

Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) Organizational Overview: Trinational Sangha River Region

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ABSTRACT

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) is a non-profit company owned by the German federal government whose mandate is to provide planning and implementation of technical cooperation in partner countries. The primary goal of the organization is to improve human living standards while stabilizing environmental carrying capacity. Priority project areas are education and training, women in development, protection of the environment, and conservation of natural resources. Project management occurs through a process called Objectives Oriented Project Planning or ZOPP. Development must be based on sound natural resource management, but conservation areas must be part of overall land-use planning, not isolated islands, and should involve all levels of stakeholders, particularly local communities. Design and implementation of integrated projects involve numerous principles, including: intersectoral co-operation; ecological soundness; long-term strategies; legislative support; improvement of living standards; social consensus; and flexibility and adaptiveness. GTZ supports the idea of a trinational, cross-border conservation area in the Sangha region.

THE ORGANIZATION

The Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (the German Technical Co-operation Agency) was established in 1974. The company is owned by the German federal government and its mandate is to undertake specialist planning and implementation of technical cooperation measures with partner countries. GTZ is a service organization with the legal status of a private limited company (GmbH) under German law, the Federal Republic of Germany being the sole shareholder. It receives annual commissions worth almost 2 billion Deutsche Mark (DM). Being a non-profit enterprise, any surplus generated is used for GTZ-financed small-scale measures in partner countries. GTZ receives the bulk of its commissions from the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) but other German ministries avail themselves of its services as well. In line with its Articles of Association, GTZ also undertakes commissions from international institutions such as the European Commission, the World Bank, and U.N. special agencies as well as partner country governments. Such clients remunerate GTZ directly for its services.

Currently, GTZ is working in 135 countries supporting over 2,700 projects. It employs more than 6,000 local staff members and approximately 1,500 GTZ field experts. At its head office near Frankfurt in Germany, some 1,300 people staff the different country departments, the planning and development department, and

several service departments. Technical co-operation serves the primary goal of improving people's livelihoods and establishing the earth's natural carrying capacity. Our corporate mission is to assist economies and people in mobilizing knowledge and skills and in establishing the general economic and social conditions they need to create an environment conducive to progress.

Project proposals coming from partner countries are reviewed and evaluated according to their technical feasibility and their compatibility with the priorities for development cooperation set by the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Apart from poverty reduction, these priorities include education and training, women in development, the protection of the environment, and the conservation of natural resources. When a project concept has been co-ordinated with the partner country, and the two sides have agreed to cooperate in implementing the project, a contract is entered into at the government level. BMZ then commissions GTZ to provide the necessary assistance to the partner country's project. This assistance usually consists of a local long- and/or short-term consultancy, counterpart training, procurement of materials and equipment, management of non-repayable financial contributions and other services.

GTZ has developed a wide range of instruments to help partners prepare and implement projects. In the GTZ management system, the project management base is formed by ZOPP, a German acronym for Objectives Oriented Project Planning. ZOPP provides the framework for the analytical and planning steps of the preparation and implementation of a project. ZOPP's core feature is participation by persons and institutions involved in the project. An economically viable and sustainable development process can only be achieved if, from the outset, the planning process achieves a consensus among all participants on its objectives.

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GTZ'S APPROACH TO NATURE CONSERVATION

As mentioned before, protection of the environment and conservation of natural resources are priorities for development co-operation set by the BMZ, motivated by the fact that development can only be sustainable if based on sound natural resource management. Nature conservation has the objective of protecting biodiversity and ecological processes and is thus a key element in any strategy to arrive at sound management of natural resources. Recognizing and implementing the connection between conservation and development also means that conservation areas can no longer be considered "islands of non-development." Protected areas must be part of

an overall land-use planning concept aimed at sustainable development of the region.

The goal of conservation is to protect and preserve endangered ecosystems and species. For conservation projects in development co-operation, the dimension of local people affected by the conservation measures is another key element. Integrated conservation projects must contribute to stabilizing or improving the living standards of these people. The challenge for these integrated projects is to promote development that assures conservation of endangered ecosystems and species and at the same time improves local living standards.

To achieve these dual goals, all stakeholders must be involved. The most important stakeholder group is the population living directly around, and sometimes within, the protected area. Often these people were not involved in the decision making process leading to the creation of the protected area, and their traditional user rights were not taken into account. Restrictions on the use of natural resources, considered necessary to preserve the biodiversity and ecological functions of the area for the benefit of future generations, may profoundly affect local peoples' livelihood, resulting in conflicts with protected area management.

Long term protection of these areas can only be assured if the affected population accepts the protected status of the area. This is especially true in the central African context, where government structures are rapidly breaking down and no longer capable of enforcing conservation laws. Therefore, local people have to be actively involved in the protected area's management, taking part in planning and decision processes. Possibilities of controlled sustainable exploitation of some natural resources, possibly within certain parts of the protected area, need to be carefully evaluated together with local interests groups. Local people have to be empowered to defend traditional user-rights against outside interest groups. Restrictions on resource use have to be balanced with development activities. Thus, local populations affected by the protected area are the most important target group for integrated conservation projects.

Other groups exploiting the resources, often on a commercial basis and on a non-sustainable level, are also important stakeholders, for example, hunters, forest concessionaires, or users of non-timber forest products. Integrated conservation projects have to engage in a dialogue with these interest groups in order to arrive at an ecologically sustainable use of the resources, respecting traditional user rights of local people and conservation objectives.

Other important stakeholders are government administrations and institutions that regulate or assist resource users. These can be

ministries of planning, agriculture, forestry, resettlement, and other government services, training and research institutions, development banks, and development organizations (national and international, governmental and non-governmental). Of special importance are the institutions charged with the management of protected areas.

INTEGRATED CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The following principles are to be considered in the design and implementation of integrated conservation projects.

- Since effective conservation calls for measures inside and outside protected areas, intersectoral cooperation is of the utmost importance;
- Conservation measures should be oriented at the functional, performance, and regeneration capacity of ecosystems;
- Conservation measures should aim for long term objectives;
- Conservation should have a sound legal basis and be embodied in a land use planning framework. The creation of protected areas with buffer zones, connected through corridors, should be based on an overall integrated land use concept;
- Conservation measures should contribute to stabilizing or improving the living standards of local people;
- Conservation measures should be based on a broad social consensus, and must be oriented to the cultural, social, and economic context of the region;
- Utilization of natural resources compatible with conservation objectives should be permitted and developed in order to improve economical potential, especially for the local people;
- Conservation projects should be flexible and based on learning processes.

To promote conservation, GTZ operates in the following fields:

Conservation Planning

All phases of conservation projects, from planning through implementation, require monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, conservation planning involves:

- identification of protected areas;

- elaboration of strategies for the management of protected areas and buffer zones and technical advice for their implementation;
- applied research: although fundamental research is not an operational field for GTZ, applied research can be promoted to clarify some management questions (usually in collaboration with national or international research institutes);
- satellite and aerial photo analysis and design of geographical information databases for the planning and monitoring of conservation projects in a regional land use planning framework.

Policy Advice on Creating an Appropriate Framework

Nature conservation requires favourable conditions and a clear legal foundation on which successful projects can be built sustainably. GTZ policy advice covers:

- development of conservation strategies and environmental action plans;
- government advisory services for redrafting the legislative framework for nature conservation;
- support for the establishment and support of conservation authorities;
- preparation of international conventions.

Support to Local Institutions

GTZ offers priority support to local institutions that promote and implement conservation projects as integral project components. Specifically, GTZ supports local institutions through:

- training of conservation personnel in technical fields, administration, and public relations work;
- enhancing the performance of conservation authorities through improved planning methods, institution building, and the supply of appropriate equipment;
- consultancy services to NGOs on conservation work.

Promoting the Economical Viability of Protected Areas

The management of natural resources within projects must be ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable. Economic viability is increased through:



(Illustration: Bernardin Nabana)

- ecotourism in protected areas;
- identification and dissemination of ecologically compatible land-use forms.

Promotion of the Social Acceptance of Conservation:

Conservation projects in the long term can only be sustainable if local populations and institutions support them. Thus, GTZ supports:

- strategies for environmental education and training;
- development of incentive packages to promote ecologically sustainable activities;
- development of conflict resolution mechanisms.

GTZ IN NATURE CONSERVATION IN THE SANGHA RIVER REGION

GTZ promotes projects in the three different countries of the Sangha region: Cameroon, Congo, and the Central African Republic.

Country:	Cameroon
Title:	Biodiversity Conservation in the Southeastern Region of Cameroon
Project-Number:	95.2536.1
Description:	Goals of this project include the development of a strategy for sustainable use of biodiversity in the region, support to the forestry administration for the preparation of forestry management plans, implementation of a protected area system, and development of sustainable land use methods with the communities. The German contribution is planned for seven years (1996-2003).
Donor Co-operation:	WWF Cameroon, Overseas Development Agency (ODA), World Bank (GEF)
Country:	Central African Republic
Title:	Natural Resources Conservation, Bayanga
Project-Number:	93.2137.3
Description:	The project contributes to the protection of biodiversity in CAR through a combination of measures for nature conservation, rural development and creation of

	alternative income-generation-activities. The German contribution is planned for 11 years (1994-2005).
Donor Co-operation:	WWF-International
Country:	Republic of Congo
Title:	PROECO
Project-Number:	92.2089.8
Description:	The project aims at contributing to the sustainable protection of the Nouabalé- Ndoki National Park through the intro- duction of well-regulated resource use and rural regional development activities in the buffer zone. The German contribu- tion is planned for 11 years (1994-2005).
Donor Co-operation:	Coopération Française, ECOFAC, WCS

GTZ has always been a strong promoter of the idea of a tri-national cross-border conservation area. Even though this regional cooperation may only be possible in the distant future, we believe that on an operational level, further integration of the activities in the three countries must take place. In order to improve the efficiency of conservation activities, integration must be improved between the different organizations and institutions, governmental as well as non-governmental, working in the protected areas and the zones around them. Improved integration between conservation activities on the ground and conservation policy on national and international levels is also extremely important.

GUY DEBONNET is an employee of GTZ, undertaking conservation work in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He was recently involved in the evaluation of the GTZ-Nouabalé-Ndoki project in Congo. He is also in the process of preparing a GTZ workshop on nature conservation in central Africa.

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