



**PROJECT LESSONS-LEARNED REPORT**

*Total length of report: 2-3 pages.*

*Please refer to the [Deliverable Description](#) for more information on the purpose and use of this report*

<b>Project Title:</b>	Catalyzing Sustainability of Thailand’s Protected Area System (CATSPA)
<b>Country:</b>	Thailand
<b>Related CPAP Outcome</b>	UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) 2007 – 2011 on increased capacity of national focal points in removal of barriers in pursuing local sustainable management of natural resources and environment and promotion of area-based environmental management.
<b>Project Description and Key Lessons-Learned</b>	
<b>Brief description of context</b>	<p>Thailand’s biodiversity is globally significant. IUCN’s Red List notes that Thailand has over 1700 globally threatened species, including several Critically Endangered species of mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, and plants. Nine per cent of all species known to science can be found in the country and significant portions of several WWF Ecoregions 200 also fall inside Thailand. Thailand’s topography contributes to high gamma diversity, particularly of coastal and marine ecosystems along the thin long mountainous peninsula of Southern Thailand.</p> <p>In order to conserve its globally and nationally important biodiversity, Thailand started to establish protected areas (PAs) in the 1960s. Currently, the country’s protected area system consists of more than 400 PAs, including national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, forest parks, non-hunting areas, botanical gardens, and arboreta, covering approximately 18% of the country’s total land area and 8% of its territorial seas.</p>
<b>Brief description of project</b>	<p>The Project aims to overcome barriers to sustainability of Thailand’s protected area (PA) system, by looking into effective management and sustainable financing of protected areas. The project is building the confidence and capacities of the PA management authorities and provide them with resources to test innovative PA management and financing schemes. The project is also supporting development of appropriate incentives, establishment of an effective monitoring system, and community participation in conservation efforts. At the system level, the project works on improving management framework of PAs, which include the information-based planning with integrated budgeting and resource mobilization strategies as well as on capacitating PA managers on management effectiveness, co-management, and sustainable financing tools more effectively.</p> <p>Major outputs include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved governance support enabling environment for long term protected area system sustainability.</li> <li>2. Institutional and individual capacities enhanced.</li> <li>3. Revenue generation mechanisms and management approaches are assessed and tested at 5 PA demonstration sites leading to increased funding levels of the PA system.</li> <li>4. Advocacy and disseminate in PA management best practices.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Key project successes</b></p>	<p>The key successes of the project include piloting the Forest Complex Protected Area Committees, developing and extending terrestrial SMART Patrol, piloting Marine SMART Patrol, completing the 20 Year Integrated National Park Management Master Plan, and piloting conservation trust funds for PAs in a terrestrial PA, a marine PA, and a Complex PA. Activities to enhance financial and management capacity of the DNP were undertaken including formulation of business plans for number of protected areas and training of DNP staff in financial management.</p> <p>The project has been successful in enhancing the stakeholder participatory model in Thailand's PA's both at the individual PA level and the complex level. There was a high level of support for the continuation and extension of regular participatory planning exercises with DNP over and above those already established under the PAC system.</p> <p>There has been a reported beneficial increase in collaboration and a verbal commitment was made by DNP and relevant stakeholders, to continue the working relationship. Furthermore, the Budget Bureau has made a commitment to support and replicate the Protected Area Complex management model to more regions in Thailand thereby reinforcing the project success in the replication of models developed in the project framework for improving protected area management and protected area sustainability.</p>
<p><b>Project shortcomings and solutions</b></p>	<p>The difficulties faced by this project were mainly on the day to day administration of the project leading to time delays and periods of inactivity. The most serious of these was the periods of time where the DNP senior staff did not take ownership. This was counteracted by DNP staff who were enthusiastic in seeing the project completed. Where the senior management of the implementing agency failed in their responsibilities to manage the project as committed in the project document, it places UNDP in a difficult position both with the implementing agency and GEF and with few opportunities to redress the problem. Issues concerning financial management and procurement although limiting were largely overcome by adaptive management by both DNP and UNDP in the latter part of the project. This has resulted in most of the work being implemented as planned but the outcomes were not fully achieved</p>
<p><b>Lessons learned</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During project design, 'Outcomes' should be defined more precisely and provide more guidance for the implementing team in defining specific project activities in order to avoid mis-interpretation of the original project ideas. This is especially relevant where the implementing team is not experienced in implementing GEF-financed projects.</li> <li>• The high levels of DNP Senior management staff turnover throughout the project implementation period resulted in periods of low ownership of the project and as a consequence this reduced the projects workflow and outputs. To achieve uninterrupted project implementation results, continuous stability of the project management team and senior staff is highly beneficial and the proposed establishment of a 'Special Delivery Unit' would support this approach.</li> <li>• Difficulties and long delay between project approval and financial disbursement that arose in the project's implementation could have been greatly ameliorated if a 'project implementation rule book' had been in place at the start of the project. The 'rule book' could be wide ranging depending on</li> </ul>

	<p>the complexities of the individual project and would be agreed between UNDP and DNP. The contents should include, but not be limited to, the financial, procurement and management rules and procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective PA management needs collaboration between government agencies, non-government organizations, private sector, academic institutions as well as local communities with clearly defined roles and benchmarking.</li> </ul>
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To sustain the projects accomplishments and roll out further actions based on lessons learned, an outcome mapping report providing the results of the project and recommendations/ suggestions for the next steps were consolidated and proposed the responsible parties to take the results forward.</li> <li>• To ensure continuation of activities initiated in the project and their replication into other protected areas in Thailand, e.g. terrestrial and marine SMART Patrol, Complex PACs, working with buffer zone communities to assist with community forest management and reduction of conflicts through the elephant corridor creation of buffer zones etc. DNP was committed to discuss, with the Budget Bureau, National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) and MoNRE to ensure that the programmes and strategies governing these activities are adopted into government policy and that continuous funding is identified.</li> <li>• Key lessons-learned from CATSPA project management constraints have been shared and informed the project management of the Strengthening Capacity and Incentives for Wildlife Conservation in the Western Forest Complex, the second UNDP/GEF- supported project with DNP to improve the project implementation strategy and process.</li> </ul>

Project Information	
<b>Award ID:</b>	00059058 Project ID: 00073656
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<b>Project resources:</b>	N/A
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