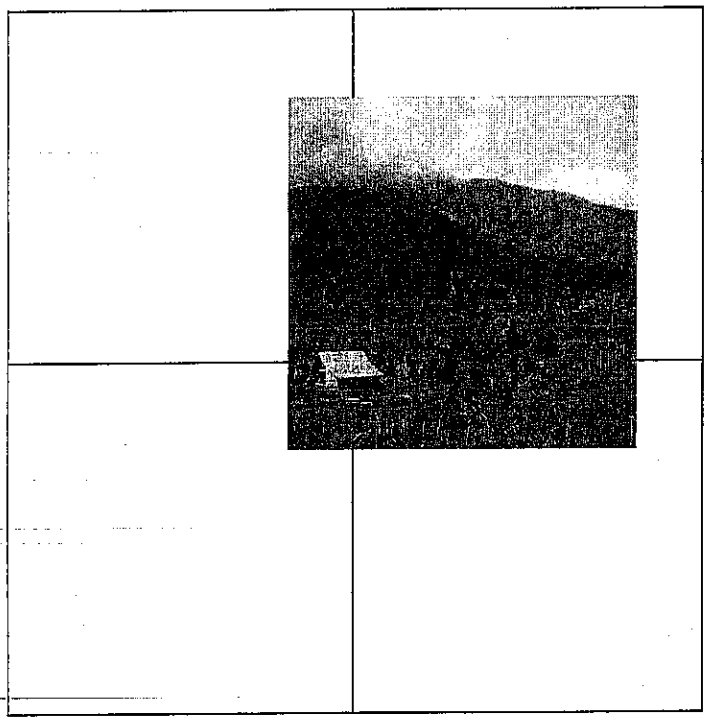
Sustainable Management of Mt. Isarog's Territories



Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNDP GEF Project

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ADSDPP	Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan
ARB	Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries
BMS	Biodiversity Monitoring Systems
CADC	Certificate of Ancestral Land Claim
CADT	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
CARE	Cooperative Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CBBMG	Community-Based Biodiversity Monitoring Group
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CENRO	Community Environment and Natural Resources Office
CFC	Conservation Farming Communities
CLOA	Certificate of Land Ownership Agreement
DA	Department of Agriculture
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GMP	General Management Plan
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Project
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IP	Indigenous People
IPAF	Integrated Protected Area Trust Fund
IPRA	Indigenous People Rights Act
LGU	Local Government Unit
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCME	Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystems
MIGs	Mt. Isarog Guardians
MIICDP	Mt. Isarog Integrated Conservation and Development Project
MINP	Mt. Isarog National Park
MTE	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NGO	Non-government organization
NIPAP	National Integrated Protected Areas Programme
NIPAS	National Integrated Protected Areas System
PA	Protected Area
PAO	Protected Area Office
PACBRMA	Protected Area Community-Based Resource Management Agreements
PAMB	Protected Area Management Board
PASu	Parks Area Superintendent
PENRO	Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office
Php	Philippine Peso
PMO	Project Management Office
PRAGA	Participatory Rural Appraisal and Gender Analysis
SuMMIT	Sustainable Management of Mt. Isarog s Territories
TAG	Technical Assistance Group
TM	Tenured Migrants
TRA	Threat Reduction Assessment
TRT	Threat Reduction Target
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
US$	United States Dollar

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SUMMIT project is being executed by CARE Philippines over a four-year period (2001 to 2004), with UNDP as implementing agency and GEF co-funding. It is a continuation of outside assistance efforts to strengthen the management of the Mt Isarog National Park, overlapping with other comparable projects supported by other donors. An independent evaluation was carried out in April 2004[1] to assess progress and make recommendations for strengthening implementation, impact and sustainability of the initiative.

SUMMIT is aimed at protecting the biodiversity within the National Park and the surrounding lands while improving the well-being of local people living within and around the protected area (PA) boundaries. The project s six components are concerned with tackling an ambitious array of linked issues: (1) development of the Park s management institutions; (2) raising the various stakeholders awareness of biodiversity values and issues; (3) monitoring progress and effectiveness of both conservation and livelihood efforts; (4) supporting development of sustainable livelihoods in agro-forestry enterprises; (5) providing secure land tenure in the area for migrants, indigenous peoples and agrarian reform beneficiaries; and (6) rehabilitation of the forest ecosystem.

The project has made good progress in a number of areas over its 3-4 years of activity. In particular, the project has facilitated effective participation of the local community in protecting the natural values of Mt Isarog, and has successfully introduced mechanisms by which the surrounding land will be conserved, at the same time as enabling local people to practise sustainable farming and develop sustainable livelihoods in the area. The immediate area of the park is now in better condition and more secure; Mt Isarog Guards (volunteer community rangers) are actively patrolling and deterring infringements; local area conservation and development planning are being brought together in some of the barangays; community organisations are establishing savings-&-credit schemes and supporting new livelihood ventures; some progress has been made towards reforming land tenure and providing resource security for people living and farming in and around the national park.

The main difficulties perceived by the MTE are that there has been insufficient progress towards the goal of developing an effective and efficient regime of co-management between government agencies and the local community. The project office under CARE Philippines and the PA Office under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have not been able to integrate their efforts, with DENR not being adequately engaged and not securing substantial participation of local people in decision making and co-management. The key component of the project aiming to reform and strengthen the Protected Area Management Board as the principal institutional mechanism to lead co-management has not been effective and was substantially disrupted by a controversial management decision in 2002.

A second aspect of insufficient progress is in demonstrating effective mechanisms for combining livelihoods development with nature conservation throughout the area of foothills and creeks surrounding the designated core of the MINP. Devising and securing an appropriate system of multiple-use and multiple-tenure management, and marrying conservation with development is a complicated challenge which requires more time and more collaborative support from all stakeholders than the SUMMIT project has enjoyed to date.
Based on the review findings and evaluation a number of recommendations are made with the aim of extending and strengthening the SUMMIT project. These include:

- extension of the project for an additional 3-4 years.
- closer support and engagement of the MINP Protected Area Office; building the PAO s capacity as the lead agency managing the MINP in cooperation with community groups including the MIG force.
- reform of the PAMB into a small management board and a larger consultative forum; provision of training and guidance to all PAMB members.

[1] The evaluation was conducted in the project s fourth year, but was still considered as the formal Mid-Term Evaluation aimed at guiding implementation of the remainder of the project.

- cooperative development and nature conservation planning with all barangay and municipal governments neighbouring MINP; landscape conservation zoning and management around the MINP in an extension of the role of the PAO.
- expedited land tenure reform and processing of tenurial instruments for the whole MINP and buffer zone.
- expansion of the sustainable livelihoods program with model credit schemes and technical assistance accessible to all local communities.
- long-term financing for conservation management secured from national, regional and local government revenues, including freshwater supply fees.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. The Sustainable Management of Mt. Isarog s Territories (SUMMIT) project is being implemented by UNDP, with CARE Philippines (Cooperative Assistance and Relief Everywhere) as the executing agency. The four-year project, which began in 2000, has a total cost of $2.225 million, of which the GEF has contributed $.750 million.

2. The project is part of a portfolio of four medium and large GEF biodiversity projects being managed by UNDP Philippines. An independent evaluation of these four projects was conducted by a team of consultants under the supervision of UNDP in April-May, 2004.[2]

3. For the SUMMIT project, the review and evaluation process involved a field visit of two and a half days, during which the team held a meeting with Project Management Office (PMO) staff to discuss Key Questions and Issues, conducted visits to barangays to meet with community organisations (CBO) and other participants, and facilitated an all-day workshop on Key Actions and Recommendations with all project stakeholders, followed by a final meeting with the PMO. This report was drafted by Gareth Porter, revised based on input from the other team members and was again revised to take account of responses from the PMO and other stakeholders based on the feedback session.

Summary Project Profile

Project Title:	Sustainable Management of Mt. Isarog s Territories (SUMMIT)
Project Purpose:	Protection and sustainable use of biodiversity in Mt. Isarog National Park
Duration:	4 years
Starting Date:	July 1, 2000
Completion Date	June 30, 2004
Project Location:	Mt. Isarog National Park and 23 surrounding barangays, Camarines Sur Province
Executing Agency:	CARE Philippines
Financing:	$2,225,000

2.0 PROJECT CONTEXT and PROBLEM

4. The problem that prompted the design and GEF support for the SUMMIT project was the anthropogenic threats to the biodiversity in Mt. Isarog National Park (MINP) from communities in and around the Park. MINP is one of the oldest national parks in the Philippines, as well as one of the few remaining "mega-diversity" sites in the country. MINP, which covers an area of 10,112 hectares (ha), was first designated as a National Park in 1938, during the Commonwealth period. However, this designation had no practical effect on conserving the area, whose forests were subject to intense logging, especially after 1950. The result was that forest cover was reduced to 44 percent of its original level by 1960, according to the publication *Management Strategy for Mt. Isarog.* The SUMMIT Project Document records that 23 percent of primary forest and 12 percent of secondary forest were destroyed in just six years (1986-1992). Deforestation in the park has caused repeated flooding on the plains.

5. MINP became part of the National Integrated Protected Areas System of the Philippines under the NIPAS Act of 1992, and a 2002 Presidential Proclamation pronounced MI a National Park. MINP was one of the eight initial priority PAs selected by the European Union (EU)-funded National Integrated Protected Areas Programme (NIPAP), which provided assistance from 1995 through 2000 to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as the national government agency responsible for protected areas. NIPAP supported development of management and enforcement capacity in MINP, including the formulation of a General Management Plan. Before the end of that project, the EU asked CARE Philippines to design a follow-up project to focus more on the social and economic development of communities living

[2] The members of the Evaluation Team for SUMMIT were Serafin Talisayon, Peter Hunnam, Gareth Porter and Perry Ong.

around the MINP. That project became the Mt. Isarog Integrated Conservation and Development Project (MICCD) funded by the EU, which preceded the SUMMIT project.

6. Satellite imagery indicated that forest cover in MINP stabilized by 2000 at around 4,774 hectares, or 47 percent of the total area of the park. This figure was close to the total estimated by DENR from 1992 data, according to the "Coffee Table" book on Mt. Isarog published by the project. It is also consistent with the testimony of a DENR official during the evaluation that enforcement capabilities had increased substantially during the mid-1990s, having a pronounced deterrent effect on major illegal logging activities in the MINP. The head of the Mt. Isarog Guardians (MIGs) in one of the barangays visited by the evaluation team also affirmed that deforestation had "stopped in the 1980s or 1990s." The Threat Reduction Analysis (TRA) on "timber poaching" produced by the project estimated that the rate of timber extraction from the MINP had declined by as much as 98 percent from the period of rapid deforestation in the 1980s.

7. The evidence indicates, therefore, that the potentially

land tenure. These root causes of the activities that destroy biodiversity in the MINP are to be attacked through "education, institutional strengthening and income generation." The Project Document refers to a strategy of building a "social fence" around the MINP.

13. The project is based on the assumption that illegal actions in MINP by residents of local communities can be reduced significantly by the interventions outlined in the project design. The TRA undertaken by the project in 2002 confirms, however, that such activities had largely ceased before the project was underway. Although it is based on impressionistic estimates by local stakeholders rather than the accumulation of data from primary research, the TRA shows that by 2002, before any of the interventions had borne fruit, the major activities that could be threats to biodiversity in the park—timber poaching, the collection of non-timber forest products, wildlife hunting and treasure hunting—had all declined by roughly 80-90% from their respective levels in the 1980s or early 1990s.

14. The experiences of a number of other Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDP) in Asia, as documented in a World Bank study, have suggested that providing livelihood opportunities and increased income based on alternatives to extraction of resources from the PA does not in itself assure reduction in illegal activities that threaten biodiversity. These experiences are replete with examples of communities in which residents took advantage of new livelihood opportunities while continuing to exploit and degrade natural resources from the PA. The lesson from previous ICDPs is thus that educational and alternative livelihood activities are likely to be more effective if they are accompanied by clear incentives for foregoing activities potentially destructive of biodiversity.

15. The second assumption of the project designers is that the primary problem with the PAMB is its institutional weakness and that the solution is capacity-building and assistance in developing policy. This was to be brought about by non-government and community-based organizations being "overwhelmingly" represented on the PAMB. That assumption, which followed naturally from the premise that the government was supporting the devolution of authority over the PAs from national level DENR to locally-based institutions, turned out to be false. In fact, non-government representatives on the PAMB were only a small minority of the membership. Thus the strategy of empowering local communities through capacity-building for the PAMB turned out to be unrealistic.

3.0 PROJECT DESIGN and STRATEGY

Components and Structure

16. The project design is based on six main Components:

1. Increasing the capacity of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), local governments and community-based organizations (CBOs).
2. Increasing stakeholder awareness of the value of conservation and protection of the biodiversity in the MINP.
3. Establishing a system of voluntary, community-based biodiversity and socio-economic monitoring.
4. Promoting environmentally sustainable agro-forestry and non-farm business opportunities.
5. Legal instruments for land tenure security of migrants and indigenous peoples and agrarian reform beneficiaries.
6. Forest rehabilitation.

17. A primary issue about the project design is whether it was realistic to set out to achieve all this in the framework of a four-year project. The evaluation considers that pursuing all of these objectives was too ambitious for a medium-sized, four-year project. It would have been more realistic to have organized the SUMMIT Project as a 7-8 year initiative.

18. The consequence of trying to tackle all the above major challenges in a relatively short time has been that multiple strategies have been implemented simultaneously. Project staff and resources have been spread too thinly in too many places, and at the same time unrealistic expectations have been created about the participation of people in the surrounding barangays. The Project has not been able to follow a sequential process of MINP strengthening, based on addressing those issues which are socially or politically required to accomplish other objectives.

Component 1: Capacity-building

19. The capacity-building component was originally designed to contribute primarily to the responsiveness of the PAMB to the communities which are to be represented on it by "strengthening feedback" from those communities. The project s revised logical framework of 2002 appears to recognize that the original expected output was not realistic. It provides a different set of objectives for building the capacity of PAMB: increased capacity for adaptive management, for "internal and external collaboration" and for "resource generation and mobilization". The capacity-building component of the revised log frame still assumed that the basic composition and political character of the PAMB was not a central issue that would have to be resolved before capacity-building could have the effect desired. In fact local barangay and municipal officials continued to dominate the PAMB, with consequences that were far-reaching for its decision-making.

Component 2: IEC

20. The Information, Education and Communication (IEC) component was aimed at raising awareness to "change behavioral norms that have led to environmentally destructive behaviors". It was intended to be focused on "MINP-specific conservation standards", which presumably refers to norms relating to activities that damage biodiversity in the park. At the mid-point of the project, however, in response to a review carried out by the EU, the objective of the IEC component was changed to that of bringing about actual changes in behavior rather than the formal acceptance of new norms of behavior. In this regard, the IEC component was made more ambitious than it had been in the original design.

Component 3: Community-based Monitoring Systems

21. The component on monitoring systems for biodiversity and socio-economic systems is aimed explicitly at "establishing the links between poverty and environmental degradation" in order to "harmonize planning of interventions toward conservation". This is in line with the basic project strategy of addressing socio-economic causes of pressures on the MINP. The mid-term revision of the log-frame, however, shifted the objective away from the *product* of the monitoring toward the *sustainability* of the monitoring system. The new objective of the component is establishment of a monitoring system that is community-based and the production of data that are actually used by local decision-making bodies.

Component 4: Sustainable Livelihoods

22. The sustainable agro-forestry, agriculture and non-farm livelihood component calls for technical training, marketing and savings and credit support for farmers in communities surrounding the park to take advantage of alternative livelihood opportunities. CBOs were to be provided with revolving funds for supporting these livelihood opportunities, and the project would support a demonstration farm.

23. The purpose of these activities was described in various different ways by the project designers. According to the Project Document, the purpose of this component was to "reduce human pressure on the park". However, the same document states that the purpose of the

project as a whole was "social and economic development for the communities" living in and around the MINP, without regard to its impact on threatening activities. The design of the component appears to have been marked by confusion about the primary purpose of the activities: was it primarily to encourage more sustainable agriculture? Was it supposed to reduce dependence on park resources? Was it intended to alleviate poverty or simply to foster economic development in the area? And how was this was to linked to reducing threats to the MINP?

24. The ET found that the livelihood component was not well designed either to reduce dependence on MINP resources or to alleviate poverty. Logically, a livelihood component aimed at reducing the reliance of communities on natural resources in the park would have focused first and foremost on the communities within the park itself or on those who were otherwise most dependent on the resources. That would have meant that the three concentrations of settlers within park boundaries, most of whom are indigenous peoples, in the Curry, Guinaban and Villaflorida barangays, would have been the starting points for targeting livelihood benefits. The project design, however, directed the livelihood component primarily toward agriculturally-based threats to the soils and water *outside* the park by focusing on those barangays in which CBOs were organized for the purpose of developing new agricultural techniques.

25. Equally important, the decision to focus on capacity-building of CBOs as intermediaries in delivering credits resulted in bias towards farmers within the barangays. Because of the socio-economic character of the membership of the CBOs, the project did not target the poorest strata of the population of target barangays, who were most dependent on MINP resources and therefore presumably most in need of improved economic security.

26. Although no comprehensive data on land ownership and tenancy were available to the MTE Team, the evidence that can be gleaned from the PRAGA (Participatory Rural Appraisal and Gender Analysis) undertaken by the project strongly suggests that a large majority of the population are tenant farmers or are otherwise landless, and that landowners with secure tenure represent only a small minority. In the three barangays for which such data are provided—Villaflorida, San Jose Oras and Del Rosario—the total number of landless farmers (tenants and agricultural workers) is 319, whereas the number of landowners is only 38. The farmers who belong to the CBOs which benefited from the project, however, are largely landowners. The Household Survey of "Farmer Beneficiaries", who were eligible to receive loans funded by SUMMIT, recorded that roughly 130 out of 230 owned their own land, whereas the remaining 100 rented land, hire out their labor or both. Twenty six of these landowners—one in every five—owned 4 to 10 hectares, and were therefore considered by the barangay population as the upper class. In short, the membership of the CBOs was comprised of the middle and upper classes of those barangays rather than the poorest.

27. The project design was therefore conducive to introducing organic farming and to increasing the incomes of the better off farmers, but not to poverty alleviation or to reduction of threats to biodiversity. In that sense, it was detached from the overall aim of the project.

Component 5: Land Tenure Security

28. The land tenure component of the project was aimed at granting security of tenure, in the form of either a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) or a Certificate of Land Ownership Agreement (CLOA). However, the provision of such benefits was to come only after the "awareness" of the migrants and IPs had been raised and their "capacities" for sustainable livelihoods increased.

29. This was hardly a logical sequence of project activities, and it appears to the MTE Team to have been little more than a justification for the long delay in the provision of such benefits which the project designers correctly anticipated due to bureaucratic and political obstacles. The Project Document itself noted the "sensitivity" of the issue of obtaining such security, which was a reference to the fact of claims of landowners on ancestral lands of the IPs as well

as lands which migrants were farming. The political-bureaucratic problems surrounding land tenure were acknowledged only indirectly rather than being confronted openly by the project designers, which had serious consequences for the implementation of this component.

Component 6: Forest Rehabilitation

30. Strictly speaking, the forest rehabilitation component is not part of the GEF SUMMIT project at all. No mention of forest rehabilitation is made in the Project Document. It is, however, a component of the EU-supported MIICDP. Nevertheless, the Project staff has not distinguished between the components of the two projects.

31. The logical framework for the MIICDP project adopted in 2002 calls for 400 hectares of reforestation to be carried out, and for the management and maintenance of the reforested area to be in the hands of CBOs. The project design was based on the belief that such a sustainable use agreement would be acceptable to DENR in light of the NIPAS law s shift towards providing the local community with a positive stake in park management. However, since the land to be reforested was within the core zone of the park, this was probably never a realistic objective for the project. Indeed, the PMO reports that, from consultations on the issue, a majority of the partners and project beneficiaries were not in favor of establishing a sustainable use regime for the rehabilitated forests.

Sustainability

32. The Project Document refers to both institutional and financial sustainability as part of the project strategy. It explicitly assumes that community representatives will have been prepared by capacity-building activities to take active roles in the PAMB which will continue after the project ends.

33. As for financial sustainability, the document points to the Integrated Protected Area Fund (IPAF) as the basis for sustaining operations in the MINP. Revenues for that fund were expected to come from the national budget, following passage of the congressional enactment of the PA, from a share of the 20 percent Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) of the seven municipalities surrounding the MINP, and from "resource users", including Metro Naga Water District, the Pili Water District and Bicol Hydro Corporation.

34. Finally, the project assumed that "viable conservation-oriented enterprises" in the 23 barangays surrounding MINP would be funded by a revolving loan fund provided by SUMMIT, which would require counterpart contributions from the CBO members into a "biodiversity conservation fund". The project design thus provided at least a general outline of a strategy for post-project institutional and financial sustainability, although it did not provide a blueprint for how such a strategy could be realized.

Logical Framework

35. General conceptual and practical problems with the objectives stated in the logical framework have been discussed in the context of the project strategy and design. Another problem, which is common to many project logical frameworks is that the broad objectives and results specified under each component are not translated into meaningful indicators of achievement. In the SUMMIT project s original log frame most indicators are not measures of project outcomes or results, but of project activities or inputs. For example, for the capacity-building component, the indicators chosen included a training program for PAMB, training provided for volunteer forest guards, conduct of a training needs assessment for Barangay Development Councils and efforts to get LGUs to formulate "Environmental Codes". Other components also employed such activity indicators. They failed to focus on measures of success in the overall objective of the component.

36. The indicators of expected outcomes for the capacity development component of the revised logical framework in regard to PAMB, are that there will be six committees with clearly defined roles, active members, operating guidelines and plans, that it will have a clearly defined financial sustainability mechanism that is fully operational, and that its rules and procedures will be approved and fully implemented by 2003. Except for the sustainability mechanism, these are simply the most basic structural and functional capabilities of any organization, and should not require special funding to achieve.

37. Indicators of successful results achieved by the IEC component go to the opposite extreme by identifying outcomes that cannot be attributed reasonably to IEC activities. The two indicators are at least a 20 percent reduction in the TRA index and at least 1,000 "target households" shifting to "environmentally friendly" behavior by the end of 2003. In fact, the communications efforts of SUMMIT could not possibly bring about such results. The PMO recognized this and explains these targets as being applicable only to the project as a whole, not the IEC component.

38. The indicators of achievement for the livelihoods component were the existence and operation of credit systems in 7 CBOs, the participation in credit lines by 200 households, the existence of marketing contracts and the participation of 350 farmers in organized marketing activities. Although these indicators measure progress toward the specific quantitative targets, they are not adequate measures of success of the larger objective of the component, because they do not refer to the effectiveness of the activities in relation to the overall objective. More appropriate measures of success in increased capacity for such livelihood program might have been indicators of whether the CBOs demonstrated the ability to manage credit programs adequately.

Implementation Plan

39. Based on the idea that livelihood activities would help reduce pressures on the MINP, the implementation plan of the SUMMIT Project in regard to livelihood activities and IEC should have been based on an accurate profile of the populations of the barangays. The implementation plan did provide for the conduct of baseline socio-economic research as well as biodiversity monitoring during the first six months of the project. However, the implementation plan did not envision using the baseline socio-economic research to provide guidance on where the primary threats to the MINP biodiversity were coming from in order to target both IEC work and livelihoods. The "Household Baseline Survey", which was completed only in December 2002, long after the livelihood program had been set in motion, was not designed to be representative of the population of the barangays surrounding MINP. Instead it was a baseline survey of the beneficiaries of the project s livelihoods component.

41. Not only were the livelihood and IEC activities begun without being related to the most important socio-economic information that needed to be gathered and analyzed, but they targeted an unrepresentative segment of the population that was arguably least dependent on park resources. By targeting beneficiaries before the relevant socio-economic data was collected and analyzed, therefore, the implementation plan further exacerbated the design fault in the project which negated any useful linkage between the livelihood component and conservation of biodiversity in the MINP.

42. A second sequencing issue is the relationship between activities aimed at increasing security of tenure and other project activities. The project intended local indigenous people and tenured migrants to engage in a variety of activities, including participating in data-gathering and monitoring and developing sustainable livelihoods *before* they derive any increased security of tenure. Because security of tenure is so central to the lives of both Indigenous Peoples and Tenured Migrants, the MTE Team considers that it would have been more effective to enable the indigenous peoples and migrants to secure tenurial security *before* asking them to participate in other project activities.

43. The project s quarterly progress reports, based on a systematic reporting on outputs, represent an important monitoring tool. These reports provide what appears to be a relatively complete record of both accomplishments and problems encountered under each project component. They also provide a running account of lessons learned. However, they did not utilize the indicators in the logical framework as means of measuring the results of the project, which would have made the reports more useful to the project staff as well as others.

4.0 RESULTS

Progress towards the Overall Goal and Purpose

44. The overall success of the project was evaluated against the two overarching objectives identified in the revised framework in 2002: protection of the biodiversity resources of MINP and development of "ecologically sustainable livelihoods for those living around it". The same framework offered two indicators of each of these twin objectives. Thus, the MTE examined each of these larger indicators of result achievement.

Effective Reduction in Threats to MINP and Agricultural Biodiversity

45. Most of the major threats to biodiversity in the MINP (timber poaching, wildlife hunting and gathering non-timber forest products) appear to have been dramatically reduced even before the project began. The PMO reports that data are now available to show the changes in the level of threats between 2002 and 2003, but these data were not made available to the MTE Team.

46. Nevertheless, by increasing the capacity of the MINP management for enforcement of park rules, the project has contributed to a further reduction in those threats. It has funded the wages of five Forest Rangers working under the Protected Area Office and mobilized an additional 120 volunteer park guards—the MIGs—beyond the 64 who had been mobilized prior to the project. The project has also provided training and mobility to the volunteers in the form of 23 horses.

47. Anecdotal evidence from the MIGs themselves and from DENR personnel indicates that the level of threatening behaviors continues to decline because of the additional enforcement capability. Apart from this, an important indication that the Forest Rangers and MIGs have been effective in carrying out their mandate is that they are continuously being harassed legally and physically.

48. The MTE Team found no evidence that the issue of agricultural biodiversity, defined as avoiding the loss of traditional crop varieties, was at stake in this project.

Community/ Institutional Linkages Founded on Resource Governance among Key Stakeholders in Place

49. The MTE Team interpreted this indicator as reference to the relationships between PAMB and other stakeholders, as well as the relationships between community-based organizations and government institutions. The primary question in this regard is whether the PAMB reflects the aspirations of stakeholders other than local government and political leaders. Another one would be whether it is likely to survive as an effective force for management once the project is over.

50. The vote by the majority of PAMB members in late 2002 in support of the position of DENR in approving an application for a treasure-hunting area clearance within the MINP raised serious questions about its institutional development. The PMO and other stakeholders responded to the PAMB s lack of integrity with a campaign to reform the PAMB, beginning with a demand to

remove the PENRO who endorsed the DENR approval. Although the institutional development of PAMB was resumed in late 2003 after the PENRO was replaced, the underlying issues of membership representation and effectiveness remained unresolved.

51. Another issue concerns the slow progress in giving communities surrounding the park a role in the governance of local resources. The project had hoped for agreements between community-based organizations and governments on co-management of reforestation sites over a ten-year period, which would presumably mean that communities would have limited access to timber on those plantations. According to the PMO, most LGUs have signed such co-management agreements, although these do not provide for any sustainable use arrangements, because of opposition from DENR.

Access of Secure Land Tenure among Primary Stakeholders Enhanced

52. Largely because of forces beyond the control of the project, relatively little substantial progress has been made on this objective. Although one CADC was converted to a CADT through the project s efforts, most IPs and MTs have been unable to obtain legal confirmation of ownership, because of the sluggishness of government decisions. This has been attributed to landowner resistance and political pressures. Furthermore, three national laws (Agrarian Reform, NIPAS and IPRA) must be reconciled before land tenurial security benefits can be obtained by the target beneficiaries.

Improved Economic Security of 1,000 Families inside the PA and in Buffer zone Communities

53. The project has not defined economic security or devised any indicators to measure success in improving it. Although it has been reported that farmers in one barangay have increased their incomes as a result of the project, the team has found no data on changes in the income of families who participated in the livelihood component. The MTE Team has been left with the impression that little change in either the incomes or economic security of families in barangays in and around the MINP has been achieved by the project. It appears, moreover, that any such benefits are more likely to accrue to those who are least in need of it in the target barangays than to those who are most in need, given the structure of the CBO membership.

Component Objective 1: Institution Building/ Capacity Development

54. Among the results achieved by the SUMMIT project in regard to building capacity for PAMB, communities and local government units by early 2004 are the following:

- Drafting of a PA Bill;
- Implementation of a Willingness to Pay survey on a stratified sampling of 1,500 residents in 50 barangays in four municipalities and one city as basis for a water fees program which could support the MINP;
- Mobilization of forest rangers and MIGs;
- Adoption by eight barangays of "sustainability indicators";
- Agreement on collaboration between the project, the MIGS and ANIS, a federation of people s organizations sponsored by the NGO, Haribon.

55. These achievements reflect disparate efforts to increase different types of capacity of different stakeholders. Although there is no doubt that the capacities of certain institutions (i.e., the forest rangers, MIGs, and LGUs) have all increased in some sense, it is difficult to assess the overall significance of the results. It is not clear whether the project has resulted in a PAMB that will not revert to a pattern of behavior that is in conflict with its fundamental mission. Nor is it clear that the increased organizational capabilities of the CBOs will translate into something more meaningful in regard to resource governance in the future or that the

adoption of "sustainability indicators" represents a significant change in the ability or willingness of the barangay councils to take measures supportive of conservation in MINP.

56. A key issue in regard to the results achieved under this component is whether the strengthened enforcement program is financially sustainable. The project design offered a series of suggestions, the most important of which was the idea of a system of payments for water services provided by the park to water users. The PMO did pursue that idea in the form of a study of how a water users fee system might be established. That study, carried out by the Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystems (MCME), used the willingness to pay or contingent evaluation method to survey 1,500 respondents in 50 target barangays, and could be the basis for creating a system. However, the study, which has not been completed, has come late in the project, and it is not clear how long it may take to translate it into effective action for a future funding mechanism for MINP management and enforcement.

Component Objective 2: Information, Education and Communication (IEC)

57. The SUMMIT project has produced a wide array of educational and information materials, including:

- a documentary video on the MIGs;
- a Coffee Table Book on the MINP;
- a CD with 11 songs about MINP and an agreement to air them on 18 radio stations in the province;
- various materials on farming techniques and on organic farming;
- comic books on treasure hunting and timber poaching;
- billboards in 10 barangays on entry points for eco-tourism sites.

58. The materials do not appear to have been aimed primarily at raising stakeholder awareness of the value of conserving and protecting MINP s biodiversity or at the behaviors that potentially threaten it. Indeed, the overall emphasis of the output was still on support of the project s activities in organic farming and sustainable livelihoods rather than on the activities that threaten the park s biodiversity.

59. Of the thirteen IEC products listed, two were on timber poaching, treasure hunting and poison and electric fishing problems, and one, somewhat more ambiguous, was on "Produced in MINP", whereas the rest were all farming and other livelihood opportunities. For the most part the IEC program appears to have been, in effect, an adjunct of the sustainable livelihood component rather than an independent effort to raise consciousness about the protection of biodiversity in MINP.

Component Objective 3: Sustainable Livelihoods

60. For the most part, the SUMMIT project staff defined its mandate in regard to the sustainable livelihoods component as developing the capacity of CBOs to support farm and off-farm systems and to provide credits to their members. A large part of the outputs of this component consisted of training and technical assistance to the CBOs in business and financial skills needed to organize and carry out their functions of supporting the adoption of new farming techniques and providing credits to farmers for agricultural and off-farm production.

61. The project carried out numerous activities, including tutorials, workshops, farmers field schools, and other training sessions for both the CBOs and individual farmers. Apart from business-related training, the project conducted training on organic farming and Sloping Land Management and established 7 demonstration farms. The project also followed up on the technical assistance and training with audits of the capabilities and accounts of the CBOs, and periodic reviews of credit and savings policies, as well as production and marketing policies.

This component involved, by far, the most numerous and most complex set of activities in the SUMMIT project.

62. The SUMMIT project extended financial support to the CBOs in the form of a trust fund amounting to 2.5 million pesos for loans to farmers for the adoption of conservation-oriented farming technologies and off-farm livelihood opportunities. In addition, 1.1 million pesos were transferred to SUSLIVES Incorporated, the federation of CBOs, to support organized production and marketing for their members.

63. These activities have succeeded for the most part in producing the direct results intended. Nine Conservation Farming Communities (CFCs) have been organized in nine different barangay, and eight CBOs have organized agricultural credit schemes, with capital raised partly from the trust fund provided by the project and partly (on a much smaller scale) from savings generated by the farmers themselves. In addition, the CBOs have facilitated the marketing of products by some 200 farmers at collection centers.

64. In terms of the quality of the system of credits, however, the project appears to have fallen short of its expectations. Despite intensive efforts by the project staff to improve the business capacity of the CBOs to manage the agricultural credit schemes, the PMO ultimately concluded that the CBOs were not mature enough to handle such lending operations, and that credit provision should be carried out by a more specialized financial institution. Loans were not released to farmers in a timely fashion, and more importantly, repayment rates by participating farmers on loans were a low 10 percent of total collectibles by the second quarter of 2003.

65. The livelihood component achieved at least initial success in switching farmers to conservation farming techniques. Some 277 farmers are reported to have used conservation techniques as a result of the project. How many farmers have converted permanently to organic farming remains in doubt, however. One of the major features of the program was encouraging farmers to grow higher-value vegetable crops, without chemical pesticides or fertilizer, instead of corn, which does require chemical inputs. The vegetable program backfired, because of overproduction, in relation to the market for those products. Market demand was not initially taken into account. When the market could not absorb the oversupply of vegetables, farmers had to return to the cultivation of corn, which is still not organic. The PMO staff raised questions in its learning workshop about the suitability of sustainable agriculture as a means to sustainable livelihood of the barangay.

66. More troubling to the MTE Team, there appears to be no link between the way the livelihoods component was organized and the protection of biodiversity within the MINP or the alleviation of poverty. The intermediary CBOs do not represent the poorest strata of the local community but are geared to the interests of the better-off farmers. The beneficiaries of the project appear to have been, for the most part, if not exclusively, those who were already more economically secure. At the final workshop on the MTE in Manila, the PMO explained that middle and upper class farmers had been selected as beneficiaries in order to secure the collateral for loans.

67. Furthermore, the fact that the beneficiaries were chosen before the threat reduction targeting analysis was available meant that some of the benefits were going to known "threat doers". The MTE team found that the lack of any distinction in targeting beneficiaries who were involved in threatening activities and those who weren t sent a perverse signal that threat doers would be rewarded rather than punished.

Component Objective 4: Land Tenure Security

68. The SUMMIT project originally pushed for the issuance of CLOAs for tenured migrants (TM) and for conversion of Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADCs) into Certificates of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADTs). It also advocated the establishment of Protected Area

Community-Based Resource Management Agreements (PACBRMAs) to groups of legally qualified and facilitated TM organizations in 8 barangays.

69. With the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the project staff formed a joint NCIP-CARE "Core Team" consisting of 1 member of the PMO staff and 12 selected employees of NCIP Region V. The team conducted a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) in 12 tribal communities in Ocampo to generate data to be used in formulating the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP). The practice of awarding CLOAs in areas which were the subject of CADTs was suspended by agreement between NCIP and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), which represented a victory for the IPs. Finally, the project achieved the awarding of a CADT to 12 tribal communities of Ocampo in 2003.

70. The progress achieved in the issuance of both CADTs and CLOAs has been far less than what was envisioned by the project, because of claims by landowners to both ancestral lands and lands claimed by tenured migrants. Another reason is the bureaucratic differences over land tenure policies. The latter are still being resolved by an inter-agency Task Force at the national level involving DAR, DENR and NCIP. One of the issues holding up progress on land tenure security for migrant tenant farmers is the legal criteria for the qualification of tenured migrants, which is necessary in order to finalize the list of tenured migrants qualified for PACBRMAs. TMs have felt that their interests have been partly neglected, because they are not represented in the PAMB and the DENR has not given priority to the issue.

71. Because of its inability to achieve greater traction in land tenure security for IPs and TMs, after the mid-term review of the MIICDP by the EU, the project began to focus increasingly on leasehold agreements between tenants and landowners in the 9 barangays in which the project was active through its work with CBOs. This is a much reduced objective for the project regarding land tenure. Furthermore, the project is hampered by the fact that the CBOs in those barangays have very limited capacity to work on land tenure issues, as the project staff observed in its lessons learned exercise.

Component Objective 5: Community-based Biodiversity and Socio-economic Monitoring Systems

72. The SUMMIT project has achieved the following results under its community-based biodiversity and socio-economic monitoring component:

- Assembly of a BMS-TRA team with the requisite technical expertise to generate accurate information.
- Establishment of Community-Based Biodiversity Monitoring Groups (CBBMGs) in 7 barangays, which regularly collect data through four different methods (Focus Group Discussions, Transect Walk Surveys, Photo-documentation and Consolidated Field Diary entries by Forest Rangers).
- Completion of a Threat Reduction Assessment (TRA) of the status of 21 different environmentally threatening activities in and around MINP and of a Threat Reduction Targeting (TRT) listing all beneficiary households of the project in the 9 Conservation Farming Communities and noting which households have participated in activities threatening biodiversity in MINP.
- MOA between CARE, DENR-PAO, LGUs and academic institutions to ensure the sustainability of both community-based biodiversity monitoring and TRA activities.
- Initial analysis of BMS data by the Research Division of the Camarines Sur State Agricultural College.

73. The MTE Team did not have the opportunity to examine the data generated by the CBBMGs. However, the BMS-TRA team has encountered difficulties with the limited commitment and capacity of the community-based groups to carry out at least some of the monitoring, and its own limited ability to interpret the data collected. As of the first quarter 2003, fewer than half

of the 60-65 CBBMG members in six barangays were submitting the Focus Group Discussions (FGD) data that they were supposed to have gathered, and the participation of one additional barangay had to be cancelled because of its inactivity. Although those who did not participate were reported to have provided input through those who did participate, the group nature of the input is such that the submission of written tally sheets is not a complete substitute for direct participation in the discussions. It is not clear how much these problems have seriously affected the quality of the data generated by the groups.

74. The inability of the project staff to obtain an interpretation of the data generated by the BMS has been a contentious issue between the project and DENR. Project staff says they have submitted the data to the regional DENR office for interpretation, but have never received anything back. However, it would seem that biological assessment techniques that can be taught to community members without specialized training should lend themselves to interpretation by lay people. DENR officials confirmed to the MTE Team that these simple forms of data should not require scientific specialists to interpret. The apparent lack of understanding of this point by the project staff is puzzling.

75. The TRA is based on quick estimates of the numbers of people involved in each threat, the area covered by it and the degree of reduction in threat from an earlier baseline. It has several advantages for the communities which are applying it: it is a relatively simple, low-cost and low-expertise monitoring and evaluation tool; it focuses the awareness of the community on threats to biodiversity in the MINP; and has been linked with the generation of information on which households are involved in various potentially threatening activities.

76. The data on these questions were generated in a workshop, apparently prior to study of the issues and any field research, although BMS data are supposed to substantiate the TRA where they operate. The baseline for comparison in the original TRA was set not at the beginning of the project, but some 10-15 years earlier, for reasons which are unclear. The PMO reports that there will be another TRA whose results (for 2003) will be compared with the 2002 results in order to assess the trends. The PMO asserts that the one-year gap between the two assessments will increase the reliability of the reports. That seems highly doubtful, however, given the nature of the process. It appears to the MTE Team that the TRA is an instrument that is much better at reflecting gross differences than it is in measuring smaller ones.

77. The SUMMIT s supervising specialist for the TRA exercise has expressed his own doubts about the reliability of the data produced by the TRA, observing that the TRA puts a premium on trends rather than on accurate data per se, and that time constraints on the process of estimating threat reduction caused "deteriorating data quality control" in that process. The inherent limitations of the methodology and the lack of consensus on its accuracy have apparently reduced its usefulness as a means of measuring the threats to the MINP both in absolute terms and relative to the start of the project.

78. The project has apparently made substantial progress in ensuring that at least the CBBMGs will continue their work beyond the duration of the project, but the core of those teams are the Forest Rangers. The sustainability of the biodiversity monitoring will certainly depend on obtaining commitments of support for the wages of the Forest Rangers from LGUs in the area.

79. The sustainability of the TRA depends on Barangay Development Councils adopting it as an assessment tool. That process has apparently just begun, so it is too early to assess its success.

5.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

80. The MTE Team found that the CARE Philippines PMO staff was exceptionally dedicated, capable and hard-working, and that they operated in a highly disciplined manner to produce

outputs that followed the project s logical framework. The Project Director appears to have tried consciously to ensure that the officers responsible for different components maintained close relations in order to coordinate among themselves and to take advantage of synergies among the components.

81. The fact that the project was implemented by an NGO posed special problems for project management. Whenever the authority and resources for a protected area project are given to an NGO, a degree of tension between the NGO and relevant government agency or agencies is almost inevitable. Government officials are likely to have less enthusiasm for the project or may lack any feeling of ownership for the project at all. Resentful of the fact that an NGO has the resources and a certain degree of power, the officials may be inclined to hang back. In turn, if the signals from the government are not positive, the NGO is tempted to forge ahead without full government buy-in.

82. This risk was recognized and discussed at the outset of the SUMMIT Project at the Local Project Appraisal Conference involving the government, NGO and UNDP. All three institutions should have taken special pains to ensure that an NGO-government deadlock did not hamper project implementation, but appear to have failed to do so.

83. Under these circumstances, it would require extraordinary sensitivity, tact and diplomacy on the part of the PMO to have been able to engage DENR officials successfully in the project. It would also have required a degree of dedication on the part of both DENR and local elected officials, on whose commitment the fate of the project was heavily dependent. The MTE Team found evidence that the PMO did begin with sincere desire to engage the DENR as a full partner in the project, but the level of cooperation between the two institutions was insufficient even before the PAMB dissolved in acrimony in late 2002 over the DENR support for a request by a local political figure for permission to clear an area within the park for treasure hunting.

84. The failure to get substantial DENR engagement in the project reflected in part a fundamental conflict of values and interests between some DENR and elected officials, on one hand, and the PMO, on the other. Given the PAO s support for an "anomalous" decision by the PAMB to approve a treasure-hunting application involving clearing an area within the park, a breakdown of collaboration was probably inevitable even had the PMO proceeded with the most conscious effort to prevent it before November 2002. However, the MTE Team also found that the PMO had not gone far enough in making the DENR feel a full partner in implementing the project. Various management structures and processes could have been put in place, such as a common office for the PAO and PMO, both before November 2002 and after the replacement of the PASu who had been identified with the pro-treasure hunting position.

85. A big part of the problem was that the DENR personnel got the impression that the PMO staff was running, not only the project, but the MINP itself. The MTE Team believes that the PMO was not as clear as it should have been on its role, which was only providing assistance to the PAMB and the PAO in managing the park. As a result, the PMO continued to do much of what the PAO should have been doing. The new PAO and his deputy were well aware of the need for closer collaboration with the PMO in order to prepare for the end of the project, but had succumbed to the perception that the PMO had the money and authority, so it wasn t really the PAO s project.

6.0 MEASUREMENT OF IMPACT ON GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

86. The MTE Team was asked by UNDP to provide "time-bound, quantifiable and benchmarked indicators" to be used to determine the "overall contribution of project outcomes to global environmental benefits". In the case of the SUMMIT project, the most meaningful indicators would be the following:

- Change in the rate of loss of forest cover from the beginning of project implementation to the end of the project;
- Change in the status of a selected group of indicator species within the park from the beginning of the project implementation to the end of the project;
- Change in the incidence of a selected group of economic activities threatening biodiversity in the park.

87. Unfortunately, the monitoring framework adopted by the project did not measure loss of forest cover directly. It does include changes in indicator species as part of the biodiversity monitoring framework. However, the data generated by the CBBMGs has not yet been interpreted to yield results relevant to the second indicator. Therefore the team has not been able to obtain the data necessary to determine the contribution of the project to biodiversity conservation in regard to those two indicators.

88. Crude estimates could be made of the incidence of major threatening behaviors between the beginning and the end of the project. However, it does not appear that these estimates would be reliable enough to come to a clear-cut conclusion about project results.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions from the MTE

1. Four years is too little to accomplish the aims of the project, particularly the consolidation of the management institutions and local participation in management.

2. The project has achieved only the smaller part of what was intended in regard to sustainable livelihoods and land tenure security.

3. The SUMMIT Project has made a significant contribution to enforcement in the park through its support for Park Rangers and MIGs, but has not established a mechanism to ensure continuing support for enforcement beyond the duration of the project.

4. The PMO has not been clear enough in defining its role as strictly one of strengthening DENR and other institutions in managing the PA rather than exercising de facto management authority. That lack of clarity has contributed to the marginalization of the DENR.

5. The SUMMIT Project lacks a broader conservation landscape perspective on conservation in the MINP area.

6. The livelihood program was not well designed either to reduce threats to biodiversity in the MINP or to reduce poverty in surrounding communities, because it was not based on a careful strategy for targeting beneficiaries.

Recommendation 1: Organize a second phase of the SUMMIT with a new structure for execution.

89. The TPR member agencies should seek funding for an additional three to four years following the Evaluation (i.e., from June 2004 to the end of 2007). It would be appropriate for this grant to go to the PAO and for the PAO in turn to contract CARE/SUMMIT to reform the current PMO into a MINP PAO-Technical Assistance Group (TAG), with the mission to deliver short-term technical assistance to the management and development of MINP.

Recommendation 2: Reform the MINP Management Board.

90. The PAO and the TAG should facilitate reform of the PAMB based on a two-tier structure, with a small management board of three to five members and a larger consultative forum that would meet infrequently and provide recommendations to the board. This structure would be in line with the recommendation of the Daruma study of the Philippines PA system for UNDP. The reform measures would also include recognition of the PAMB s role in directing and supervising the PAO, and the PAO s delegated responsibilities for all day-to-day management decisions concerning the MINP.

Recommendation 3: Delineate and designate a buffer zone around the MINP, and devise and implement a landscape conservation strategy within that zone.

91. The PAO and DENR should delineate a new boundary for MINP that would include a buffer zone, to include multiple use and protection zones and obtain official designation by municipal codes. The buffer zone should encompass the immediate surrounding region, extending down each river valley catchment for between three and 10 kilometers, depending on the geography and ecology.

92. PAO and TAG, in partnership with LGUs, CENRO and DA should prepare a Conservation Landscape Plan for the buffer zone. The plan would be based on three main strategies:

- Habitat restoration and protection, specially river, wetland and riparian vegetation rehabilitation, plus consolidation of the patchwork of remnant forest stands, which would be protection zones.
- Integrated landscape management of forests, agro-forestry, agriculture and other ecosystems.
- Management of development infrastructure (roads, electricity and water supply) and settlement (standards for water-course protection, sewage and solid waste management, including re-location of TMs from newly-designated Core Area).

93. The strategies would be implemented through a combination of LGU and community programs, with LGUs and CBOs as the implementers and CENRO and TAG as technical advisers, coordinators and promoters. Major implementation tools would include landowner agreements (contracts and covenants), seed grants, sponsored demonstration sites, annual awards, communications (IEC) and school greening programs.

Recommendation 4: Expedite the processing of land tenure reforms for the whole MINP and de facto buffer zone.

94. The relevant agencies (NCIP, DAR and DENR), along with PAO and the TAG, should establish a local inter-agency Task Force to develop in concert with the national level interagency task force, a plan to harmonize the application of IPRA, NIPAs and CARL, including an agreed date for defining eligibility of TMs, and to process all CADCs in the area, secure CADTs and harmonize all TM claims and those of ARBs, in the extended park and buffer zone.

Recommendation 5: Establish a permanent mechanism for management and enforcement in the MINP Core Area.

95. DENR should adjust its personnel policy so that the PASu, Deputy PASu and park rangers at Mt. Isarog are permanently assigned to the PA.

96. PAO and TAG should initiate a plan for the institutionalization of support for the management and enforcement of MINP Core Area, in which the Core Zone will be undeveloped and uninhabited. The program should include further development and support of the MIGs as

long-term, part-time volunteer rangers working alongside the park rangers, continuing to apprehend those carrying out illegal activities, and completing the restoration of degraded areas.

97. The PAO and TAG should finalize plans for a permanent financing mechanism for management of the park primarily on a system of water user fees.

Recommendation 6: Adopt the rule that those who are known to be threatening MINP resources may not obtain economic benefits under the project.

98. In order to avoid creating perverse incentives for continued illegal activities in the MINP, the project staff should insist that CBOs adopt a rule that Farmer Beneficiaries, who have obtained credits for agriculture or other livelihood opportunities under the project but who are known to have continued carrying out activities in the MINP that threaten its biodiversity, must be denied the right to receive any further benefits.

8.0 LESSONS

LESSON 1. Livelihood benefits to surrounding communities must be linked with incentives for changed behavior in order to contribute to the reduction of threats to the PA.

99. The Threat Reduction Targeting study done by the project showed that some of those who were receiving project benefits were also continuing to carry out illegal activities in the MINP. That finding underlines the reality that timber poaching, wildlife hunting and other illegal activities are not simply a function of the level of poverty or resource dependence. The experience of the SUMMIT project appears to reinforce the lesson from other ICDPs in Asia that providing alternative sources of income does not mean that individuals are motivated to stop extracting resources from the park. Some individuals are likely to be tempted to take advantage of the park as a source of income, even if they already have the means to earn enough to support their families from agriculture or other means.

100. The only way to minimize the likelihood of continued exploitation of park resources is to address the needs of those who might be tempted o extract biodiversity resources from MINP, but to do so in a way that is contingent on the support of the entire community for conservation of biodiversity within the park. Communities should be mobilized to exert peer pressure on individuals who have carried out illegal activities within the park in the past to forego such activities, with the understanding that violations by members of the community would be inconsistent with continued participation in the economic benefits.

LESSON 2: Project proponents should carefully consider whether the resistance to change in land tenure by landowners and their political allies compromises the ability of the project to achieve its goals before designing the project.

101. The failure of the project to make any substantive progress on increased security of tenure was a source of frustration to IPs and tenured migrants in the project area, which reduced motivation for participation in other project activities. The failure of the government bureaucracy to resolve legal issues over land tenure was clearly related to the power of landowners over the political-bureaucratic process.

102. The power of socio-economic elites over a key project outcome poses a serious question for project proponents. In the future, they should either get formal commitments from the government that the landowner resistance will not be allowed to obstruct progress in

distributing land titles and confirming ancestral domain rights in the project area as a condition of the project, and design the project so that it does not require the resolution of the land tenure issues, or not propose that project at all. If the project is proposed without any formal assurances from the government on the issue, it should not be approved by UNDP or GEF.

LESSON 3: Protected Area projects, which are implemented by NGOs rather than government agencies bear an inherent risk that the government agency in question will not participate fully, with serious potential consequences for the project.

103. The logic of NGO-implemented projects relating to Protected Areas is that the government agency responsible for national parks feels marginalized and does not have real ownership of the project. If that happens, much of the value of the project may be lost.

104. Project designers and donors should ascertain in advance that the NGO and the government agency in question are willing and able to work together to strengthen the management of the PA. An MOA or contract should specify the respective roles and inputs of the two parties and the procedures and systems to be used to ensure collaboration.

LESSON 4: Protected Area project designs must include specific measures to ensure institutional and financial sustainability of the PA scheme.

105. The context of PA projects is normally that governments themselves have lacked the political will to provide adequate funding—or any funding at all—for PAs. The problem of how to sustain any of the institution-building and other benefits created by a project is likely to be acute. The SUMMIT project was no exception. Despite the fact that the project proposal included some useful ideas for new sources of funding for park management, such as water user fees, the present prospect is that the implementation period will run out before that idea could be turned into a reality.

106. Up to now, projects have been approved with only the bare bones of proposals for how to resolve the sustainability issue. In the future, GEF should seriously consider more stringent requirements for project proposals in this regard. They should actually provide a detailed blueprint for a solution to finance park management and other necessary activities, based on in-depth research and analysis of the problem, rather than conceptual statements. In the absence of much more rigorous efforts to address the issue at the outset, GEF should not expect their biodiversity projects to have any lasting impacts.

ANNEX I Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

Thursday, 4 March, 2004

United Nations Development Programme
Global Environment Facility

PHI/99/G31 Samar Island Biodiversity Project (SIBP)
PHI/00/G35 Sustainable Management of Mt. Isarog s Territories (SUMMIT) Project
PHI/00/G36 Conservation of Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park and World Heritage Site
PHI/00/G37 Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Bohol Islands Marine Triangle (BMT)

Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)
Terms of Reference (TOR)

I. Background and Rationale

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), established in 1991, is an independent financial organization which helps developing countries fund projects and programs that protect the global environment. GEF grants support projects related to the following complex global environmental issues: biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants. GEF projects are managed by the implementing agencies: (1) the United Nations Environment Programme; (2) the United Nations Development Programme; and (3) the World Bank.

The GEF implementing agencies play key roles in managing GEF projects on the ground. Through them, the GEF has quickly accumulated a diverse project portfolio serving the developing world, Eastern Europe, and the Russian Federation—more than 140 countries altogether. Moreover, GEF teamwork by these partners reinforces their individual efforts to mainstream or incorporate global environment concerns into all of their policies and programs. Moreover, as the financial mechanism for four international conventions - the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants - GEF helps fund initiatives that assist developing countries in meeting the objectives of the conventions. GEF also collaborates closely with other treaties and agreements.

GEF projects are often innovative or experimental, GEF is pioneering coordination among many parties, and its development of successful operational programs requires continuous learning. Thus, integrating lessons learned from earlier efforts to achieve greater effectiveness is a key GEF goal. Each year, GEF engages in an extensive process that monitors its projects and evaluates their progress. This process yields the Project Performance Report. The GEF Monitoring & Evaluation policies and procedures, established to assess and capture the unique features of GEF projects, also supplement UNDP monitoring and evaluation tools and processes.

UNDP s biodiversity conservation portfolio in the Philippines started with the approval of the Samar Island Biodiversity Project (PDF-B 1997 and Full Project 1999). Thereafter, three MSPs were approved and are being implemented under the biodiversity conservation focal area:
(1) PHI/00/G35 Sustainable Management of Mt. Isarog s Territories (SUMMIT) Project;
(2) PHI/00/G35 Conservation of the Tubbataha Reefs National Marine Park and World Heritage Site;
(3) PHI/00/G37 Biodiversity Conservation and Management of the Bohol Islands Marine Triangle (BMT). Please see attached project profiles.

This Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) aims to review the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the activities and results within each component or desired outcome of the projects and recommend approaches to improve design, implementation and monitoring mechanisms for the remaining years of project implementation.

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level in UNDP/GEF has four specific objectives: i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts; ii) to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements; iii) to promote accountability for resource use; and iii) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned. A mix of tools is used to ensure effective project M&E. These might be applied continuously throughout the lifetime of the project – e.g. periodic monitoring of indicators -, or as specific time-bound exercises such as mid-term reviews, audit reports and independent evaluations.

In addition to providing an independent in-depth review of implementation progress, this type of evaluation is responsive to GEF Council decisions on transparency and better access of information during implementation.

The mid-term evaluation is a ***systematic and operations-oriented learning exercise.*** Given this challenge, this exercise will be structured in such a way that it ***generates relevant knowledge for our partners*** while at the same time ensuring that this knowledge can and will be ***applied in practical and immediate ways.*** A consultative rather than an advisory process would dispel fears among some partners that evaluation is about finding fault and a proxy for measuring individual or institutional performance, rather than a sharing of knowledge and experiences amongst peers.

One of the most important features of this process is the agreement from the outset on a completion point for the evaluation, which will bring the main actors together to identify and agree upon the key issues to be analyzed. The mid-term evaluation provides the opportunity to assess early signs of project success or failure and prompt necessary adjustments. This will consequently lead to the formulation of lessons learned and recommendations that are most appropriate for performance improvement.

II. Objectives

A. Main Purpose

The project will employ, to the degree possible, participatory mechanisms in order to involve stakeholders and beneficiaries in the collective examination and assessment of their projects. The dissemination of lessons, in particular those that have the potential for broader application, is a key element of the MTE.

The main purposes are:

- *Project Assessment.* Examine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of previous operational activities and results achieved within all components of the project, by showing how project processes and outcomes contribute to the achievement of project goals and objectives.
- *Lessons Learned.* Develop lessons learned and recommendations for adjustments of project strategies, to improve the project implementation during and the impact after the project.
- *Enhanced Ownership and Accountability.* Enhance the accountability of partners, project managers and beneficiaries through improved implementation approaches and management structures.
- *Measurement of Impact.* Develop a monitoring framework – including time-bound, quantifiable and benchmarked indicators – to determine the overall contribution of project outcomes to global environmental benefits.

In pursuit of the above, the following key issues should be addressed:

- Assess progress towards attaining the project s global environmental objectives per GEF Operational Program concerned (OP # 2, 3, & 4).
- Assess progress towards achievement of project outcomes;
- Describe the project s adaptive management strategy – how have project activities changed in response to new conditions, and have the changes been appropriate;
- Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various institutional arrangements for project implementation and the level of coordination between relevant players;

- Review any partnership arrangements with other donors and comment on their strengths and weaknesses;
- Assess the level of public involvement in the project and recommend on whether public involvement has been appropriate to the goals of the project;
- Describe and assess efforts of UNDP and the Executing Agency in support of the program office and national institutions;
- Review and assess existing monitoring frameworks fro measuring project impacts;
- Propose indicators for measuring project global impacts, including baselines, targets and means of verification;
- Review and evaluate the extent to which project impacts have reached the intended beneficiaries, both within and outside project sites;
- Assess the likelihood of continuation of project outcomes and benefits after completion of GEF funding;
- Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of project outcomes;
- Assess whether the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) and performance indicators have been used as effective project management tools;
- Review the implementation of the project s monitoring and evaluation plans;
- Describe the main lessons that have emerged in terms of:
  strengthening country ownership/drivenness;
  strengthening cooperation with LGUs, civil society and the private sector
  strengthening stakeholder participation;
  application of adaptive management strategies;
  efforts to secure sustainability;
  role of M&E in project implementation.
  In describing all lessons learned, an explicit distinction needs to be made between those lessons applicable only to this project, and lessons that may be of value more broadly, including to other, similar projects in the UNDP/GEF pipeline and portfolio;
- On the operational side, review responsiveness of financial and administrative policies, systems, and procedures.

B. Special Issue

One of the goals of UNDP-GEF biodiversity conservation projects is to strengthen governance structures and processes contributing to improved management of resources, alleviating poverty in the process. Through these projects, rules, processes and behavior that affect the way powers are exercised at the local and national levels in the field of environmental policies, particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence will be promoted through the wide participation of local communities. In this regard, the MTE would also look at the extent these projects contribute to improved governance in terms of:

- Strengthening local community involvement in governance processes;
- Conflict resolution (esp. for Samar and Isarog);
- Strengthening local community involvement in management of natural resources;
- Strengthening national (e.g. NIPAS, Local Government Code, IPRA, etc.) and local regulatory frameworks

C. Target Audience

This exercise will provide information about the above-mentioned purposes for all stakeholders, from donors to community partners and beneficiaries. The final Mid-term Evaluation Report will be shared with the GEF independent Monitoring and Evaluation Unit as a public document.

This review approach defines beneficiaries and partners as participants, a collaboration of multiple actors, within as well as outside the project, engaged in learning process. As all stakeholders learn and share knowledge in a co-operative relationship with the evaluation team, it increases the likelihood of the project partners adopting and achieving the intended objectives. As such, they also decide on the detailed Key Questions and Issues (KQI), conduct research, analyze findings and make

recommendations. The evaluator and his team becomes a facilitator in this participatory review, animating workshops, guiding the process at critical junctures and consolidating the final report.

The concept of a *core learning team* to steer the evaluation process will also be introduced in this exercise. The core learning team will be composed of key people representing Executing Agencies and/or PMO of each project and will be the direct focal point of the evaluation team in each project. Learning together will not only increase the quality and relevance of evaluations, but also provide ownership and commitment in the evaluation exercise and in the achievement of its results/recommendations, leading to a greater adoption of the evaluation output. The main role of the core learning team is to produce a set of consensus-based, agreed upon recommendations and lessons learned, and an understanding of the concrete follow-up activities that are required from the MTE. The CLT s main purpose is threefold:

- Discuss the draft evaluation report and the preliminary findings and extract as well as develop the recommendations; sharing experiences and lessons learned and developing the related follow up plan;
- Plan the process leading to negotiation and approval of the agreement/understanding among the partners on the results of the evaluation.;
- Ensure that recommendations of the MTE are adopted and implemented.

D. Planned Outputs

The MTE will provide the following outputs for the donors, the project management as well as all other project stakeholders:

- PRA Review results, workshop outputs, and minutes of meetings with stakeholders.
- A detailed final evaluation report based on the UNDP GEF format of evaluation reports.

III. Proposed Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) Process

The steps below describe the major phases of the MTE ~~process~~. In formulating the approach and methodology and timetable, consultants should be guided by the following activities. However, this is not to say that consultants do not have room for creativity and innovation to modify the processes and approaches as they see them appropriate to the study.

A. Preliminary review process

- Review of Project and progress to date
- Is the project efficiently achieving its objectives (in accordance with: (1) Operationally - schedule, budget, etc and (2)Adequately/ Qualitatively - to what extent are activities contributing to outcomes, objectives?
- Are current and planned interventions the most appropriate?
- Stocktaking of existing knowledge (approach, who are involved, role of partners, sources of information, review of reports, challenges, opportunities, expected outcome, timing)

B. Validation of Progress and Adequacy / Relevance of Ongoing Interventions/ Activities

- Determining expertise required of consultants and the modality of field work
- Methodology of evaluation including local surveys, PRAs, FGDs (partners involved with special emphasis on the role of community-based organizations)
- Conducting field work (roles of partners, expected outcome, timing)

C. Comparison with other related Projects, either national or international initiatives

- Sharing of Experiences – What works, worked, did not work and why.

D. Recommendations

- Agreements on conclusions, recommendations and follow-up actions (partners involved, consultation process, expected outcome, timing)
- Articulation of lessons Learned (expected outcome, timing, change of workplan, budgets, indicators for progress)

IV. Reporting and Feedback

A. Briefing

A general briefing will be conducted for evaluation team and the Executing Agencies/PMOs are scheduled in order to contextualize the activities and level off on the generic flow of the MTE.

B. Debriefing with the core learning team and key stakeholders

A debriefing will be held with the CLT and with key stakeholders and staff involved in the project, especially with the DENR and/or government counterpart institutions, implementing agencies, and other government and civil society partners to share the results and recommendations from the review.

C. Debriefing with PMO

A final debriefing will be done with staff of the project PMO. This debriefing will provide the PMO staff with a consolidated picture of the review findings, recommendations and lessons learned from the review process.

D. Reporting

In order to ensure a high accuracy of the final report, the draft review report will be shared with various stakeholder groups for review and validation through the CLE. After considering inputs from stakeholder groups, the evaluators will submit the Final Report to UNDP Manila. UNDP Manila will also furnish UNDP Regional Office in Kuala Lumpur and UNDP-GEF at Headquarters. Respective Executing Agencies will disseminate the final report to stakeholder groups. The project management will be responsible for the implementation of the recommendations.

Respective PMOs will endeavor to facilitate the translation of key portions of the review report to Filipino or the appropriate dialect, especially the findings, recommendations and lessons learned, for non-English speaking stakeholders.

E. Evaluation Products

A Mid-term Evaluation Report (no more than 30 pages, excluding Executive Summary and Annexes) structured as follows:

(i) Acronyms and Terms

(ii) Executive Summary (no more than 4 pages)
The Executive Summary should briefly explain how the evaluation was conducted and provide the summary of contents of the report and its findings.

(iii) Project Concept and Design Summary
This section should begin with the context of the problem that the project is addressing. It should describe how effectively the project concept and design can deal with the situation

(iv) Project Results

Progress towards attaining the project s regional and global environmental objectives and achievement of project outcomes. It should also try to answer the question: What has

happened and why? The performance indicators in the logframe matrix are crucial to completing this section.

(v) Project Management

This section covers the assessment of the project s adaptive management, partnerships, involvement of stakeholders, public participation, roles and responsibilities, monitoring plans, assistance from UNDP and IMO , etc.

(vi) Recommendations

Here, the evaluators should be as specific as possible. To whom are the recommendations addressed and what exactly should that party do? Recommendations might include sets of options and alternatives.

(vii) Lessons Learned

This is a list of lessons that may be useful to other projects.

List of Annexes (Terms of Reference, Itinerary, Persons Interviewed)

V. Evaluation Team

The MTE will be composed of two international consultants (with expertise on biodiversity conservation and environmental governance) and two national consultants of international caliber with similar specialization.

A. Environmental Governance Specialists (one international and one national)

- Academic and/or professional background in institutional aspects of natural resource management. A minimum of 15 years relevant experience is required.
- Experience in the evaluation of technical assistance projects, preferably with UNDP or other United Nations development agencies and major donors. If possible, experience in the evaluation of GEF-funded international waters and/or biodiversity conservation projects.
- Excellent English writing and communication skills. Demonstrated ability to assess complex situations in order to succinctly and clearly distill critical issues and draw forward looking conclusions.
- Experience leading multi-disciplinary, multi-national teams to deliver quality products in high stress, short deadline situations.
- Proven capacity in working across the levels of institutions from policy, to legislation, regulation, and organizations
- An ability to assess institutional capacity and incentives
- Excellent facilitation skills

B. Biodiversity Conservation Specialist (one international and one national)

- Academic and professional background in natural science, with extensive experience in sustainable development and biodiversity conservation.
- An understanding of GEF principles and expected impacts in terms of global benefits.
- A minimum of 15 years relevant working experience is required
- Experience in implementation or evaluation of technical assistance projects
- Skills in biodiversity conservation tools and techniques
- Excellent English writing and communication skills
- Excellent facilitation skills

ANNEX II Evaluation Itinerary Achieved

Date	Evaluation Activity	Location
15 April 2004	Initial briefing with CARE Philippines	Metro Manila
19 April	Initial Discussion with Project Staff Key Questions and Issues Field Visit to Guinaban and San Pedro	Naga City Camarines Sur
20 April	Stakeholders Forum on Key Questions and Issues	Naga City
21 April	Stakeholders Forum on Key Actions and Recommendations Meeting with DENR Exit Meeting with Project Staff	Naga City
15 May	Discussion of Draft Report with Project Stakeholders	Metro Manila
19 May	National Workshop on UNDP GEF Biodiversity Projects	Metro Manila

ANNEX III Persons Consulted during the Evaluation

Abante,	Yolda	PAO
Abao,	Edilberto	San Pedro
Abid,	Leticia	CBBMG
Abio,	Michael	
Alarcon,	Odelon	
Alfon,	Josie	
Amporado,	Elisa	CWA
Angeles,	Francia	
Anila,	Danding	Guinaban
Anila,	Amparo	Guinaban
Argones,	Salvacion	Tribal Chief
Arieta,	Rebecca	San Pedro
Arieta,	Edelyn	San Pedro
Arogueza,	Margie	
Arroyo,	Lee	NCIP
Asol,	Maria	
Auto,	Eladio	
Badilla,	Lomel	DAR-Ocampo
Balares,	Jane	CARE
Balbastro,	Laditha	Rotary Village Corporation
Balitbit,	Leticia	BAGPLAI
Banadera,	Francisco	
Belardo,	Juan	DENR-PAWD
Belga,	Tita	San Pedro
Belza,	Dwight	ICDC
Benosa,	Rogelio	Gatbo
Bernal,	Pio	CENRO
Bonpin,	Ted	CARE
Braoso,	Aida	San Pedro
Brofan,	Justino	MIGS

Capis,	Victor	MIGS
Catroverde,	Norma	BAGPLAI
Cayon,	Lorenzo	San Pedro
Cea,	Teodolfo	Catagbacan
Cedano,	Vienna	CASALI
Cezar,	Maricel	General
Cezar,	Narita	
Cezar,	Dolores	
Claveria,	Racquel	DAR
Claveria,	Marlon	MASADIGDI
Claveria,	DAR	Provincial
Concepcion,	Albar	
Cornel,	Nelia	Ocampo
Credo,	Michelle	BAGPLAI
Crucillo,	Leonora	MLGU
de Vera,	Lorelie	
dela Torre,	Froilan	LGU-Tinambak
Dicapu,	Josephine	PICDAI
Dollero,	Wenceslao	Guinaban Agrarian Reform Council
Egnacia,	Dodin	
Embuscado,	Asuncion	PAGPLAI
Enciso,	Enrico	DMO
Enciso,	Arnold	
Flores,	Benita	
Flores,	Pedro	
Formalyo,	Teresita	
Foronda,	Gemma	CARE
Frandozo,	Dioscoro	Suslives Inc.
Frendoza,	Busero	
Garcia,	Janet	PAWB
Gava,	Jocelyn	CWS
Gonzales,	Rosendo	PAPCO
Guinaban	Cesar	
Hale,	Fabiana	
Ibarrientos,	Edgar	LGU-Ocampo
Infante,	Isidro	Ocampo
Justiniana,	Felicidad	CARE-Microfinance
Lagdaan,	Milagros	
Layosa,	Roy	CARE
Lorena,	Gloria	ICBC
Lozada,	Moriel	PSU
Lozada,	Rolanda	MIGs
Luna,	Ramon	MPD-Tigan
Luna,	Esmeraldo	DENR-PENRO
Luzada,	Moriel	
Luzada,	Rolando	San Pedro
Luzada,	Gaspar	
Martinez,	Ami	CARE
Mendoza,	Angel	ANIS
Nayve,	Alex	CARE

Nique,	Jocelyn	CARE
Nongalonta,	Hesus	PAO
Omolida,	Armando	PAO-MINP-PASU
Osea,	Jerry	
Pacer,	Jose	San Pedro
Pacis,	Maria	
Pacis,	Roberto	
Paga,	Esteban	CARE
Pante,	Elizabeth	
Parola,	Teofila	
Paron,	Delfina	
Patoc,	Juan	MIGS
Peña,	Emerlina	Guinaban
Pilapil,	Josephine	PICDAI
Pilar,	Danilo	MIGS
Pilazo,	Elmer	MIGS
Porter	Gareth	Consultant
Prilago,	Dolores	
Quinong,	Antonio	BURDFI
Ramirez,	Remy	
Ravanilla,	Nicolas	MASADIGDI
Rebuano,	Vicente	TKKI
Rellora,	Bienvenido	
Reyes,	Mau	CARE
Ruia,	Elena	
San Juan,	Bernardo	MIGs
San Juan,	Federico	San Pedro
Sandio,	Gracia	San Pedro
Sedeño,	Alfredo	San Pedro
Sending,	Herbert	LBCDAI
Senosin,	Lorena	
Sieria,	Catalina	
Siruapa	Nena	
Sotto,	Benjamin	Gatbo
Tanamor,	Vivian	
Tejares,	Alejandro	PICDAI
Tejares,	Jose	PAO
Tenares,	Carmen	San Pedro
Tillaposa,	Anceslao	
Vale,	Rolando	BOD-Migs
Vargas,	Alexander	
Yaguel,	Vicente	NCIP
Zamora,	Helene	ICDC
Zoilo,	Elenida	TM

ANNEX IV Reference Documents

Date	Title	Author/ Publisher
August 14, 2001	1st Project Steering Committee Meeting (PSC), Naga City.	
April 2, 2004	CARE Philippines SUMMIT/MICCD Project Documentation Report of Lesson-Learned Meeting in Preparation for the Mid-term Evaluation of GEF Biodiversity Projects	CARE Philippines
Year 2003	Commission on Audit, Philippines, Audit Report on Sustainable Management of Mt. Isarog s Territories (SUMMIT)	CARE Philippines
September 2002	Final Report, Mid-term Review, Mount Isarog Integrated Conservation and Development Project Philippines	
December 2002	Household Baseline Survey Report	
	Isarog Map Showing Summit/MICDP Areas	
	Logical Framework for Mount Isarog Integrated Conservation and Development Project (MIICDP)	CARE Philippines
	Management Strategy for Mt. Isarog (based on the General Management Plan)	CARE Philippines
February 2001-June 2001	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
January 2002-March 2002	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
April 2002-June 2002	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
July 2002-September 2002	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
October 2002-December 2002	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
January 2003-March 2003	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
April 2003-June 2003	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
July 2003-September 2003	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
October 2003-December 2003	Project Progress Report, Narrative Report	CARE Philippines
March 2004	SUMMIT/MICD Project, A Comprehensive Report on the Threat Reduction Assessments in Mt. Isarog Natural Park	
September 3, 2003	Supplemental UNDP/GEF M & E Questionnaire—Biodiversity: Sustainable Management of Mt. Isarog Territories	
	Terms of Reference of the PA Bill Preparatory Committee	
Year 2002	UNDP Annual Project Report (APR)/UNDP/GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR) 2002	