



The monitoring and evaluation of graduates of the Southern African Wildlife College

Sustainable Livelihood Consultants

Client: Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC) and the Peace Parks Foundation, funded by USAID

Consultants

Leif Petersen, Lyn Pullen



Assignment

Leif Petersen, under the auspices of the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF), was contracted to conduct a monitoring and evaluation exercise focusing on graduates of Southern African Wildlife College's (SAWC) long-course graduates. Its overall aim was to assist SAWC in determining future conservation training needs in the southern African region as well as the perceived strengths and weaknesses of its own training programme.

This exercise also ascertained the following:

- An understanding the effectiveness of the college as a training institution
- How SAWC graduates are performing in the workforce. The results will be used to motivate students and strengthen their role as agents of change in the conservation sector
- Which aspects of the course's training should or could be altered, when and how to increase its effectiveness, and how to better meet market requirements
- Whether the political, social or economic operational environments for graduates require a completely different strategy in order to promote sustainable ecological management
- The need to evaluate those who might become future students
- How to clearly demonstrate SAWC's educational role to conservation agencies
- Potential trainers/course leaders within the SADC region who might strengthen the training resource base.

Methodology

The consultancy team visited the following countries to interview SAWC graduates: Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Research findings

A new major thrust of marketing, communication and liaison with conservation agencies by senior SAWC staff is required in order to increase the its southern African profile. Strategies for accomplishing this include:

- Sourcing more trainers from outside South Africa
- Ensuring that all training material has a regional focus
- Increasing SAWC's profile in other African countries by a) establishing a regular SAWC newsletter, b) developing international linkages with other educational institutions, and c) trying to fill staff vacancies at SAWC with SADC nationals
- Better utilisation of members of SAWC's Training Advisory Group

It was also perceived that SAWC training should compliment field experience, rather than provide the entire basis from which the graduate conducts management.

In addition, there are strong opportunities for SAWC to develop training alliances across southern Africa. New potential partners for SAWC include:

- Nyamaluma Community Training College (Zambia)
- Tropical Resource and Environmental Planning Department, University of Zimbabwe
- WWF-SARPO (Zimbabwe)
- Zimbabwe National Parks and Wildlife Service
- College of African Wildlife Management, Mweka (Tanzania)
- Chimoio Agricultural Training Institute (Mozambique)
- Gorongosa Game Scout Training Project (Mozambique)
- Botswana Wildlife Training Institute.

Recommendation

SAWC should set in place a formal programme for monitoring its graduates from throughout the region. This alone would greatly improve SAWC's networking, profile and regional representation in the conservation community.