

## **Monitoring change in protected area management effectiveness**

Since its creation in 2000, CEPF has supported over 200 projects aimed at establishing protected areas, or strengthening their management. CEPF, like many other donors, conservation professionals and protected area authorities, wants to understand whether the management practices we are supporting, are resulting in increased management effectiveness. CEPF has adopted the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), to report on progress in improving management effectiveness in the protected areas receiving CEPF investment.

### **What is the METT?**

The METT is one of a series of management effectiveness assessment tools aimed at supporting implementation of the World Commission on Protected Areas' (WCPA) "framework for assessment". Designed in the early 2000s, the WCPA framework aims to provide guidance in the development of assessment systems and to encourage standards for assessment and reporting.

The METT was developed as a simple site-level tracking tool to facilitate reporting on management effectiveness of protected areas. It was designed in 2003 by the World Bank/WWF Alliance for Forest Conservation and Sustainable Use, to measure progress towards the target "*75 million hectares of existing forest protected areas under improved management to achieve conservation and development outcomes by 2010.*" The METT was subsequently revised to accommodate wetlands targets of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and inland waters targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and thus is better able to track management of wetland ecosystems within protected areas and integration of terrestrial and wetlands conservation.

### **Why fill out the METT?**

The METT can help monitor progress towards improving management effectiveness, and it can help managers track progress in implementing protected areas commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. It is now obligatory for all Global Environment Facility (GEF) protected area projects to use the METT. As the GEF is one of CEPF's seven donor partners, all CEPF grantees (or sub-grantees) with project activities that pertain to the management of a protected area are requested to deliver one or more METTs for each protected area that they will work in during their project, unless another grantee involved in the same protected area has already been or is expected to be tasked with securing and submitting the METT reports.

The scoring system used in the METT is useful for tracking progress over time in individual sites and can be used to identify trends and patterns in management of protected areas across a number of sites. As more and more METTs become available, the dataset is beginning to provide useful insights into protected area management effectiveness.

### **How often should it be filled out?**

The GEF requires that all protected area projects fill out a METT three times during the projects' lifespan. This requirement rolls down to CEPF, however, because the METT is linked to a specific protected area instead of a grantee or project, existing baseline METTs can be used, provided that they have been filled out within one year prior to the start of the project. Since the duration of CEPF protected area projects is on average 2 ½ years, it may not be necessary to fill out a mid-term as well as a final METT; a baseline and final are sufficient. The baseline METT is to be submitted to CEPF within three months of inception of the grant, and the final METT is to be submitted together with the project's final completion report.

### **How to fill out the METT**

CEPF is using the METT template provided by the GEF ([find it here](#)). The template is an Excel file with two sections. The first section comprises two datasheets. *Data Sheet 1: Reporting Progress at Protected Area Sites* pertains to general information about the protected area and its designations. *Data Sheet 2: Protected Areas Threats* requests information about 12 possible threats to the protected area. The second section is the actual *Assessment*. It consists of 30 questions designed to be easily answered by those managing the protected area.

The METT questions should be answered by a group of protected area staff, and where possible, with additional external experts, local community leaders or others with knowledge and interest in the area and its management. A box next to each question allows for qualitative judgements to be explained in more detail. Completing this box can provide a reference point and information for local staff in the future. It is advisable to use at least some of the same team members who undertook previous assessments. For each question, respondents are also asked to identify any intended actions that will improve management performance. All sections should be completed whenever relevant. Specific questions that are not relevant to a particular protected area should be omitted, with a reason given in the comment/explanation section.

### **What happens to the METTs after they are submitted to CEPF?**

CEPF reviews all METTs received from grantees, and records METT scores in our database. Additionally and as required, all METTs received at CEPF are submitted to GEF. The METTs are used by CEPF and Regional Implementation Teams (RIT) to monitor progress in targeted protected areas. In the Eastern Afromontane hotspot, METTs have been analyzed and results compiled into a report, [Baseline Management Effectiveness in the CEPF Eastern Afromontane Hotspot Region](#). This report presents a baseline of management effectiveness and forest cover, which can be used to measure future changes following CEPF investment.

Further, in April 2016, CEPF started a new project, *Using the METT to Monitor the Status of Management Effectiveness in Protected Areas in the Hotspots*, which will be undertaken by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC). The project will entail analysis of the METTs that CEPF grantees have submitted from many protected areas occurring in 13 hotspots in various stages of investment (profiling, start-up, active and recently completed). The project has two objectives:

- Set the stage for CEPF to systematically monitor the METT scores of protected areas in the hotspots, with a baseline for all assessed protected areas, which can be used to measure change in management effectiveness throughout CEPF's investment period.
- Measure change in protected area management effectiveness in all hotspots where CEPF is currently investing or has recently completed an investment phase.

Results are expected in October 2016.