

## **Evaluation Abstract**

**Title, author and date of the evaluation report:**

Development of Mnazi Bay-Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park, Mid-Term Evaluation, prepared by Meg Gawler and Christopher Muhando, December 2004

**Name of project, programme or organizational unit:**

Development of Mnazi Bay-Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park

**Objectives of the project, programme or mandate of the organizational unit:**

Goal: To conserve a representative example of internationally significant and threatened marine biodiversity.

Objective: To enable local and government stakeholders to protect effectively and utilize sustainably the marine biodiversity and resources of Mnazi Bay and the Ruvuma Estuary.

**IUCN area of specialisation:** Marine Protected Areas

**Geographical area:** Tanzania, East Africa

**Project or programme duration, length of existence of organisational unit:**

54 months; launched in March 2000

**Overall budget of the project, programme or organizational unit:**

\$1,495,424 (UNDP/GEF); \$215,800 (in-kind, Government of Tanzania); \$42,000 (IUCN); \$56,000 (communities); EUR 630,000 (Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial - FFEM)

**Donor(s):** UNDP/GEF and FFEM

**Objectives of the evaluation:**

- Assess progress towards objectives
- Describe the project's adaptive management strategy
- Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Review the readiness of the national component to assume full operational responsibility for delivering project objectives.

A full list of the evaluation objectives is available in Annex 1: Terms of Reference

**Type of evaluation:** Mid-Term Project

**Period covered by the evaluation:** 2000 - 2004

**Commissioned by:** UNDP/GEF

**Audience:**

**Evaluation team:** External

**Methodology used:**

The review involved an extensive review of documentation, field observations, key informant interviews, and meetings in the villages of Msimbati, Nalingu, and Kihimika. In the course of the evaluation, the

views of 82 individuals were solicited (38 respondents to key informant interviews, 43 in meetings held in the villages, and one by email). The on-site visit lasted 7.5 days, and included a boat trip through the mangroves and to a turtle nesting site, as well as stops in Litembe, Kilambo, and Ruvula.

**Questions of the evaluation:**

The report does not contain a particular set of questions. A comprehensive list of evaluation objectives is available in Annex 1: Terms of Reference and includes objectives on delivery, management, capacity building, institutional partnerships, UNDP support, financing and donor partnership processes, sustainability and lessons learned.

**Findings:**

The evaluation team has reached the following conclusions:

- It is fundamentally a very worthwhile project.
- A solid framework for the marine park is being established.
- There is tremendous good will among most community members. However, support is fragile and risks being lost if concrete benefits are not realized quickly.
- A number of corrective measures need to be taken in the second phase if the project is to succeed.
- The project team shows great promise of making a success of the park, if given the support that is needed.

The main findings are as follows:

- A good team is presently in place (although a new Technical Advisor is needed urgently)
- The project has had good success in establishing the knowledge base.
- There is a strong sense of ownership by Tanzanian government.
- The project and the park are in imminent danger of losing the goodwill of the villages.
- There have been serious implementation problems, including far too much interference from project partners in implementation. Delays in the availability of funding and excessive control have resulted in costly delays.

The evaluation highlights a variety of project strengths, including a supportive legislative and policy basis, support from the highest regional authorities, a well designed logical framework, excellent knowledge base, good awareness of marine and coastal environmental issues, involvement of villages in environmental management planning, etc.

A number of implementation problems are also identified, such as raised expectations at the community level and a perception of broken promises, overly ambitious timetables, delays in conducting the fisheries and alternative livelihoods assessments, weak collaboration with key district departments, no M&E plan in place, lagging behind with the implementation of the project's centerpiece – helping people move towards improved and sustainable livelihoods, etc.

**Recommendations:**

The evaluation makes three strategic and 99 specific recommendations and three strategic recommendations:

- It is urgent to move quickly with concrete benefits to local people.
- All project partners should take a giant step back, and delegate responsibility more fully to the project team to implement the project.
- MPRU should assume operational responsibility for the Implementation Phase of the project, and be held accountable for project deliverables.

The full set of specific recommendations is available on p. 27-34 of the report.

**Lessons Learned:**

- Allow for a longer set-up phase within the same project budget.
- Understand better the livelihood context of local communities before embarking on alternative income generation activities.
- Provide in-depth information and identify local community visions of the local environments through the General Management Plan. The latter draws on the Community Based Resource Management philosophy by using visual methods (images and posters) and a simple workbook for community representatives to develop state of the environment reports and environmental action plans for their village areas, as well as to identify environmental micro-projects.

**Language of the evaluation:** English

**Available from:** IUCN Global Monitoring & Evaluation Initiative, Gland, Switzerland; IUCN East Africa Regional Office (EARO)