency, and that eco-tourism will feature in the master plan.

The challenges for eco-tourism development and the prospect for it "catching on" with communities are multiple. One of the main problems is the poor infrastructure and logistics – it is complicated to bring tourists to eco-tourism destinations with poor public service and non-maintained forest roads and transportation being difficult and time consuming. Some attractions like bird watching may have low product appreciation.

The Project has not made economic calculations and it is therefore recommended to quantify economic prospect for the communities of developing ecotourism as part of IGA – and to assess the consequences of tourism both negative and positive. There are now new regulations under preparation which will impact Project activities with new rules and quota of tourist arrivals, hotel quotas, limits to tourism expansion etc. Benefit sharing must also be analysed.

3.4 Conservation goal

3.4.1 Low Key Monitoring

Low Key Monitoring (LKM) is presented in the PD as part of activities aimed at reducing the “negative developments” affecting the Mbeliling forest. It is expected that LKM and applied biological studies data demonstrate stable or higher populations of most important bird species and fewer incidences of habitat destruction by the end of Project. The associated activities are that “LKM is continued as a joint exercise of CDG members and Dinas Kehutanan staff, and expanded to cover more forest”.

After a review in 2011 and further learning, it was realised that the Low Key Monitoring system was not sustainable, for several reasons:

- Not all villages are near the forest or have forest, or have difficult access.
- Villagers in general put birds, and wildlife at end of priority level and had low interest in monitoring biodiversity changes in the forest
- Only CDGs participated in LKM (not wider group of villagers)
- In state forest the public have no use access rights, and people tend to obey that rule
- The local Forest Agency does not have a budget for LKM and is therefore reluctant to participate, even if invited.

For that reason, the Project changed the purpose and objective of LKM and the TOR was revised accordingly. The purpose changed from only monitoring forest condition and biodiversity changes to monitor natural resource more broadly speaking, e.g. LKM now includes monitoring of the water supply situation, candle nut, cash crops, water sources, land conservation with rotation and other aspects which are more readily associated with the daily life of the villagers. The Project stated: “We move the system closer to their life”, as initially the villagers thought that LKM was only for Burung Indonesia. This change also meant that the Project can better use results from monitoring in participatory processes. The new system started January 2013 and has a regular schedule. The CDGs now are able to increase the knowledge of what they can do in the local context, especially related to their livelihood improvement.

The facilitation now includes new indicators as per the revised TOR for LKM, termed Laot Puar. BI tries to make visible for villagers that data contribute to local planning. Facilitators inspire village government to continue to invite line agencies to come and discuss issues in the field e.g. water resources, however, the Project does not have much expectation on behalf of the agencies, rather the thinking is that data collected can be used by agencies if desired. Even if the agency doesn’t use the data the villagers will have good use of it.

From the LKM experience, there has been a clear learning process, albeit not documented, to which the Project has adapted implementation. This process has had as consequence that focus has shifted towards livelihood improvement away from conservation as was the intended purpose of LKM.

It was envisaged that DOF should receive data to be analysed and that data could be used to assess changes in biodiversity in Mbeliling forest area. Apart from the general question of data validity concerning low key data collection – can it be used for statistical analyses? – the fact that villagers

were not interested in monitoring bird species and biodiversity in the forest pre-empted the possibility of assessing changes in the forest.

The experience shows that it is difficult to incorporate *forest* biodiversity monitoring in participatory processes geared towards *livelihood* improvement, if people are not directly dependent on forest resources in their daily life. Only the ecotourism groups recognise the importance of seeing bird species and therefore the importance for monitoring birds, also in the forest.

The current Laot Puar monitoring process is conducted by following a 30 min trail with the whole process taking about 2,5 hours. The group varies the trail about every month after deciding on places e.g. spring, crop area, and identifies species seen including wildlife. It also monitors water discharge, crop condition etc. This means that the LKM groups *do* record biodiversity data, but that data is not as useful for BI as envisaged, but more useful for checking village level compliance with RNCA requirements and local planning.

Thus, the expectation of BI/DOF regarding more “hardcore” data and dedicated bird monitoring in forests will not materialise and in essence the purpose of the monitoring has changed.

It is therefore recommended in the short term to put more emphasis on and demonstrate **important biodiversity and data in the Forum in order to strengthen the advocacy work so that it may be reflected and integrated in line agency work.**

It is further recommended to analyse the possibility of making partnerships with other stakeholders who might be interested in doing LKM as originally envisaged, and/or to form special groups in-house to do LKM.

In the longer perspective or programme design perspective **it is recommended that BI/DOF analyse new ways of incorporating LKM and differentiate the purpose to cater for both BI and project interests.**

It is likely that LKM should not form part of participatory monitoring except where this is directly in the interest of beneficiaries.

3.4.1 Biological studies and awareness raising

As part of the conservation goal, a number of biological studies for sustainable management of the most important species and habitats are to be carried out (output 3.1). These include studies on:

Hanging Parrot - follow up study starts May 2013

Flores Crow – follow up study starts May 2013

Until now, the Project has carried out the following studies:

- Yellow crested Cockatoo (July – August 2012): 80 individual were found in Golo Mori, in the western part of Mbeliling where the Cockatoo uses the habitat as feeding ground, but not as breeding ground . The bird is migrating from Rinca and no longer breeds in West Manggarai due to previous hunting/ trapping.

- Flores Monarch (Feb -March 2012): studies indicate a status quo in species frequency. Follow up study is planned to monitor population and habitat. The bird is only found in primary forest, at an altitude of 600-900 m.

Studies on the Komodo Dragon will start in May 2013, with participation from the Komodo Survival Programme. The intention is to use camera traps and analyse distribution, frequency, feeding habits etc which will contribute to overall data on Komodo in the region

Public awareness

The public awareness campaign started 2011 with many villages visited with the purpose of presenting the Project, its objectives, goals, stories from other places and how to achieve sustainability by examples (natural resources, poverty caused degradation, over use etc). The activities were packaged with shows, with many people visiting the village office, then discussion and questions and answers session, finishing with movies, songs and videos.

Also included in the campaign have been village presentations on how to measure impact (through questionnaires, to be re-measured), and a reference to a survey in Phase I, which is to be repeated at the end of Phase II once more.

Songs with biodiversity messages were made with local people based on Project material and broadcasted on local radio . However, the station is presently not working but this activity will be taken up again.

The experience has been good in this area, but learning shows that awareness raising activities should be more participatory related to specific issues in villages.

3.4.2 Environmental education

The District Education Office and a senior staff team is developing a new curriculum containing environmental education, through a team effort by the Project. It has been a long process but is now resulting in a 90 minute school program likely of being incorporated into the curriculum form next year. It will be part of the education in grades 1-6, in 50 schools in four sub-districts. This is seen as a major achievement involving both Project staff, teachers and the Education Agency.

3.4.3 Landscape management plan

The MTR is asked in the TOR to assess the role that the “Landscape Management Plan” is “intended to play in achieving the conservation goal” and whether it has the “needed quality and legal backing for that role”.

The role that the Plan is intended to play is not described clearly in the PD but it is implicitly understood as a regulatory instrument that will ensure the sustainable management of the Mbeliling landscape based on mutual agreements by all users of the productive landscape. The PD describes in the section “options to change the negative developments” (p.9) that the Project must “Finalise the

participatory process of formulating the Mbeliling landscape management and make it binding for all parties, including the District Government". It does not mention the Management *Plan*, rather the process. Under Outputs (p.14) the main caption is "*The Mbeliling landscape management plan process ensures equal participation and improves livelihoods for local communities*". Again, it highlights the process and not the Plan as end product.

Output 3.3 is presented as "*A management plan for the Mbeliling landscape is agreed on by all parties, integrated with district development plans, as well as the process of creating the KPH (Integrated Forest Management)*". It does not state that the Management Plan is an expected output, rather it is the *agreement* on a plan.

Under activities, p.19, it is stated that "The Project team takes the lead in the facilitation of the process of formulating and legalising the Mbeliling landscape management plan with all other stakeholders."

Thus it should be clear that the expectation according to the PD is not a plan but rather the *process* of formulating and agreeing by all stakeholders on a plan, which is accepted and adopted by the District authorities. This is in line with the general Project strategy and approach of advocating for changes leading to more sustainable development of the Mbeliling landscape.

The Project has continued work on a draft of "Strategic Plan for Productive and Sustainable Mbeliling Landscape", (which became available in English during this MTR). It should be noted that it is *not* called a *Landscape Management Plan*, but a *Strategic Plan*. Indeed, a review of the Strategic Plan confirms the above assessment. It is not a Management Plan but a strategic plan.

This is confusing because the term Landscape Management Plan is used in the PD and in the logical framework. The question is whether it is clear to all partners exactly what should be the expected output.

The MTR reviewed the Plan and came to the conclusion that it is primarily a statement of strategic principles to be adhered to for the sustainable management of the Mbeliling landscape.

The draft Strategic Plan is a very theoretical document with descriptions of the characteristics of the Mbeliling landscape, the landscape approach, the role of the Mbeliling Forum and Committee, and principles of participation, the ecological balance principle, the sustainable livelihood principle and empowerment strategies. There are no quantified data or concrete planning proposals, or even examples of suggested prioritisations of land allocations for any planning purpose in the Mbeliling area in the document. As such it remains a strategic document for reference use for planners who might be interested in adopting its principles.

There is no local government budget for an agreed plan as foreseen. The integration of Strategic Plan aspects into the District development plans must be taken on by each agency and according to their own working plans adjusted according to the sustainability and conservation criteria brought forward in the Strategic Plan. Thus, its success is entirely dependent on the motivation of the local government to respect the principles.

As stated in the Strategic Plan (p.27), "the ideas proposed in the Mbeliling landscape Strategic Plan are mainly synced and in harmony with the vision and mission of the government, especially the

SKPD (local government agency). Every SKPD have their plan and annual budget to develop community and area in the entire West Manggarai District. By developing the Mbeliling Landscape Strategic Plan, it is expected that all plans and budgets of SKPD that relates to the development of activities in Mbeliling landscape can refer to the Mbeliling Landscape Strategic Plan” thus complying with conservation and sustainable production criteria.

The reaction on the government / political side on adopting the Strategic Plan so far are varied. Initially, according to the Project, the officials thought it would increase costs and add additional resource demands if they integrate the Plan into the political system. However, the Project has been highlighting the fact that they are introducing only the concepts and principles of integrated management into the existing district planning.

The Project has mentioned that there is already a Decree for the integrated management in the West Manggarai area (so-called KPH-P or Integrated Forest Management – Production). The KPH concept is GoI policy, under which West Manggarai is categorised as “productive” area and is therefore under local government jurisdiction with management powers devolved to local authorities. The Project mentioned to the MTR that it wishes to support the operationalization of such KPH-P through their Strategic Plan.

However, there is no indication that the local government is working on a *comprehensive* Landscape Management Plan, which is stated as an output (e.g. under output 3.3 “.....Mbeliling landscape management plan is finalised and agreed by end of year 3”) and legalised in the second quarter of year 4, or that this output is related to the KPH-P concept.

Even if the indicators of the log-frame could be related to the KPH-P, the Strategic Plan is not deemed to be a sufficiently strong instrument to operationalize the KPH-P or support the preparation of a comprehensive landscape management plan.

The Project would stand a better chance to influence the local government in taking on the planning process or elements of a plan, if the Project used its strength in demonstrating local solutions as it has done with e.g. eco-tourism or livelihood development. If the Project could produce proposals or examples of a better land use planning, land allocation for different conservation or sustainable production purposes, spatial planning using GIS and hard data, with good arguments related to the well-being of the population and the health of the environment, then it would be in a better position. However, the Project has not demonstrated capacity in this field. Therefore, the MTR is of the opinion that the Strategic Plan will remain a theoretical document, unless more technical assistance is allocated to the Project to support the development of examples and planning proposals which may be more readily accepted by the local government (for KPH-P or comprehensive management plan purposes). More TA is however not likely to become available during Phase II.

It is recommended that DOF, and BI discuss and agree on how exactly the management planning output should be interpreted and addressed in the remaining Project period. This must include clarifications on how exactly the KPH-P process is aligned with and can be the target for Project activities, and an agreement on realistic log-frame indicators, which can be complied with within the remaining Project period.

The indicators should be refined and adapted to better correspond to show the effort made by the Project in convincing local government and other stakeholders in taking on sustainable development planning in Mbeliling. This would also imply putting more effort into documenting better the efforts - training, meetings, workshops etc. - and their contents/outcomes, and generating Lessons Learnt, and eventually documenting what the local government and agencies are taking on as a response to Project initiatives.

3.4.4 Management centre and District government staff training

Output 3.4 concerns training of local government staff “to sufficiently play their formal role as overseers of the Mbeliling forest”. The indicators imply training of 20 selected staff from different agencies participating in selected training from year 1, and 15 staff participating in study tours. Some staff have participated in workshops, but in general it can be said that this output has not materialised as yet. The Project has indicated that there is little motivation.

Also, it is expected under this output that the Sub-district forest office in Werang becomes the Mbeliling forest management centre to “support and improve overall management and monitoring of the forest area”. This output has as indicator the refurbishment and equipment of the Werang forest office, and an agreement for the District to co-fund the refurbishment.

An information centre was already proposed during Phase I, but it was difficult to achieve. For Phase II, it was proposed as a *forest management centre* under government ownership, which however requires inclusion in government work plans. This would require approval from the District parliament, but according to the Project this has not materialised, because there is no priority to fund such an initiative.

In this context the MTR has to point at the ambiguity of the logic and lack of precision in the output description in the PD: are we talking about a centre which should support “overall management and monitoring of the *forest* area? There are no TOR or descriptions e.g. in the Strategic Plan of what really is the desired outcome of this output.

The question has been raised by the Project whether this centre could be financed from Danida funds. This would have the consequence that it would not be sustainable, and is therefore not recommended. An alternative would be for such a centre to be established by an NGO, which could be formed as a consequence of the Project work. This would make sense and could form part of an exit strategy and enhance sustainability.

It is recommended to pursue the establishment of an information centre (as a more realistic output than a forest management centre) with the purpose of storing and disseminating Mbeliling data of presently supported Project activities. This would include elements of eco-tourism, landscape related GIS data, production data, bird observation data etc. catering for a wider range of the public.

It is recommended to reassess, revise and propose realistic indicators for such an agreed output.

3.4.5 Geographical Information Systems - GIS

GIS has been used mainly in connection with output 1.4 related to the work with CDGs, especially the preparation of village maps. These are derived from the PRA exercises sketch maps and include e.g. springs, forest boundary, village land use, and eco-tourism sites. The MTR received 16 village maps (from Phase I). Presumably there are now village maps for all 27 villages, although not finalised. These maps are important and serve a good purpose for the RNCA.

However the Project has not used GIS in a more analytical way, or as part of the supported planning process, although this would have been a great asset for demonstrating and quantifying planning elements. There is no use of GIS in the Strategic Plan and no mention of its potential use. The Project could not produce an overview map of the assisted villages and their relation to the forest areas, not to mention the extent of the different forest classes or the trends in encroachment or changes in forest area.

To harness the full potential of GIS in the landscape planning context would require more external TA as the Project does not have the in-house capacity, and it is therefore not realistic. It would also require an adaptation of the log-frame outputs and indicators, currently only “overview and planning maps” are mentioned in connection with village mapping.

As a minimum, GIS should be strengthened with the production of overview maps showing the 27 villages in relation to the land use and forest categories. Such maps could be used mainly for presenting project data to the wider public with the purpose of strengthening the Projects advocacy power.

It is recommended to incorporate maps with location of villages and related information – initially this could be employed in the planned web page development, e.g. incorporate i-frames for Google maps/earth including markers with geo-referenced information for all villages.

3.5 Gender mainstreaming

The PD does not explicitly require that gender is mainstreamed throughout the Project but states that “at least 30% of those involved (in CDGs/RNCAs, and income generating activities) will be women”. According to the last Annual Report this goal has not yet been reached with women’s participation ranging between 18%-22%. According to the same report the involvement of women is not fully satisfactory though several steps have been taken towards this goal. DOF carried out a one day training work-shop for staff and facilitators on gender mainstreaming and initiated together with the earlier Community Participation Officer a gender case study with the objective to better understand the role of women and men respectively in natural resource management and economic activities. This study has not yet been carried out. Despite efforts to support active participation of women in meetings and decision making processes there is still a long way to go. Women in Mbeliling generally have low or no formal education, and they find it difficult to break with traditions, for example it is mostly the male head of a household who represents the household in a community context. The number of women’s groups at community level is very low. It is also extremely difficult to attract women to work for the Project. There is only one female facilitator (out

of nine) and no female staff. Finally there is generally a limited understanding of the process of gender mainstreaming.

It is recommended to carry out the planned gender case study in 2-4 Project villages and look specifically at gender roles in relation to natural resource management, decision making and community groups, and to discuss potentials for a broader involvement of women. The gender manual should be translated into Bahasa Indonesia and be used as back-ground material for further capacity building of staff and especially facilitators. Training may be provided by DOF in connection with supervision missions as has been the case until now.

3.6 Project management, organisation and technical assistance

Organisation.

The Project is organised with 18 local staff on Flores (plus driver and office helper), all co-funded with Burung Indonesia. This includes 9 village facilitators. The Team Leader and Finance officer are full time during the four years Project period, while others are from 2-4 years. The 9 village facilitators work in total 75 months per year, i.e. they are not full time. In total there are 664 man months of local staff input. The staff allocation and time distribution is shown in Annex 7 of the Project Document. The local staff composition is well chosen based on experience from Phase I and seems to have worked well.

There are 74 man months of local staff in Bogor, whose inputs vary from 4 to 20 months. GIS and mapping provide 12 and 18 months respectively.

Additionally, local short-term consultants provide an input of 43 man months, of which most have been implemented. Outstanding, but programmed, is the Komodo Dragon study and some inputs by FLD.

An officer for the District Agriculture office has been seconded for a total of 45 man months to liaise between the local government offices and the Project, who according to the Project has served well and contributed to liaison between District and Project.

The local staff has received internal training in various topics: The village facilitators have been trained in GPS use, GIS, PRA, nursery, basic courses for all (agribusiness), water resource monitoring, evaluation CDG, cooperatives, credit management, gender mainstreaming and communication. The facilitators have implemented a high number of trainings for CDG groups. Most training has been carried out as Training of Trainers. For a list of implemented trainings and topics see Annex 6.

Project steering

The experience from Phase I showed that the Steering Committee of that phase did not fulfil its role. Although not documented, an internal meeting agreed on having a committee with only an advisory role for Phase II. In reality BI and DOF are steering the Project until termination. However, there is also an indication that the Mbeliling Committee should take on some of the Project promoted

activities as a result of the advocacy work and support to the planning processes in the Mbeliling landscape. As mentioned elsewhere this does not seem likely to be sustainable at this time.

Capacity, role and challenges of project management, staff and facilitators

Challenges have been related to the continuity of staff/facilitators: e.g. the Community Participation Officer and Communication Awareness Specialist have changed. It is difficult to replace them as it requires long time to train and get acquainted with the work, which have caused delays in activities. There is only one woman working in the Project, as a facilitator. It has proven extremely difficult to find women who are willing to work and live in Werang.

Administration

The Project and its Finance & Administration officer is using the system from Bogor based on standard monthly statements, with quarterly replenishments. Accounting is standard, using a well tested system of BI. It does not give rise to comments, and there have been no problems reported.

Budget

The spending seems in compliance with the scheduled disbursement plan as per the implementation plan, about half of the funds have been spent. The Project has sought revision for a budget line within an activity category due to an overspending of about 50.000 DKK. This is minor and **it is recommended that this be taken from other immediate objective budget line in the same operational budget.**

The consultant inputs scheduled for implementation during the remaining Project period is justified and will be needed. For example, the Legal Adviser is needed for collaboration with GoI on eg the Strategic Plan, and the Ecotourism Master Plan in 2013. The advisor on hydrology was used in year 1, but there is a need to follow up for the Strategic Plan and Payment for Ecosystem Services. Because of this, **it is recommended to allocate funds from the operational part of the budget (activity part), or the DOF TA to LKM to secure sufficient budget for TA on Lessons Learned.**

As a conclusion to this section, the Project has a well-functioning team with good team spirit working together, and seemingly good skills in what they are doing. There are no immediate needs for additional in-house resources and the team has utilised well specialists in specific work areas, e.g. ecotourism, hydrology, joint marketing etc and the upcoming Komodo Survival Programme specialist to assist in that study.

The management systems and operational planning seem to work very well, with monthly meetings. It is commendable that facilitators meet every month and come together to evaluate progress on activity planning, sharing experiences etc. and that this is used for operational planning, which fosters effectiveness in management. Staff members produce Back to Office reports for all activities undertaken. Additionally, specific evaluations are carried out for different activities, providing a good basis for compiling records on activities.

However, the information gathering is not systematised, and there is no formal monitoring system using spread sheets or even better databases for storing data. This makes it difficult to get summary data on Project activities and therefore the total effort delivered. There is no strong tradition for

writing more analytical evaluative reports, and there is no mechanism developed for using this data for generating lessons learnt.

The PD prescribes the development of a lessons learnt mechanism as part of the Project strategy, and specifically for the FPKM work (activity 1.2.3).

It is recommended to give priority to the strengthening of the information handling through an improved information system. This would entail going through all data collection and reporting, simplifying and prioritising the type of information according to its purpose and value, and building the lessons learned mechanism on that basis.

Sustainability

To increase the chances of making Project achievements sustainable, an Exit Strategy should be prepared. It is recommended to provide external assistance to assist the Project to carry out this exercise. Initially it is proposed to carry out an internal workshop (DOF, BI, Project) to identify elements to be included:

- It needs to be further discussed how the Mbeliling Committee is seen to be managing the Mbeliling landscape
- There are indications that the CDGs can be sustained in future with capacity building – the Exit Strategy should deal with how they can be replicated for additional local groups which could evolve into establishment of recognised community organisations with increasing bargaining power.
- Developing a lessons learned mechanism should have high priority for the remaining Project period. It must emerge from a good monitoring system providing good quality information.
- While the Bupati has signed the proposal for support to the Project it is necessary to assess the District line agencies' motivation level and come up with ideas on how to increase their interest in the Project, e.g. by demonstrating success stories, lessons learned and technical planning proposals including demonstration of spatial planning options
- Review the prospects of the Forum and cooperatives to be more developed (perhaps recognised by the government as NGO?) and decide on supporting actions.

4. Summary of recommendations

The Project has been quite effective in delivering outputs which are directly attributed to the Project activities, both within goal 1 and especially within goal 2: improved livelihood options. The effectiveness of achieving results in the landscape management planning has been more limited.

The MTR considers that the Project remains highly relevant for the main beneficiaries (farmers and their communities in the Mbeliling landscape, local government officials, and agencies responsible for agriculture and natural resources conservation and sustainable use).

The Project design suffers from misleading use of accepted terminology for some objectives and outputs which can give rise to confusion in what is expected from the Project. From a design perspective,

- **it is recommended to use peer reviewers to carefully assess the consistency in terminology and concepts when designing projects, using external specialists.**

The CDG formation and RNCA concept has brought awareness and contributed to building capacity and strengthening local civil society. The RNCAs are strong agreements which have demonstrated their advocacy function in several cases as evidenced by examples provided during village interviews (e.g. putting pressure on local government to comply with promised infrastructure). The aim of creating role models seems to be working, although there seems to be variation in the groups' coherence and motivation.

The MTR found that the FPKM is operational and functioning well, judging by reviewed minutes of meetings and other documents, and from information from villages where discussions were held with Forum representatives. The Mbeliling Committee is legalised at District level, but is still not overseeing project progress and providing advice on landscape level, and its sustainability is questionable.

All studies on identification of livelihood improvement through IGAs have provided valuable and relevant information on IGA opportunities and the microfinance scheme seems to be well implemented and working, although productive activities are limited and undertaken by savings and loans groups. Overall, the Project has been quite effective in fulfilling the outputs related to increased income generation, but has only a rudimentary baseline and no detailed economic analyses. So far results can only be judged by "success stories" prepared for singular cases.

Seedling production does not seem to have much potential for income generation based on seedling sales, but improved plant material plays an important role in enhancing farm incomes in the longer term. However, tree cropping and agroforestry has had limited impact in the District due to low numbers planted and small number of villagers participating so far.

- **It is important to focus on replication in the remaining Project period both with CDGs acting as trainers (role models) and continuation of the FLD support as planned, specifically it is recommended to continue the ToT courses and technical trainings as planned.**
- **It is recommended to aggregate the village maps into an overview map of land use and forest categories, protected areas etc. It should show agricultural systems and land uses reflected in the RNCAs, i.e. including forest/agricultural, land boundary resolution, proposals for land allocation for different purposes etc.**

Regarding eco-tourism, the new tourism plan under preparation will consider more aspects of eco-tourism to be included in the 25 year plan for 3 districts as a result of Project advocacy, but is dependent on District budget. Eco-tourism challenges have been to e.g. bring tourists to eco-tourism destinations with poor public service and non-maintained forest roads. No economic calculations have been made to date. DOF provides a training work-shop on marketing of ecotourism through electronic media for Project communication and ecotourism staff and BI staff in May, which is hoped to contribute to a growing number of visitors to Mbeliling.

- **It is recommended to quantify economic prospect for the communities of developing ecotourism as part of IGA – and to assess the consequences of tourism both negative and positive.**

The Project changed the purpose and objective of LKM and the TOR was revised accordingly:

- **It is recommended in the short term to put more emphasis on and demonstrate important biodiversity data in the Forum in order to strengthen the advocacy work so that it may be reflected and integrated into line agency work.**
- **It is recommended to analyse the possibility of making partnerships with other stakeholders who might be interested in doing LKM as originally envisaged, and/or to form special groups in-house to do LKM.**
- **In the longer perspective or Programme Design perspective it is recommended that DOF analyses new ways of incorporating LKM and differentiates purpose to cater for both BirdLife and Project interests.**
- **It is likely that LKM should not form part of participatory monitoring except where this is directly in the interest of beneficiaries.**

The Strategic Plan is not deemed to be a sufficiently strong instrument to operationalize the KPH-P or support the preparation of a comprehensive landscape management plan.

- **It is recommended that DOF, BI and the Project discuss and agree on how exactly the management planning output should be interpreted and addressed in the remaining Project period. This must include clarifications on how exactly the KPH-P process is aligned with and can be the target for Project activities, and an agreement on realistic log-frame indicators, which can be complied with within the remaining Project period.**
- **The indicators should be refined and adapted to better correspond to show the effort made by the Project in convincing local government and other stakeholders in taking on sustainable development planning in Mbeliling.**
- **It is recommended to pursue the establishment of an information centre (as a more realistic output than a forest management centre) with the purpose of storing and disseminating Mbeliling data of presently supported Project activities. This would include elements of eco-tourism, landscape related GIS data, production data, bird observation data etc. catering for a wider range of the public.**
- **It is recommended to incorporate maps with location of villages and related information – initially this could be employed in the planned web page development e.g. incorporate i-**

frames for Google maps/earth including markers with geo-referenced information for all villages

The Project has a well-functioning team with good team spirit working together, and seemingly with good skills in what they are doing. There are no immediate needs for additional in-house resources and the team has utilised well specialists in specific work areas, e.g. ecotourism, hydrology, joint marketing etc and the upcoming Komodo Survival Programme specialist to assist in that study. The management systems and operational planning seem to work very well.

- **It is recommended to give priority to the strengthening of the information handling through an improved information system. This would entail going through all data collection and reporting, simplifying and prioritising the type of information according to its purpose and value, and building the lessons learned mechanism on that basis.**
- **It is recommended to make an internal workshop (DOF, BI, Project) to identify elements to be included in an exit strategy.**