

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

REPUBLIC OF BENIN

**AGOUA, MONTS KOUFFE AND WARI-MARO FORESTRY MANAGEMENT
PROJECT (PAMF)**

SAP No.: P-BJ-AAD-002
ADF Loan No. 2100 150 000 093
ABEDA Loan No. 15/04/2000

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Agriculture and Agro-Industry Department (OSAN)

DECEMBER 2008

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This report was prepared by a Forestry Consultant and a Consulting Agro-economist, following their mission to Benin from 7 to 21 November 2008. Questions on this document should be referred to Mr. Ken B. JOHM, Division Manager, OSAN.4 (Extension 2468).

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

LDO	Local Development Officer
IGAs	Income-generating Activities
ADB	African Development Bank
ABEDA	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
CAA	Caisse Autonome d'Amortissement (Sinking Fund)
PMU	Project Management Unit
CNSP	National Project Monitoring Unit
CRDRN	Regional Coordination for the Management of Shared Natural Resources
CRSP	Regional Project Monitoring Committee
CSE	Monitoring Evaluation Unit
CSEP	External Project Monitoring Commission
CTP	Principal Technical Adviser
CVC	Village Hunters' Fraternities
CVDD	Village Sustainable Development Council
CVEC	Village Savings and Credit Fund
BDs	Bidding Documents
DCRE	External Resource Coordination Directorate
DFS	Deutsche Forstservice GmbH
DGFRN	Directorate for Forests and Natural Resources
DPP	Directorate for Programming and Planning
ADF	African Development Fund
FC	Forest Reserve
GDRN	Sustainable Management of Natural Resources
GRN	Natural Resource Management
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
IKA	Kilometric Abundance Index
LEA	Applied Ecology Laboratory
MEPN	Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Nature
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PAMF	Agoua, Monts Kouffé and Wari-Maró Forestry Management Project
PBF	Fuelwood Plantations Project
PSG	Simple Management Plan
GIS	Geographic Information System
TOR	Terms of Reference

FISCAL YEAR

1 January – 31 December

CURRENCIES AND MEASURES

Currency Unit: CFA Franc

		At Appraisal (Nov.1998)	On Completion (August 2008)
UA	1	CFAF 780.113	CFAF 701.950

TREND OF MEAN ANNUAL EXCHANGE RATE

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
CFAF/UA	862.42	822.34	796.55	728.90	754.30	747.34	698.86
	100%	95.35%	92.36%	84.5%	87.5%	86.6%	81.0%

BASIC PROJECT DATA

1. Country : Benin
2. Project : Agoua, Monts Kouffé and Wari-Maró Forest Management Project (PAMF)
3. ADF Loan Number : 2100150 000 093
4. ABEDA Loan Number : 15/04/2000
5. Borrower : Government of Benin
6. Beneficiaries : Populations living near the Agoua, Monts Kouffé and Wari-Maró forests
7. Executing Agency : Project Management Unit established within the General Directorate of Forests and Natural Resources

A. ADF LOAN DATA

1. Amount (in UA million) 10.54
2. Service charge (%) 0.75
3. Commitment fee (%) 0.50
4. Repayment Period 50 years
5. Grace Period 10 years
6. Approval Date 30/01/2000
7. Signature Date 24/03/2000
8. Effectiveness Date 18/04/2001

B. ABEDA LOAN DATA

1. Amount (UA million): 5.55
2. Date Approved : 27/04/2000

C. PROJECT DATA

1. Total Project Cost and Financing Plan (UA million)

Financing Sources	Appraisal			Completion
	F.E.	L.C.	Total	Total
ADF	7.87	2.67	10.54	10.42
ABEDA	4.31	1.24	5.55	2.99
Government	0.00	1.40	1.40	0.78
Beneficiary	0.00	0.07	0.07	0.07
TOTAL	12.18	5.38	17.56	14.26

- Effective date of first ADF disbursement : 16/08/2001
 Effective date of last disbursement : 25/08/2008
 Start-up of project implementation activities : January 2002
 Completion date of project implementation activities : 30/06/2008

D. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Cancellation (UA million) : 0,00
 2. Time Overrun/Underrun :
 - Slippage on effectiveness : + 13 months
 - Slippage on completion date : + 30 months
 - Slippage on date of last disbursement : + 32 months
 - Number of extensions of last disbursement deadline : 03
 3. Project implementation status : completed
 4. List of verifiable indicators : cf. Annex 4
 5. Institutional performance
 - Bank : highly satisfactory
 - Gvt : fairly satisfactory
 6. Performance of consultants : satisfactory
 7. Performance of contractors : unsatisfactory
- Estimated ERR at completion:
8. Economic rate of return (ERR) 21.01% at appraisal
 - Scenario 1: 8% (only those activities implemented)
 - Scenario 2: 19% (taking into account all activities planned at appraisal)

E. MISSIONS

The project was given special attention by the donors. Indeed, since project start-up, donors fielded a total of 14 supervision missions, including 10 by the ADF and 4 by ABEDA. The recommendations made not only to the project, but also the administration and the Bank were applied by the Project Management Unit, thus making it possible to improve project performance.

Date	Mission	No. of Pers.	Composition	S/d
04-19 December 2003	ADB Tech. Superv.	1	Agronomist-Environmentalist (Task manager)	16
05-20 December 2004	ADB Tech. Superv.	2	Animal husbandry expert + Environmentalist	32
12-18 January 2005	ADB Tech. Superv.	1	Agronomist-Environmentalist (Task manager)	7
23 March-1 April 2005	ABEDA Mission	2	Civil Engineer + Economist	20
14-23 October 2005	ADB Tech. Supervision	1	Agro-forestry Development Manager (Consultant)	10
09-20 January 2006	ADB Financial Supervision	1	ADB Disbursement Officer	12
14-26 April 2006	ADB Tech. Supervision	1	Agronomist- Environmentalist (Task manager)	13
25-29 May 2006	ABEDA Techn. Supervision	1	Principal Expert	5
01-11 December 2006	ADB Tech. Supervision.	1	Agronomist- Environmentalist (Task manager)	11
07-28 February 2007	ADB Portfolio Review	1	Agro-economist	22
21-31 August 2007	ADB Tech. Supervision	1	Environmentalist	11
26 March-05 April 2007	ABEDA Supervision	1	Economist	11
07 March 2008	ADB Tech. Supervision	1	Environmentalist	1
30 May-08 June 2008	ABEDA Techn. Supervision	2	Civil Engineers	20
Total				191

F. ADF LOAN DISBURSEMENT (UA million)

	Estimate at appraisal	Actual amounts	Percentage (%)
<u>Total disbursed by ADF</u>	10.54	10.413	98.81
<u>Balance</u>	-	0.126	1.19

Annual Disbursed on ADF loan (UA million)

Year	Estimated	Actual	% disbursed	% cumulative disbursed
2001	1.73	0.21	2.01%	2.01%
2002	2.01	0.42	3.95%	5.96%
2003	2.41	1.32	12.51%	18.47%
2004	2.31	2.69	25.55%	44.02%
2005	2.08	1.44	13.65%	57.68%
2006		3.69	35.02%	92.69%
2007		0.54	5.10%	97.80%
2008		0.11	1.02%	98.81%
Total	10.54	10.42	98.81%	

G. ABEDA LOAN DISBURSEMENT (UA million)

	Estimate at appraisal	Actual amounts	Percentage (%)
<u>Total disbursed ABEDA</u>	5.55	2.99	53.86
<u>Balance</u>	-	2.56	46.14

Annual Disbursements on ABEDA Loan (UA million)

Year	Estimated	Actual	% disbursed	% cumulative disbursed
2001	3.24	-		
2002	0.80	-		
2003	0.71	0.03	0.45%	0.45%
2004	0.77	0.93	16.70%	17.15%
2005	0.03	0.10	1.84%	18.99%
2006	-	0.92	16.59%	35.59%
2007	-	0.54	9.75%	45.33%
2008	-	0.47	8.52%	53.86%
Total	5.55	2.99	53.86%	

H. DISBURSEMENT OF NATIONAL COUNTERPART FUND (UA million)

	Estimate at appraisal	Actual amounts	Percentage (%)
<u>Total disbursed</u>	1.48	0.78	55.79
<u>Balance</u>	-	0.70	44.21

Annual Disbursement of the National Counterpart Fund (UA million)

Year	Estimated	Actual	% disbursed	% cumulative disbursed
2001	0.72	0.04	2.93%	2.93%
2002	0.18	0.32	22.79%	25.71%
2003	0.17	0.07	4.86%	30.57%
2004	0.08	0.07	4.64%	35.21%
2005	0.25	0.07	4.64%	39.86%
2006	-	0.12	8.36%	48.21%
2007	-	0.04	2.50%	50.71%
2008	-	0.07	5.07%	55.79%
Total	1.40	0.78	55.79%	

PROJECT LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX (Reconstructed at completion)

Hierarchy of Objectives	Objectively Verifiable Indicators		Means of Verification	Assumptions /Risks
	Estimated	Actual		
SECTOR GOAL				
1. Protect Benin's natural ecosystems especially that of the forest, as well as the biodiversity	1.1. The forest ecosystem maintains at least its current potential 1.2. The biodiversity maintains at least its current status	The diachronic study of the forest reserve has revealed that the replanted areas increased from 0.89% in 2000 to 3.27% in 2006; the number of animal species and individuals per species encountered during the kilometeric abundance index surveys IKA rose from 410 individuals of 15 species in 2005 to 517 individuals of 18 species in 2006.	Environmental Impact Assessments, Project Reports, Plant and Wildlife Inventory, Biodiversity Assessment.	Political stability, available financing, human migration control, weather hazards in Benin's north.
PROJECT OBJECTIVES. Ensure the integrated and sustainable development of the forest reserves of Agoua, Monts Kouffé and Wari-Marou, ensure incomes for the nearby residents, through related economic activities	1.1. 79,000 persons take part in the application of and measures contained in the management plans 1.2. 79,000 persons apply the measures projected in the management plans 1.3. The 5 main economic activities (forests, agriculture, fishery, hunting and bee-keeping) are stabilized. 1.4. New management structures are established (associations, groups, committees, etc.) 1.6. Training programmes in the 5 main economic activities are drawn up 1.7. Marketable productions up by 40%.	134,325 persons including 68, 035 women are involved in project activities. Participatory Management Plans are yet to reach the active implementation phase; they were tested in 2007. CVDD control of fishery, agriculture and illegal logging; modern bee-keeping is introduced. Joint management structures are put in place (CVDD, CEGRN, CRDRN, CVC, reforestation committees, plant producer groups, grass-cutter breeders, bee-keepers, transhumance committee, women's associations). Training of beneficiaries in bee-keeping, grass-cutter breeding, manufacture of shea butter, management of micro-credit to women, control of illegal logging and poaching.	Management Plans, Project Completion report and ADF Report, Management Report, ADF Supervision Report, Economic Statistics, Training Report.	Compliance with environmental regulations; The populations have understood the measures and are willing to apply them; Natural resources (soil, water, plant and wildlife, etc.) are used rationally. Population well-disposed; Candidates for training available and motivated. Credits and inputs available.
OUTPUTS				
1. Management plan	1. Three (3) management plans carried out on 370.000 ha in the wooded area	Three (3) simple management plans were drawn up and implemented at the start of the project. Two (2) participatory management plans involving 3 classified forests (370,000 ha) are available.	The documents of the participatory management plans.	The Administration and populations support the management plans. The rules laid down are complied with.
2. Central cores	2.1. Total restriction of an area (56,000 ha) 2.2. 50 hunting associations organized/revitalized 2.3. Partial restriction and removal of 5 % of the game during the first two years and 10% as of year 5	Restriction of 150,901 ha of the reservation area in the Monts-Kouffé -Wari-Marou complex; revitalization of 33 existing Village Hunters' Fraternities (CVC) in the PAMF area. Hunting was suspended for the duration of project implementation.	The participatory management plan documents, the agreements with the CVCs, The contracts with the CVCs The surveillance plan document	The established regulations were complied with. The hunters are available and so are the sites.
3. Natural stands	3. 28.000 ha enriched with productive stands (timber). The number of plants per species and total volume increased.	Establishment of 28,928 ha of enriched plantations, increase by 10 plants/ha in the enriched plots; 10% increase in the valuable species of the stands.	Annual activity reports, Participatory management plan, PAP management plan.	
4. Artificial stands	4.1. 1,000 ha reforested (timber). the number of ha successfully planted was 80% 4.2. 25 village nurseries and 10 nurseries on force account established 4.3. 500 ha established using the agro-forest system	Full and agro-forest plantation over 1,698 ha. About 85% success rate; 115 village nurseries installed.		

Hierarchy of Objectives	Objectively Verifiable Indicators		Means of Verification	Assumptions /Risks
	Estimated	Actual		
5. Forest ecosystems and biodiversity stabilized.	5. Monitoring and evaluation of plant and wildlife	Forest inventory of 1,000,000 ha including 370,000 ha of classified forests and 630,000 ha of protected forests. Ecological profiles of the various plant strata, conduct of a study on subsistence hunting in villages, a survey of the possible presence of hippos in the Manigri Unit in the Agbassa and Wari-Maró areas, of a study on the movements of micro-mammals (biodiversity)	Inventory reports, reports on wildlife monitoring count, Hippo survey reports, biodiversity study reports	
6. Increase in the herd of wild animals.	6. The pack of wild ungulates up by 300 %	The number of animal species and individuals per species encountered during the IKA monitoring up from 410 individuals of 15 species in 2005 to 517 individuals of 18 species in 2006.		
7. Increase in honey production	7.1. 5,000 beehives installed 7.2. 15 kg of honey per beehive/year are produced, i.e. 75 tonnes in all	Promoting beekeeping by training and equipping 349 modern beekeepers and setting up 2,223 beehives; 3 tonnes of honey produced a year.		
8. Increase in fish production	8.1. 15 fish ponds of 400 m ² built 8.2. 12 tons of fish produced	Preparation of development strategies for fish farming, small-scale stock raising. No fish pond built.		
9. Eco-tourism developed	9.1. Inventory of tourist sites established 9.2. Five bungalows built 9.3. Five lookout towers 9.4. Five km of paths built	Development of 2 tourist sites in Mont Soubakpérou and Carnot, planting of signposts for the tourist sites and ecological centre; development of 12 km of ecological and construction of an arboretum along the tourist route		
10. Increase in agricultural production	10.1. 60 ha planted in cassava 10.2. 80 ha of bottomlands developed (rice-farming and market gardening) 10.3. 600 ha of cashew orchards rehabilitated 10.4. At least 1,300 pilot farmers receive support to improve rural development techniques	Cassava activity taken into account by an another project; development of 21.8 ha of bottomlands; 445 ha cashew orchards rehabilitated; training of 951 villagers including 216 rice-growers, 112 grass-cutter breeders, 349 bee-keepers, 139 women processing shea nuts, 115 seed growers and 20 members of the technical rehabilitation committees		
11. Increase in zoo-technical production (stockbreeding)	11.1. 3 Fulfulde committees are established and operational 11.2. 3 inoculation pens are built. 11.3. 3 veterinary input depots are built 11.4. 30 stockbreeder candidates provided with start-up equipment	24 Fulfulde committees established No vaccination pens built; 3 veterinary input depots are being built. 112 grass-cutter breeders equipped.		
12. Productive nurseries	12. 50 village nurseries set up and are productive	59 nurseries are established between 2003 and 2007.		
13. Women's activities functional	13.1. 500 women are given customized training in economic activities	753 women (419 women for the TPCF and 139 women processing shea nuts) were trained; 6 stores including 4 stores/workshops and 2 warehouses were built; 44 women's groups (12 processing shea nut and 32 beneficiaries of micro-credit (TPCF) were provided with credit for IGAs; women in 24 villages of the impact area developed processing, production and marketing activities		
14. Target staff and populations trained and	14.1. 100 persons took part in inter-village exchanges 14.2. 50 target villages trained and sensitized to specific	127 villagers (11 rice-growers, 83 grass-cutter breeders and 33 members of CVCs) took part in discussions; the	Various training and capacity building reports.	

Hierarchy of Objectives	Objectively Verifiable Indicators		Means of Verification	Assumptions /Risks
	Estimated	Actual		
sensitized	<p>economic areas</p> <p>14.3. 25 workers received training for each of the specific activities</p> <p>14.4. 20 middle level workers given further training courses</p> <p>14.5. 13 senior officials given top level training</p> <p>14.6. 10 senior officials took part in international symposia.</p> <p>14.7. Project management, the field team and populations were given various environmental training sessions</p> <p>14.8. 228 persons received training, all the people concerned were sensitized</p>	<p>populations of 47 target villages were sensitized and trained in plant production, reforestation, IGAs, organizational management, etc; 28 workers (22 LDO, 2 coordinators and 4 field unit heads) were given customized training, 9 senior officials were given high level training and 2 senior officers took part in international symposia, training in environmental monitoring for senior officials of the Directorate and some field officers; various environmental awareness sessions and training on fauna monitoring, plant production, reforestation, supervision etc; sensitization of the political and administrative authorities and local communities to the project objectives; conduct of quick participatory diagnosis in forty (40) villages.</p>	Training documents	
15. Functional credit	<p>15.1. wood logging cooperatives received credit for forest operation</p> <p>15.2. 26 applicants for traction farming are supervised and encouraged</p> <p>15.3. 53 women received credit for the cassava sector and 60 for food crops</p> <p>15.4. 3 committees and 30 stockbreeders provided with credit for stockbreeding</p> <p>15.5. 220 beekeepers received credit for the purchase of 5,000 beehives, smoking out equipment, trap-openers and centrifuges</p> <p>15.6. 50 fishermen received credit for fish-farming</p> <p>15.7. 30 credit associations or groups were created</p> <p>15.8. 548 loans were granted</p>	<p>No wood operating cooperative received any support. No applicant was given any farming supervision;</p> <p>419 women benefited from Micro-credit to Women (TPCF); 112 grass-cutter breeders were given livestock credit; 349 beekeepers were provided with credit for equipment to establish 2,223 beehives;</p> <p>Fishing was taken into account by another project; 45 groups (21 credit groups, 4 shea nut processing cooperatives and 20 beekeepers association) were established and provided with support;</p> <p>615 loans were granted to Women's Groups, beekeepers, grass-cutter breeders, rehabilitation committees and to women processing shea nut.</p>		

Hierarchy of Objectives	Objectively Verifiable Indicators		Means of Verification	Assumptions /Risks
	Estimated	Actual		
16. Infrastructure built	<p>16.1. 1.000 km of category 1 feeder roads, 171 km of category 2 feeder roads are built</p> <p>16.2. 160 culverts and 13 culvert-type structures are built</p> <p>16.3. 5 km of forest paths are built</p> <p>16.4. 9 accommodation units (forest post) of 130 m², 4 administrative buildings of 160 m², 1 conference hall of 40 m², 4 houses, 4 buildings for guests of 100 m² and 3 huts for guests of 30 m² are built</p> <p>16.5. 1 ecological centre of 160 m² is built in Agbassa</p> <p>16.6. 6 dispensaries, 12 schools, 5 towers and 5 lookout towers, 30 warehouses for local economic operators, 3 veterinary input depots and 4 honey houses are built</p> <p>16.7. 2 boreholes with water tower are built in Abassa and Wari- Maro and 15 manually equipped boreholes are dug</p> <p>16.8. 5 ponds and micro-dams are built</p>	<p>162. km feeder roads; 11 small bridges in the context of small repairs on the feeder roads; 12 km of ecological paths built; 9 accommodation units built; 4 administrative building built; 4 houses built; 4 buildings for guests built; 3 huts for guests built; 1 conference room built; 1 ecological centre built in Manigri; 6 dispensaries built including 1 provisionally delivered and 5 at the completion phase; 12 schools built including 2 provisionally delivered and 10 in the process of completion; no mirador; 6 warehouses including 4 stores/workshops and 2 warehouses built; 3 veterinary input depots built including 1 provisionally delivered and 2 at the completion phase; 4 honey houses built including 2 delivered and 2 in the process of completion;</p> <p>16 boreholes dug;</p> <p>No pond and no micro-dam built.</p>		
17. Promote research (Ecological Centre)	17.1. Various inventories (flora, fauna, etc.)	Conduct of works concerning the establishment of volume tables for 11 forest species; installation of permanent plots to monitor plant dynamics; establishment of the ecological profiles of the various plant strata; conduct of studies on village subsistence hunting, on possible the possible presence of hippos in the Manigri unit of the Agbassa and Wari-Maros areas, on the movements of micro-mammals (biodiversity).	i	
18. Project management	<p>18.1. National staff recruited</p> <p>18.2. National experts recruited</p> <p>18.3. Technical assistants recruited</p> <p>18.4. Operating costs projected</p> <p>18.5. Accounts audited</p>	National staff recruited; 106 p/m of national experts recruited; 194,233 pm of technical assistants and international experts recruited; project accounts audited seven times by external auditors (2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007-1 st quarter 2008).	Activity reports, expert reports, technical assistance report.	
<u>KEY ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>RESOURCES</u>	<u>RESOURCES</u>		
1. <u>Management of natural resources</u>	<p>1.1. ADF : UA 8.81 million</p> <p>1.2. ABEDA : UA 4.72 million</p> <p>1.3. Government : UA 0.53 million</p> <p>1.4. Beneficiaries : 0.07 million</p>	<p>ADF : UA 8.13 million</p> <p>ABEDA : UA 2.60 million</p> <p>GVT : UA 0.21 million</p> <p>Beneficiaries : UA 0.07 million</p>		
2. <u>Support actions</u>	<p>2.1. ADF : 0.78 million</p> <p>2.2. ABEDA : 0.83 million</p> <p>2.3. Government : 0.44 million UC</p>	<p>ADF : UA 0.53 million</p> <p>ABEDA : UA 0.39 million</p> <p>Govt. : UA 0.41 million</p>		
3. <u>Project management</u>	<p>3.1. ADF : UA 0.95 million</p> <p>3.2. Government : UA 0.64 million</p>	<p>ADF : UA 1.76 million</p> <p>Govt : UA 0.16 million</p>		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Introduction

1.1 In order to avoid strong anthropogenic and animal pressure on the 46 forest stands that make up the 1,303,043 ha of forest reserves, the Government of Benin sought joint financial assistance from ADB/ABEDA to implement the Agoua, Monts Kouffé and Wari-Marou Forestry Management Project (PAMF).

1.2 Despite the project's complexity and the delay in the start of its activities, it achieved most of its objectives with an overall implementation rate of about 84%; moreover, several physical activities did better than planned.

1.3 Under the project, the decision was taken to assist the pilot village committees in the 35 villages of the three forest stands, by putting in place an institutional framework for natural resource management and community development. The institutional framework comprises the following three tiers: the Sustainable Development Village Council (CVDD) at village level, the Communal Committee for the Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (CEGRN) at community level, and the Regional Coordination for the Management of Shared Natural Resources (CRDRN) at inter-forest level.

1.4 Because of the numerous training sessions organized in various fields, the project contributed to building the capacity of project beneficiaries, project officers, as well as the forest administration and local authorities.

1.5 The project contributed to the drop in the number of cattle-breeders' camps bordering the three forest stands; they were relocated to their own villages. The project identified tourist sites, put in place a mechanism for the development of eco-tourism, built and equipped an ecological centre from where several surveys are conducted so as to better control forestry management.

1.6 The activities carried out within the framework of participatory forestry management helped to create jobs, decrease the migration of youths from rural areas to Nigeria and improve the living conditions of the beneficiaries. Furthermore, other income-generating activities implemented by the project helped to stem the deterioration of natural resources in general and forest resources in particular. They also contributed somewhat, to improving the socioeconomic living conditions of the beneficiaries and thus to reducing poverty in the project impact area.

1.7 The project was also beneficial to women through the self-managed associative micro-credit systems. The activities launched with such loans enabled the women beneficiaries to build up their financial capacity, improve their living conditions and to attain a certain level of financial autonomy.

2. Project Objectives

2.1 The project's sector goal was the conservation and sustainable management of the country's eco-systems, especially safeguarding the potential of the forest eco-system and biodiversity, maintaining at least its current status.

2.2 The project's specific objectives included the integrated development of the Agoua, Kouffé and Wari-Maró forest stands (370,000 ha), by implementing with the participation of the local communities, management plans using sustainable management systems designed for the ecosystems,. The project was to help control and stabilize the economic activities of the populations through actions and support measures, particularly in the buffer zones. The project was to help organize and strengthen local associative and administrative structures and improve the incomes of the populations.

3 Project Performance

3.1 The project started up in January 2001 when the project manager assumed duty. However, physical activities actually started in January 2002 after the ADF's first disbursement (on 16 August 2001) and following the preparation of the first annual plan of action (PTA). The 13-month period taken by the Benin Government to fulfil the conditions for the loan's effectiveness and more specifically, the condition relative to the appointment of the project manager, meant that the date of start-up of activities had to be extended by a year, although initially scheduled in the appraisal report for January 2001.

3.2 In spite of this slippage on the initial schedule, the outcomes of the PAMF were satisfactory by and large, with an overall performance rating of 3 out of 4 (see Annex 6). Indeed, apart from those activities that were not implemented either because they came under other projects, or because of the delay in the implementation of the participatory management plans, the project's physical implementation rate was about 84%. The reforestation rate exceeded 100%. Nonetheless, the following weaknesses were noted: (i) poor financial rate of return of the income-generating activities, (ii) poor disbursement performance of the Borrower and ABEDA, (iii) inadequacy of the Monitoring-Evaluation system for assessing the project's outcomes.

3.3 Through the various service contracts executed by the beneficiaries and the different income-generating activities carried out, the project helped to create jobs and thus reduce the migration of youths from the rural area, and improve the social and economic conditions of the beneficiaries. The project also helped women who received loans to practice activities that improved their incomes and living conditions.

4 Lessons Learnt

4.1 The PAMF's initial implementation schedule was not adhered to because of the delay in the effectiveness of the ADF loan owing to the time taken by Benin's Government to appoint the Project Manager (13 months between the signing of the loan and its effectiveness, instead of the Bank's standard 6 months). Although this delay was made up for in terms of physical outputs, nevertheless, the participatory management plans were not implemented, despite the fact that they were vital for justifying the project's environmental, financial and economic impacts.

4.2 The participatory forestry management approach and process put in place under the PAMF was adopted with resolve and determination by the beneficiaries and had a positive impact in the short-term (2003-2007). This process was compatible with the requirements, culture, tradition, and with existing skills and know-how of the forest dwellers. However, it is yet to prove its sustainability; for that, it needs close monitoring, guidance and ownership by the people living around the forest areas.

4.3 Reforestation has contributed to safeguarding and improving the forest potential. Statistics on measured environmental impact through the Landsat Image maps have proved that the area occupied by the forests improved greatly, from 8.162 ha in 1998 to 32.949 ha in 2006, i.e. 0.81% to 3.27% (see Annex 2).

4.4 The project's induced effects are reflected in the following indicators: (i) the dendrometric control of the forest potential; (ii) the gradual restoration of the tranquility that fosters wildlife development in the wooded areas, hence the return of wildlife to their habitat; (iii) the restoration of the biodiversity in general and the floristic diversity of the wooded areas in particular; (iv) persuading the inhabitants to hunt in a more rational manner by controlling poaching; (v) awareness of the beekeepers that they must refrain from destroying the forests through arson and instead to set up beehives in the wooded areas.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In order to avoid strong anthropometric and animal pressure on the 46 forest areas that make up the 1,303,043 ha of classified forests, the Government of Benin sought joint financial assistance from the ADB//ABEDA to implement the Agoua, Monts Kouffé and Wari-Marou Forestry Management Project (PAMF).

1.2 The project was to be implemented in 5 years, i.e. from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2005. The PAMF's activities took off in January 2002 with the preparation and implementation of the first annual action plan (AAP). However, the real operational AAP was drawn up only in 2003 on the basis of the Simple Management Plans (PSG) prepared for the three stands in December 2002. Consequently, the project became operational only two years after its commencement (i.e. 2003 instead of 2001). Despite the project's complexity and the delay in the start of its activities (many activities covered all sectors of integrated rural development), the project achieved most of its objectives with an overall implementation rate of about 84%; moreover, several physical activities did better than planned, as indicated in the summary table of project outputs as at 30 June 2008 hereto attached as Annex 3.

1.3 The project supported the establishment of an institutional framework for the joint sustainable management of natural resources and community development in 35 villages adjacent to the forests. This institutional framework has three tiers: the Sustainable Development Village Council (CVDD) at village level, the Communal Committee for the Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (CEGRN) at community level, and the Regional Coordination for the Management of Shared Natural Resources (CRDRN) at inter-forest level. This institutional framework has a more lasting post project character, contrary to other natural resource management projects whose local structures put in place disappear with the project. The PAMF has already tested the operation of this institutional organization experimentally through a social mechanism (comprising men and women) which enables the beneficiaries of the areas, the current beneficiaries of the natural resources, to undertake concerted action on participatory management for their local advancement and for the implementation of the management plans.

1.4 Through the numerous training sessions organized in several fields, the project helped to build the capacity of the project beneficiaries, the project officers, the forest administration and the local authorities.

1.5 The activities carried out under participatory forestry management, helped to create jobs, decrease the migration of youths from rural areas to Nigeria and improve the living conditions of the beneficiaries. Furthermore, other income-generating activities implemented by the project helped to stem the deterioration of natural resources in general and forest resources in particular. They also contributed somewhat to improving the living conditions of the beneficiaries and thus to reducing poverty in the project impact area.

1.6 The project was also beneficial to women through the self-managed associative micro-credit systems. The activities launched with such loans enabled the women beneficiaries to build their financial capacity, improve their living conditions and to attain a certain level of financial autonomy.

2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND FORMULATION

2.1 Project Objectives

Sector Goal

2.1.1 The project's sector goal was the conservation and sustainable management of the country's eco-systems, especially the conservation of the forestry eco-system potential and the biodiversity, at least in its present state.

Project Objective

2.1.2 The project's specific objectives included the integrated development of the Agoua, Kouffé and Wari-Marou forests (370.000 ha), by implementing management plans based on the sustainable management of eco-systems and with the participation of the local communities. The project was to contribute to controlling and stabilizing the economic activities of the populations through support actions and measures, particularly in the buffer zones. The project was also to help organize and strengthen local associative and administrative structures and improve the incomes of the populations.

2.2 Project Description

2.2.1 In order to conserve forest resources and the economic activities conducive to the development of village communities which are the beneficiaries of the natural resources, the PAMF planned to implement two key programmes in three forest stands, namely: (i) development proper involving the preparation and implementation of the management plans, rural development actions, supportive research; and (ii) support measures grouping economic activities for women and youths, the implementation of social infrastructure, training, sensitization and credit.

2.2.2 Project outputs were to focus on the following three components:

- A. : Natural Resource Management;
- B. : Support actions' and
- C. : Project Management

2.3 Project Origin and Formulation

2.3.1 The Government of Benin has since 1992, with the assistance of BIRD, AFD, GTZ and UNDP launched a Natural Resources Management Project (PGRN), that focuses on the involvement of private initiative and comprises a forest management component (VAF) to test global and participatory management methods with the village communities, so as to ensure the sustainable use of resources of the forest reserves through the Dogo-Kétou, Ouémé Supérieur, Tchaourou and Toui-Kilibo pilot projects. In 1993, the Government approached the African Development Fund (ADF) to help conduct a feasibility study that was to lead to the development of the three forest stands of Agoua, Monts Kouffé and Wari-Marou. Thus, in 1995, the Embassy of the Netherlands in Benin showed interest in the study; it joined in the Fuelwood Project and sent a pre-project formulation mission to the area. Based on the findings of the said mission, the ADF financed a feasibility study, following which the project was appraised in November 1998. The project's financing plan was drawn up in March 1999 on the occasion of a joint ABEDA/ADF mission.

3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Loan Effectiveness and Project Start-up

3.1.1 The ADF loan's effectiveness was pronounced on 18 April 2001, i.e. 13 months following signature of the loan agreement (which took place on 24 March 2000), although the timeline required by the Bank between signature of the loan agreement and its entry into force is a maximum of 180 days (or 6 months). This delay was due to the difficulties encountered by the Government in appointing the project manager with the appropriate experience in forestry and project management. This appointment was effective in December 2000 because of administrative sluggishness, i.e. 9 months after the signing of the loan agreement. The loan agreement with ABEDA was signed on 27 April 2000.

3.1.3 The project started in January 2001 when the project manager took up office, but project activities actually commenced in January 2002, after the first ADF disbursement on 16 August 2001 and following the preparation of the first annual action plan (PTA).

3.2 Modifications

3.2.2 The main modifications to each component during project implementation were as follows:

Natural Resources Management: (i) an agreement concerning wildlife management was signed with the joint management structures for a total stop to hunting throughout the area because wildlife numbers are small; (ii) a restricted area much larger than that initially planned was identified by mutual agreement with the hunters (i.e. 150 901 ha against an initial objective of 56 000 ha).

Support Actions: (i) the decision not to build the 5 ponds and micro-dams was taken because funds from the Public Investment Programme (PIP) for the facilities planned were insufficient; (ii) the feeder road target was revised downward from 1171 km to 162,7 km, so as to control access into the forest reserve, under the supervision of a forest administration whose means were rather limited; (iii) the cassava farming component (60 ha) was cancelled and so were the fish ponds (12 tonnes of fish per annum) given that these activities had already been covered by other projects which focused more on cassava and fishery activities in the project impact area, namely: the Cassava Production Development Project (PDFM), the Root and Tuber Development Project (PDRT) and the Artisanal Fishery Participatory Development Project (PADPPA); (iv) no credit was granted to the logging cooperatives because the findings of the 2004 forest surveys revealed that the timber potential was on the decline compared with pre-project study results; applicants for animal traction were not supervised because of the fear that uncontrolled development of animal traction before zoning would be detrimental to classified forest protection; (vi) support to shea production launched by the project with the prospect of forest produce development, given the density of shea trees in the impact area and the desire of the women to organize themselves in producer groups.

Project Management: (i) establishment of a liaison office in Parakou close to the forests; (ii) the establishment of a new organization chart in January 2007 aimed at implementing the PAPs, following the closing of the field units in Agbassa and Wari-Maró, and setting up a Technical Management Unit located in Manigri; (iii) establishment of an institutional framework for the joint management of the forests to ensure ownership of project achievements by grassroots partners; (iv) change of project supervision which in June 2007 passed from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP) to the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Nature (MEPN) because the forest sub-sector was transferred to this Ministry.

3.3 Implementation Schedule

3.3.1 The PAMF's initial implementation schedule was extended by a year (January 2001 to January 2002) for the following main reasons: the delay in appointing the project manager (appointment in December 2000 and assumption of duty in January 2001), in recruiting technical assistants (March 2002, or a year after loan effectiveness) and in recruiting project officers (July 2002, or a year and 3 months after loan effectiveness), field staff (February 2003, or 2 years after loan effectiveness), the slow administrative procedures both on the Benin Government's side and that of ABEDA (procurement by competitive bidding) as well as in the mobilization of ABEDA and national counterpart funds).

3.3.2 The project should have been implemented in 5 years or from 1 January 2001 to 31 December, 2005. PAMF's activities started in January 2002 with the preparation and implementation of the first annual action plan (PTA) and the installation and launching activities. However, the actual operational annual action plan was prepared only in 2003 based on Simple Development Management Plans (PSG) prepared for the three forests stands in December 2002. Therefore, the project became operational only two years after its start-up (or 2003 instead of 2001). It was on the basis of these Simple Management Plans that the main development activities were conducted until 2006. The Participatory Management Plans (PAP) were finalized late 2006 and their implementation was still at a test phase at the time of project closure.

3.4 Reporting

3.4.1 The main reports prepared by the Project Management Unit were: (i) the simple management plans for the three forests stands (PSG); (ii) the Participatory Management Plans (PAP) for the three forest stands; (iii) the annual programmes and budgets; (iv) the quarterly and annual activity reports; and (v) the completion report.

3.4.2 In keeping with the loan agreement, the PAMF submitted regularly to the Bank, for approval, an activity programme and budget at the start of every year. In all, 17 quarterly reports and 6 annual activity reports were sent to the Bank between 2002 and 2007. These reports took stock of the project's implementation and the problems encountered. The completion report was prepared and sent to the Bank in May 2008.

3.5 Procurement

3.5.1 The Bank's specific procedures for the procurement of goods, services and works were complied with on the whole (details are given in Annex 5). The project management unit efficiently shouldered the responsibility of procurement including the credit component.

3.5.2 The following procurement arrangements were implemented: (i) competition based on a short list for the recruitment of technical assistants, and auditing of project accounts; (ii) national shopping for materials, vehicles and various equipment; (iii) force account for the nurseries, development and planting work, the construction of a small building to house the Ecological Centre and small store/warehouses (4 for processing shea and 2 for cashew activities), and bottomland development. Regarding training and research in the Manigri Ecological Centre, the project collaborated with specialized institutions such as the Laboratory of Applied Ecology of the University of Abomey Calavi, national research institutions (University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Parakou, ABE, CPAC, CENATEL), and international experts under short-term technical assistance contracts, as well as national experts and technicians.

3.5.3 To manage credit, the project management unit assumed the responsibility of putting in place and monitoring a credit system. The beneficiaries of the micro and other credits granted under income-generating activities formed groups (and subsequently federations). An account was opened by the project and by each group in a micro-finance institution (MFI) operating in each impact area. All credit funds were deposited into the PAMF's account and operations carried out from this account to the account of the group, depending on the number of requesters. Local development officers hired by the project were commissioned to recover the credit. For most activities (bee-keeping, grass-cutter raising, bottomland rice farming), the project granted credit in kind (equipment for bee-keepers, breeding stock for the grass-cutter breeders, seeds and farming inputs for the rice growers.).

3.5.4 The procurement process jeopardized the proper conduct of some activities and especially the construction of socio-community facilities financed ABEDA funds. Generally speaking, the average timeframe for procurement was 24 months against the national average early 2007 of 60 working days for national competitive bidding and 90 working days for international competitive bidding. Apart from this sluggish pace, procurement was smooth. In all, 31 contracts were awarded including one which was being signed at the Ministry of Finance when the completion mission was fielded. This contract concerns the supply of mobile saws and small forest materials (with ABEDA funds). In addition, the following three amendments were signed: technical assistance, works inspection and supervision and audit of accounts for 2007-1st quarter 2008.

3.6 Project Cost, Financing Sources and Disbursement

3.6.1 At appraisal, the project's total cost excluding taxes and custom duty was estimated at UA 17.56 million, including UA 12.18 million in foreign exchange and UA 5.38 million in local currency. The project was financed jointly by the ADF, ABEDA and the Government of Benin. The ADF loan was to cover 60% of the project's total cost excluding taxes and customs duties (i.e. UA 10.54 million). ABEDA was to contribute 32% of the project's total cost (or 5.55 million). The Government and beneficiaries were to provide up to 8% of the project's total cost (or UA 1.47 million, including 1.40 million for the Government and 0.07 million representing the contribution of the beneficiaries).

3.6.2 The financing plan at appraisal and upon project completion was as follows (in UA million):

Financing Sources	Estimated Cost at Appraisal			Actual Cost on Completion		
	F.E.	L.C.	Total	F.E.	L.C.	Total
ADF	7.87	2.67	10.54	7.76	2.66	10.42
ABEDA	4.31	1.24	5.55	2.82	0.17	2.99
Government	0.00	1.40	1.40	0.00	0.78	0.78
Beneficiaries	0.00	0.07	0.07	0.00	0.07	0.07
Total	12.18	5.38	17.56	10.58	3.68	14.26

3.6.3 The first disbursement was made on August 16, 2001, or 15 months after the signing of the loan agreement (24 March 2000). This was due to the difficulties encountered by the Benin Government in appointing the project manager effective only in December 2000; he took up office in January 2001. The last disbursement was made on 25 August 2008 after three extensions of this date (from 31 December 2005 to 31 December 2006, from 31 December to 31 December 2007 and lastly, from 31 December 2007 to 30 June 2008). The Table below indicates, by financing source, the amounts disbursed, the disbursement rates, the balances on the ADF and ABEDA loans as well as on the national contribution.

Financing Sources	Total Cost	Amount Disbursed	% Disbursed	Balance	% Balance
ADF	10.54	10.42	98.80%	0.12	1.14%
ABEDA	5.55	2.99	53.87%	2.56	46.13%
Government	1.48	0.78	55.71%	0.62	44.29%
Beneficiaries	0.07	0.07	100.00%	0.00	0.00%
Total	17.56	14.26	81.17%		

3.6.4 The amount disbursed by the ADF on the date of last disbursement (on 25 August 2008) was UA 10.42 million, equivalent to CFAF 8,147,054,003. The financial implementation rate therefore stands at 98.80%. The balance on the ADF loan is UA 126,166.40.

3.6.5 ABEDA's disbursement rate was 54% as at 30 June 2008, especially because of the complexity of its procurement procedures. It is however worth pointing out that ABEDA extended the date of its last disbursement to 30 September 2010 so as to take into account finalization of the basic infrastructure construction works it is funding. ABEDA's actual contribution to the project's real cost was 21% against the 32% planned at appraisal.

3.6.6 Contrary to projections, 56% of the national counterpart was disbursed (i.e. UA 0.78 million, the equivalent of CFAF 639,693,824, including the goods inherited from the Fuelwood Project phase 1, estimated at CFAF 251,000,000). The national contribution to the project's actual total cost represented about 6%. This poor performance was due to the Government's resource mobilization problems at the level of the Public Investment Programme [PIP] concerning budget preparation, (budget allocation that does not take into

account the needs expressed by the project; for instance, on an average projection of 300 million a year, the State grants on average CFAF 50 million).

3.6.7 The contribution in kind of the beneficiaries was in keeping with the projections. Such contribution concerns for example providing premises for grass-cutter breeding, a 30% contribution for beekeeping equipment, labour and maintenance within the framework of the bottomland developments.

4. PROJECT OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE

4.1 Operational Performance

4.1.1 Despite the project's intricacy and the delay in its start-up, the PAMF was able to catch up on the time lost in implementation. Indeed, most physical outputs reached an implementation level equal to or higher than 100%, although the socio-community infrastructure works which started in 2006 fell well behind the initial schedule (most of these activities were financed with ABEDA funds). Annex 3 gives details on outputs compared to estimates. Operational performance by component is summarized in the following paragraphs.

Component A: Natural Resource Management

4.1.2 As planned at appraisal, this component was to cover the following sections: (i) 370,000 ha of forest management based on three (3) management plans, (ii) management of wildlife in the three managed forests, (iii) rural development actions; and (iv) support studies and research so as to better control the actions conducted within the forestry management framework.

4.1.3 As at 30 June 2008, outputs on "Wildlife Development and Management" were as follows: (i) adoption and validation of two (2) Participatory Management Plans covering the three forest stands of Agoua, Monts Kouffé and Wari-Marou (370,000 ha), including one plan for the Agoua FR and one for the "Wari-Marou/Monts-Kouffé" forest complex; (ii) establishment of 1,698 ha of pure and agro-forest stands out of a projection of 1,500 ha, and 28,928 ha of enriching plantations out of a projection of 28,000 ha; (iii) full restriction of 150,901 ha in the Monts Kouffé/Wari-Marou complex, against an objective of 56,000 ha; (iv) total halt to hunting throughout project duration contrary to the appraisal estimates (culling of 5% of the game during the first two years and 10% as of year 5); (v) signing of contract with 33 village Hunters' Fraternities (CVC), out of an objective of 50, for surveillance of the forest stands.

4.1.4 Concerning the rural development actions, outputs can be summarized as follows: (i) installation of 2,223 beehives out of a projected 5,000, production of 3 tonnes of honey a year out of a projected 75 tonnes a year (all projected 5,000 beehives combined); (ii) promotion of grass-cutter breeding by training and equipping 112 grass-cutter breeders; (iii) promotion of rice growing through the management and development of 21.8 ha of bottomland areas, against a projected 80 ha; (iv) support to cashew production by developing 445 ha of old cashew plantations, against a projected 600 ha; (v) promotion of self-managed associative micro-credit systems by granting micro credit to 419 Women (TPCF); (vi) promotion of shea production through the construction and equipment of 4 workshops (in Banigri, Aletan, Sinahou and Wanou) and granting an advance on marketing (revolving fund) to four women's groups with 139 women.

4.1.5 The income-generating activities mentioned above were provided with project assistance in cash under the micro-credit [TPCF] (CFAF 4,890,000), shea butter processing (CFAF 19,900,000 granted) and the rehabilitation of old cashew plantations (CFAF 1,710,000 granted), in kind for beekeeping (equipment: protective overalls, gloves, smoke rooms, boots, etc.), grass-cutter breeding (1 group of 6 breeder grass-cutters per beneficiary) and bottomland rice development (agricultural inputs and bull ploughing in 5 villages). The micro-credit to women shows high repayment rates (91.27%), as do the rehabilitated cashew plantations (92.28%) and grass-cutter breeding (72.92%). The repayment rates for shea butter processing are low (1.71%); likewise for beekeeping (5.63%) and development of lowland rice farming (45.95%). Failure to identify outlets for the shea butter produced explains the low loan recovery rate. Activities such as beekeeping and bottomland rice farming were conducted only for two seasons. At the end of the project, the Technical Management Unit and Federations of Beneficiary Groups concerned were required to continue monitoring these activities and to recover the credit.

4.1.6 Concerning support studies and research aimed at a greater control of actions conducted in the context of forest management, the Ecological Centre planned was built in Manigri and was operational during project implementation; various studies and surveys have indeed been conducted there.

Component B: Support Actions

4.1.7 This component was to implement the following actions: (i) training and sensitisation of the target populations and project staff; (ii) promotion of income-generating activities for women of the 50 villages of the project impact area and promotion of a self-managed associative micro-credit system for economic activities; (iii) social actions (feeder roads, buildings, dispensaries, schools, ware houses, honey houses, etc.).

4.1.8 Regarding training of the target populations, outputs as at 30/06/2008 were as follows: (i) training of 951 villagers including 216 rice-growers, 112 grass-cutter breeders, 349 beekeepers, 139 women shea nut processors, 115 seed-growers and 20 members of the technical rehabilitation committees; (ii) training of 419 women beneficiaries of the TPCF, 139 women shea nut processors, 32 women grass-cutter breeders, 10 women seed growers, 3 women beekeepers and 150 women rice growers); (iii) training of 56 members of the CVCs on patrol and ambush techniques; (iv) training of 350 members of the CVDDs on ownership of the organic texts, the workings of a village association and organizational management.

4.1.9 Project staff received the following training sessions: 35 project workers were trained in "Team Building" (dialogue and team formation), 40 project officers and 16 officers of the forest administration in applying the participatory approach to the management of natural resources, 12 staff in the use of the accounting software, 30 staff in forest inventory, 35 forest technicians in the use of the GPS and compass, 12 local development officers (LDO) and 150 farmers, including 50 women in management and development of bottomland rice-growing, PAMF officers in project operation-inspection and intranet planning, contract award and provision of services, definition and installation of monitoring-evaluation systems, human resource management, understanding of space analysis tools (SIG/SGBR) for forestry management, accounting and budgetary and financial management of organizations.

4.1.10 The social actions carried out as at 30 June 2008 can be described as follows: 162,7 km of 1st and 2nd category feeder roads, out of a projected 1171 km; 11 small bridges built in the context of the basic repairs of feeder roads out of a projected 13 culvert type structures;

12 km of ecological paths built out of a projected 5 km; construction of the buildings planned (9 accommodating officers, 4 administrative buildings, 4 houses, 4 guest houses, 3 guest huts built, 1 conference room); construction of 6 dispensaries as planned, 1 of which has been provisionally accepted and 5 in the process of completion; construction of the 12 schools planned including 2 that have been provisionally accepted and 10 in the process of completion; construction of the 6 stores planned (including 4 stores/workshops and 2 warehouses of which 1 has been provisionally accepted and 2 are being completed; construction of the 4 honey houses planned, of which 2 have been delivered and 2 are being completed, drilling of 16 tube wells out of the projected 17.

Component C: Project Management

4.1.11 Under this component, provision was made to recruit national staff, technical assistants (permanent and short-term missions) and national experts, for various purchases, operation, audit of accounts, environmental monitoring and midterm review.

4.1.12 Achievements as at 30 June 2008 include: recruitment of the planned national staff, organization of technical assistance comprising international experts (or 194 p/months out of the projected 175 p/months) and national experts (or 106 p/months as planned, various purchases as planned (IT materials, vehicles and other equipment), defraying the operating expenses, 7 audits of project accounts (2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007-1st quarter 2008), the organization of an environmental assessment and of the 2005 midterm review.

4.2 Institutional Performance

4.2.1 A collaborative agreement was signed between the project and the Forest Administration through the General Directorate of Forests and Natural Resources (DGFRN). The latter took part in the project's activities by way of the workshops on monitoring-evaluation, project planning, and the provision of forest workers. Its responsibility was all the more important after the project's completion. It needs to be strengthened in human and financial means if project achievements are to be sustainable.

4.2.2 The project backed the establishment of a joint forest stand institutional management framework which is based on the organs put in place under the decentralization drive (Communes and Divisions). This institutional framework is more complex than initially planned in the appraisal report and comprises three levels: local (village, where the Village Councils for Sustainable Development-CVDD are located, communal (the Communal Community for the Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources - CEGRN); inter-forest. (the former CRSP which became the CRDRN with the changing trend, that is to say, the Regional Coordination for the Management of Shared Natural Resources). The agreements establishing the CVDD and CEGRN were signed by the Mayors of the Communes concerned and the members of the organs established in the 35 administrative villages near the forest reserves (35 CVDD and 5 CEGRN).

4.3 Performance of Service Providers

4.3.1 Performance of Consultants

The project recruited six consulting firms for the following services: technical assistance, staff recruitment, the preparation of the accounting procedures manual and

accounting software, the midterm review, the audit of project accounts, construction works inspection and supervision, aerial and orthophotoplan photos.

The services of the experts were well appreciated by the Project Management Unit and no major problem was raised. The reports produced were judged of good quality and were validated. The completion mission consulted some reports and judged them of good quality (midterm review report, environmental impact assessment, environmental monitoring report, etc.). The performance of the consultants has been judged satisfactory.

4.3.2 Performance of Contractors

Works contracts were signed with nine (9) local contractors for the construction of the various planned buildings, socio-economic infrastructure and boreholes. Indeed, overall, most of these contractors did not comply with the contractual deadlines. Considerable delays occurred in the construction of these socio-community and grassroots facilities financed with ABEDA funds. Only four out of the nine contractors implemented all their works. One contractor finalized the buildings in 2007 but the water towers are yet to be built (implementation rate: 96%). Four contractors fell more behind schedule than the other with implementation rates of 47%, 60%, 74% and 75%, respectively.

4.3.3 Performance of Suppliers

The project signed a total of ten contracts with suppliers all of whom by and large fulfilled their obligations. The transport equipment, IT and office equipment, as well as additional equipment for the veterinary laboratory were delivered according to schedule and were satisfactory. Only the contract to supply saws and small forest logging material (ABEDA financing) was at the signing stage at the time of the completion mission.

4.4 **Financial and Economic Performance**

4.4.1 The project's financial and economic rate of return could not be ascertained objectively and reliably at completion. In fact, at the time of appraisal, the rate of return was calculated on the basis of revenue of about CFAF 1.5 billion a year (as of year 1 of the project). This revenue was to be generated by the following activities: forest logging (sale of wood), hunting, fish farming, beekeeping, agricultural produce, cassava processing, livestock production (raising of chickens, guinea fowls, small ruminants) and marketing. However, some of the activities initially planned were not implemented. These include forest logging, hunting, fish farming, cassava processing and livestock production (only grass-cutter breeding was started). Moreover, the IGAs implemented during project execution such as beekeeping, grass-cutter raising, shea butter production, bottomland rice growing and the production of cashew nuts are yet to reach full development.

4.4.2 Although **interviews** with some of the beneficiaries suggest that the IGAs improved the living conditions, nevertheless, the financial benefits generated are still small. Indeed, to practice such activities an understanding of production, processing, marketing and management is important. For example, concerning beekeeping, only 3 tonnes of honey were collected a year from all the 349 beekeepers established under the project (against an estimated 75 tonnes per annum). Thus, because of poor organization and marketing, the price of honey is rather low (from CFAF 1,200 per litre of honey currently, the price could rise to 2,000 a litre if the activity were better organized). The same applies to the shea sector whose rate of return is currently very low especially because of outlet problems. In fact, the net

income per woman and per year in the four sites equipped and supervised by the project is insignificant (estimated at CFAF 24,144 per woman in Banigri, CFAF 1,009 in Aletan, CFAF 28,671 in Sinahou and CFAF 18,848 in Wanou). For bottomland rice growing, only 69 tonnes of paddy rice were produced by the 21 growers (for an area of 22.7 ha of lowland developed and managed), making about 3 tonnes of paddy rice per farmer, equivalent to about 1.8 tonnes of rice per farmer. At an average price of CFAF 350 per kg, the incomes per farmer are estimated at CFAF 630,000 a year. This activity received support only during two consecutive seasons.

4.4.3 It is however worth pointing out that in the areas around the forest stands, other activities were implemented under the project that enabled numerous service providers to improve their living conditions. These included the production and transportation of seedlings, the establishment and maintenance of plantations, the surveillance of 1,262 service contracts for these activities (i.e. about CFAF 1 billion of income) helped to improve the income of the providers.

4.4.4 The economic rate of return was calculated on the basis of the following two assumptions: firstly that those activities such as fish farming, cassava processing, the sale of wood, as well as hunting not conducted during the project's implementation were excluded from the ERR calculation. Similarly, the incomes from small scale retailing by women from micro-credit were not taken into account because they cannot be quantified. Only estimates of incomes from the activities that were actually implemented were taken into account in the ERR calculation (beekeeping, bottomland rice growing, grass-cutter breeding, sale of cashew nuts and poles in teak, services provided in the context of forest management). The calculations give an 8% rate of return. Conversely, in the second assumption, all activities including those that were not implemented (fish farming, cassava processing, hunting and marketing) were taken into consideration. In that case, the rate of return was estimated at 19%, close to the appraisal estimate (i.e. 21.01%). Details on the calculation can be found in Annex 8.

5 PROJECT SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

5.1 Social Impacts

5.1.1 The project resulted in the creation of about 1,052,544 person/days of jobs, in addition to those from the income-generating activities (source: economic impact study carried out in 2007). These jobs contributed to limiting the migration of youths from rural areas to Nigeria.

5.1.2 Apart from these measurable actions, the various activities conducted in the context of the project and the training sessions provided helped built the capacity of project officers and technicians, as well as of the beneficiary populations. The latter furthered their know-how in the techniques of management, production, organization and management (running of a nursery, establishment and running of a group, financial management, environmental protection, manufacture of shea butter, improved beekeeping, etc.). Similarly, the introduction of motorized processing as well as of equipment procured within the framework of shea butter production contributed to reducing the harshness of and time spent on the work of the women processing shea.

5.1.3 Furthermore, the improvement of access roads to some villages in the project impact area (Alafiarou-Agbassa, Oubérou-Wari-Marou, Moro) made it possible to open up the villages in question and reduced transport cost. For instance, transport between Agbassa and

Tchaourou cost which was between CFAF 2,500 and CFAF 3,000 in 2003 was brought down to CFAF 1,500 in 2004 after some improvements to the Alafiarou-Agbassa track in 2004.

5.1.4 The findings of the economic impact assessment suggest that the health situation in the project impact area improved. Out of the 71.4% of individuals surveyed reported improvement in access to health care thanks to the increase in income, to the sensitisation campaigns conducted by the NGOs and the actions of various projects including the PAMF. The 16 boreholes drilled by the PAMF helped improve the health conditions of the beneficiaries because of access to safe water.

5.1.5 From the educational point of view, the project contributed not only to a better educational environment because of the 12 schools and latrines built, but also to a better capacity of the parents to meet schooling expenses thanks to the incomes generated by the PAMF activities. Thus, based on interviews and on the findings of the economic impact assessment, the school enrolment rate progressed between 2004 and 2006, with a rise of 9.6 % every year.

5.2 Impacts on Women

5.2.1 The project was of benefit to women through its activities such as the promotion of self-managed associative micro-credit systems that granted micro-credit (TPCF) to 419 women: 150 out of 216 women rice farmers, 32 out of the 112 women grass-cutter breeders established by the project, 10 women out of 115 seed growers, 139 women shea nut processors (an activity practiced exclusively by women), and 3 out of 349 beekeepers.

5.2.2 All these activities enabled the women beneficiaries to build their financial capacities, improve their living conditions and attain some level of financial autonomy. More specifically, the TPCF was appreciated by the women beneficiaries. The findings of the surveys carried out during the economic impact assessment reveal that 62.3% of the women questioned said they spent about 1/3 of their income on their children's schooling expenses (textbooks, other supplies and school meals). However, the women who benefited from the TPCF were of the view that the current loan amount of CFAF 20,000 per woman is insufficient to make their activities profitable. Similarly, additional training would be useful at all levels to ensure a better management of these activities. In future, income-generating activities for women should be subject to preliminary studies so as to make sure they are profitable and viable.

5.3 Environmental Impacts

5.3.1 Reforestation contributed to the protection and improvement of the forest potential. Statistics on environmental impact determined with the Landsat Map Photos have proven that the area covered by forests has improved, up from 8,162 ha in 1998 to 32,949 ha in 2006, or from 0.81% to 3.27% of the total area occupied by forests (see Annex 2).

5.3.2 Enrichment plantations of exotic species such as *Ceiba pentandra*, *Azalia africana*, *Khaya senegalensis*, *Milicia excelsa* and *Khaya grandifoliola*, in the agricultural areas helped to improve crop yields and to meet the beneficiaries' pressing need for wood.

5.3.3 The environment also improved thanks to the rehabilitation of wildlife habitat, and the gradual return of some species such as lions, hippos, which had disappeared from the forest stands before the project started, and to the protection of hippos already found in the Wari-Maró forest stand.

5.3.4 Moreover, some income-generating activities (IGAs) such as beekeeping played a role in the protection of the forest against early and/or late forest fires, in other words controlling the traditional honey collecting practices, with the advantage of protecting colonies of bees.

5.3.5 In order to secure the forest stands threatened by fires and poaching, the DGFRN has organized permanent inter-army patrols (soldiers, police officers and forest guards). Their intervention has helped to limit the disaster of fires (early and late).

5.3.6 Persuading the populations to streamline hunting and control illegal hunting had a positive impact on the long-term management of natural resources and on the awareness particularly of beekeepers that the forests must be protected from arson and late fires.

5.3.7 The 1,262 contracts signed between the beneficiaries and the project concerning the forests (plant production and transportation, establishment and maintenance of plantations, surveillance of forest stands, lighting early fires) was a testimony to the commitment and resolve of these beneficiaries to protect the natural resources.

6 PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

6.1 Environmental Sustainability

6.1.1 All activities undertaken by the project for natural resource management such as open and enrichment plantations, surveillance of the forests against uncontrolled logging by the local communities, protecting wildlife against poaching, early fires, sensitisation of stockbreeders and control of migratory herding, helped to protect, regenerate and maintain the biodiversity. These actions should be supported and monitored in order to ensure environmental sustainability.

6.1.2 In order to preserve the project's achievements and take over from the PAMF after its implementation phase, the General Directorate of Forests and Natural Resources put in place a Technical Management Unit whose human and financial capacity needs to be built up, and which should be provided with further training on the participatory organization of the beneficiaries of the resources affected by climate change.

6.1.3 To ensure minimum operation of the Technical Management Unit, partially maintain the plantations, procure spare parts and repair vehicles, the Benin Government had already earmarked CFAF 75 million in 2008 and has budgeted CFAF 200 million for 2009.

6.2 Institutional and Financial Viability

Institutional Viability

6.2.1 The establishment of a joint management institutional framework focused on the 3-tier decentralization organs (village, commune and inter-forest) makes for greater accountability of the grassroots populations. This institutional framework made it possible for the mayors of the five communes to clarify the operational mechanisms at village and district levels, which were not provided for in the decentralization texts. The project thus contributed to building the institutional capacity of the Forest Administration, the local authorities and the public authorities. However, provision must be made to ensure the smooth running of this institutional framework.

Financial Viability

6.2.2 The participatory management plans provided for levies to be paid by users of the forest reserve (loggers, national and cross-border migratory herders, coalmen, farmers, beekeepers, fishermen, women shea nut and cashew processors, etc.). These levies were to be used to maintain and run the production apparatus. However, the incomes generated by these activities are still not enough to meet recurrent expenses and ensure project sustainability. Meaningful results require at least 5 years for the wildlife, but more time for the other activities. Regarding the socio-economic infrastructure, such as manually operated boreholes, management committees were put in place to take charge of their maintenance.

6.2.3 The project's financial viability is highly dependent on the implementation of the Participatory Management Plans (PAP), the operation of the participatory institutional framework put in place during the project's implementation (CVDD, CEGRN and CRDRN) and the rate of return of the IGAs launched under the project (shea, beekeeping, grass-cutter breeding, bottomland rice-growing, etc.) which requires above all, an understanding of each industry from production to marketing. Financing of a second phase of the project would make it possible to mobilize sufficient financial resources with a view to consolidating the project's achievements and ensure its financial and economic viability.

7 PERFORMANCE OF THE BANK AND THE BORROWER

7.1 Performance of the Bank

7.1.1 The Bank monitored the project's implementation without any major hitch, fielding 10 supervision missions over the 6-year span of project implementation (from 2002 to 2008). This frequent supervision is reflective of the Bank's objective of one mission and a half a year (or three missions every two years or 1 mission every eight months). On the whole, these supervision missions were timely because they made it possible, when necessary to direct the project's conduct.

7.1.2 Furthermore, the timeframes for processing disbursement requests for direct payments of service providers or for replenishing the revolving funds were realistic. The Bank effected 119 disbursements out of the ADF resources in 6 years (from 5 April 2002 to 15 April 2008), that is to say on average, one disbursement every 18 days. In addition, the Bank made sure that all project accounts were audited every year, in accordance with its relevant rules, and ensured that the recommendations made by the audits were taken into account.

7.1.3 For all these reasons, the Bank's performance was judged very satisfactory and its performance rated 3.5 out of 4 (see Annex 6).

7.2 Performance of ABEDA

7.2.1 The performance of ABEDA has been judged unsatisfactory because of the complexity of its procurement procedures which delayed the construction of the core social facilities that it financed. The disbursement rate of the ABEDA funds stood at 54% as at 30 June 2008.

7.3 Performance of the Borrower

7.3.1 The timeframe between the signing of the loan and its effectiveness, that is 13 months (24 March 2000 and 18 April 2001) exceeded the timeframe required by the Bank set at not more than 180 days or 6 months. This delay in the loan's execution was the fault of the Benin Government which found it very difficult to appoint the project manager (the appointment was made in December 2000).

7.3.2 Moreover, the Project Management Unit ran into problems when mobilizing the projected financial resources as the national counterpart fund, resulting in a disbursement rate of 56% on the amount earmarked.

7.3.3 Despite this poor disbursement rate, mention must be made of the Benin Government's efforts to pursue activities by setting up the Technical Management Unit based in the forest stand area, and to mobilize in 2008 and budget in 2009 a minimum of resources to ensure surveillance of the stands, supervise the local communities and pursue income-generating activities. The Borrower's performance has been judged fairly satisfactory.

8 OVERALL PERFORMANCE AND RATING

8.1 In light of the various analytical criteria shown in the evaluation tables, and the overall performance ratings of Annex 6, the PAMF's results are by and large satisfactory, with an overall rating of 3 out of 4. However, implementation performance was fairly satisfactory and rated 2.7 out of 4. This mark is justified because implementation fell behind the estimated schedule at appraisal, and so did the construction of socio-community infrastructure.

8.2 These other factors also influenced the project's performance: (i) the poor rate of return of the income-generating activities, especially because of a poor understanding of the sub-sectors in question; (ii) the weak disbursement performance of the Borrower and ABEDA of the resources allocated to the project, (iii) the inefficient monitoring-evaluation system; and (iv) the poor performance of some of the local firms contracted for the planned socio-community infrastructure.

9 CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Conclusions

9.1.1 By the end of its implementation (on 30 June 2008), the PAMF had, overall, reached its objectives in terms of physical outputs. Indeed, some activities reached or even surpassed the estimates. Nonetheless, the Participatory Management Plans were only tested at the time of project closure. Similarly, the poor incomes from the IGAs (beekeeping, grass-cutter breeding, bottomland rice-growing, shea butter and cashew nut production) make it impossible to reliably justify the project's financial and economic rates of return.

9.1.2 The project was able to prepare a forest management model at national level. It experimented the operation of an institutional framework which enabled the forest area dwellers who are the beneficiaries of the natural resources to undertake concerted action on participatory management for their local development. This organization could contribute to the implementation and ownership of the forest management plans prepared.

9.1.3 The PAMF put in place a participatory and long-term mechanism for the income-generating activities and more specifically, for the micro-credit to women. This brought women some independence in the management of the loans.

9.1.4 During its implementation, the project was able to change the mentality, attitude and behaviour of the beneficiaries using the natural resources (beekeeping, production and management of forest trees, production and marketing of small ruminants, shea butter production).

9.1.5 Through contracts for services provided within the framework of the forest management actions, as well as through the IGAs, the project led to some improvement in the living conditions of the local communities. However, the financial benefits generated by the IGAs cannot yet be reliably quantified since several aspects such as production, processing, management and marketing are yet to be mastered and given that a reference situation was not established at project start-up.

9.1.6 As a result of the numerous training sessions organized, the project helped to build the capacity of the technical and administrative officers, of the local communities, as well as of the local authorities.

9.2 Lessons Learnt

9.2.1 The PAMF's initial implementation schedule was not kept because of the delay in the effectiveness of the ADF loan due to the time taken by the Benin Government to appoint the project manager (i.e. 13 months between the signing of the loan and its effectiveness instead of the Bank's standard 6 months). The physical outputs made up for this delay although the Participatory Management Plans could not be implemented even though it was an important phase for justifying the projects' environmental, financial and economic impacts.

9.2.2 The participatory forestry management approach and process put in place under the PAMF was adopted with resolve and determination by the beneficiaries and had a positive impact in the short-term (2003-2007). This process was compatible with the requirements, culture, traditions, skills and existing knowledge of the forest dwellers. Nevertheless, this process is yet to prove its sustainability; it needs close monitoring, guidance and ownership by the populations living around the forest stands.

9.2.3 Reforestation has contributed to safeguarding and improving the forest potential. Statistics on measured environmental impact through the Landsat Image Maps have proved that the area occupied by the forests improved greatly, from 8,162 ha in 1998 to 32,949 ha in 2006, i.e. 0.81% to 3.27% (see Annex 2).

9.2.4 The project's induced effects are reflected in the following indicators: (i) the dendrometric control of the potential of the stands; (ii) the gradual restoration of the tranquility that induces wildlife Management in the forest stands, hence the return of wildlife to the habitat; (iii) the restoration of the biodiversity in general and the floristic diversity of the forest stands; (iv) the possibility to persuade the populations to hunt more rationally by controlling poaching; (v) the awareness of the bee-keepers not to destroy the forests through arson but instead to set up beehives in the forest stands.

9.3 Recommendations

In view of the outcomes and lessons noted following completion of the PAMF, it is recommended:

To the Bank

9.3.1 To favourably consider the Benin Government's request for financing of the PAMF's second phase with a view to: (i) sustaining the key achievements of the project, (ii) implementing the participatory management plans drawn up, (iii) maintaining the young plantations and protecting forest resources from bush fires for at least three to four years, (iv) limiting uncontrolled use of forest resources; (v) ensuring continued protection of wildlife against poaching; (vi) improving beneficiary entrepreneurship in the management of forest resources; and (vii) improving the project's financial and economic rate of return.

9.3.2 To ensure that a reference situation is established at project start-up so as to facilitate monitoring-evaluation; it would also be desirable to take initiatives aimed at women; in particular, IGAs should be based on preliminary studies that will confirm their rate of return and viability.

To the Borrower

9.3.3 To provide DGFRN with minimal resources to ensure sustainability of project achievements, in particular, for the maintenance of the forest plantations, protection of natural resources and operation of the Technical Management Unit for greater efficiency as surveillance of the stands continues, supervision of the institutional authorities put in place and monitoring of IGAs.

9.3.4 To avoid in future, periods of uncertainty between the end of the project and a possible new phase, in order to alleviate the observed consequences such as the efforts to make for a new forest inventory following uncontrolled logging of natural resources by the forest dwellers.

9.3.5 To ensure that the Forest Administration delivers to the project beneficiaries, certificates for services rendered by the latter, both individuals and collective interest groups (stockbreeders, CVC, seed growers, agro-foresters, forest managers), so that they could prove their professional experience during future projects or external operators involved in natural resource management.

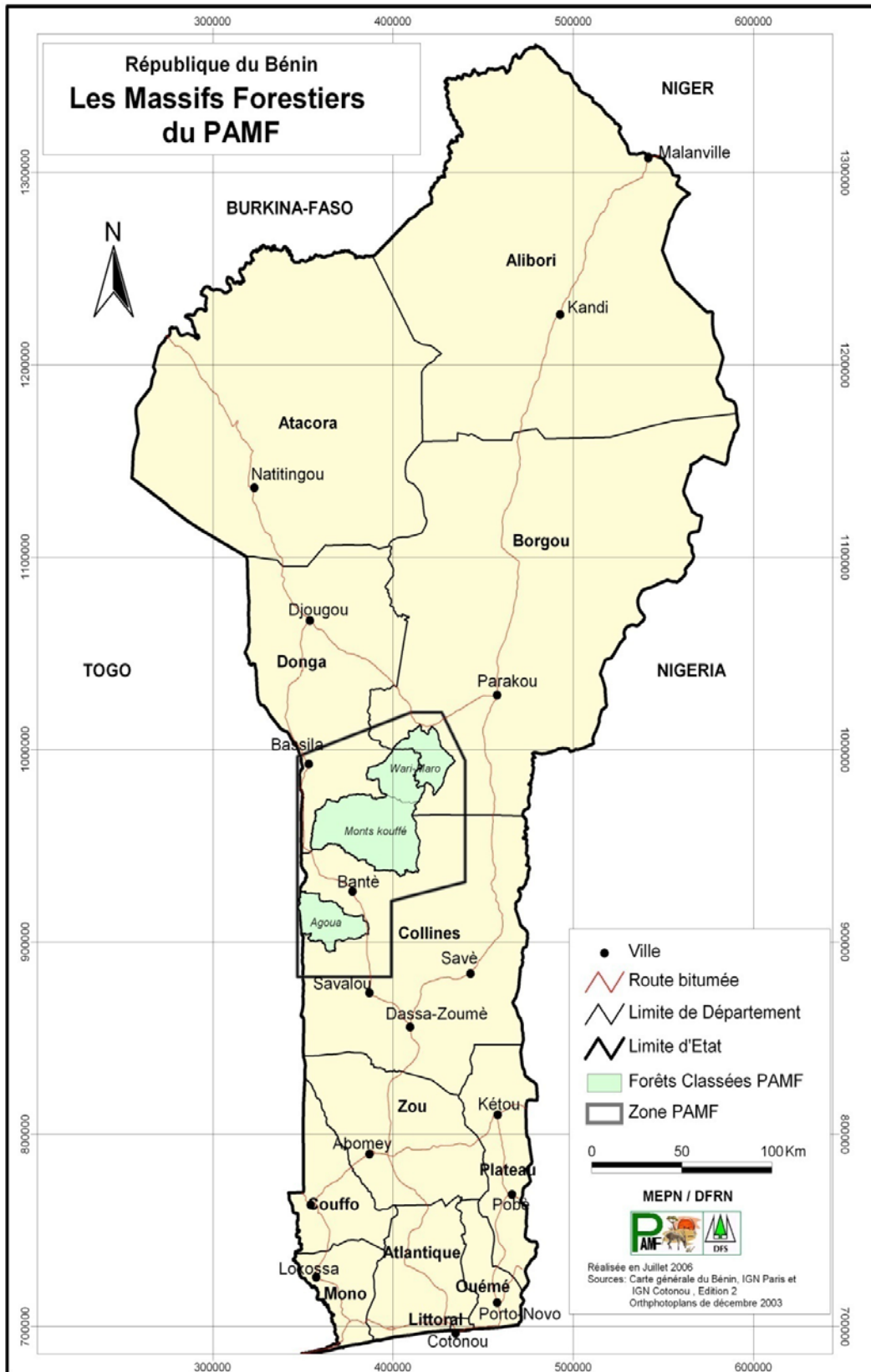
9.3.6 To ensure that the socio-community facilities financed with ABEDA funds are completed in order to improve the PAMF's operational and socio-economic performance.

9.3.7 To support the established joint management organizational framework (CVDD, CEGRN and CRDRN) from the standpoints of organization and advisory services, so as to make it more operational under the sustainable management of the forest stands and the implementation of the participatory management plans.

9.3.8 To ensure that the DGFRN channels various projects and private structures, involved in natural resources, towards the groups and associations of seed growers existing in the region, for their needs in forest seedlings.

ANNEXES

PAMF Impact Areas



Area of Land Use Classes between 1998 and 2006

Land Use Classes	1998		2006	
	Sup. (ha)	(%)	Sup. (ha)	(%)
Forest area	46249	4.59	44334	4.4
Savannah area	88608	87.94	847795	84.14
Cropped area	64688	6.42	80104	7.95
Plantation area	8162	0.81	32949	3.27
Other area (Infrastructure)	2418	0.24	2418	0.24
TOTAL	1007600	100	1007600	100

Summary Table of Project Outputs as at 30 June 2008

	Activities	Unit	Est.	Actual	%	Justification of Difference/Remarks
1)	Creation of new management structures	U	--	87 ¹	75	Long duration of the process to establish the institutional framework because of the participatory approach.
2)	Preparation of training programme in the 5 main economic activities	U	1	--	75	Instead of the programme, a training plan is prepared and applied annually
3)	Preparation of 3 management plans for 370 000 ha in the forest stands	U	3	2	100	The Monts-Kouffé and Wari-Maró Forest Reserves are in the same ecological area, and are adjacent to one another; the protected area is astride the 2 forests. It was not necessary to draw 2 separate management plans for the 2 forest reserves. The PAPs for Agoua and the Wari-Maró - Monts Kouffé Complex have been endorsed, finalized, edited and sent to the structures concerned.
4)	Full protection of one area	Ha	56 000	150.901	100	Instead of protecting the initially planned 56 000 ha, a reservation area of 150.901 ha has been identified, demarcated and marked out. Similarly; its plan has been prepared. The protected areas and the main water courses (Ouémé, Téroú and Odola) had to be included as they are areas of wildlife concentration and because of the need to take several ecosystems into account.
5)	Organisation and revitalization of hunters' fraternities	U	50	33	100	The census of hunters' fraternities revealed the existence of 33 Village Hunters' Fraternities (CVC)
6)	Partial protection and culling of 5% of game during the first 2 years and 10% as of Year 5	--	--	--	100	Protection of and mutual consent for putting a complete stop to hunting given the scarcity of wildlife in the project impact area.
7)	Enrichment in productive stands	Ha	28 000	28 928	103	The cost of implementation per ha lower than planned.
8)	Reforestation with timber and through an agro-forest system (artificial planting) with 80% of success rate	Ha	1500	1 698	113	Most the plantations were installed manually; they were not cleared mechanically. Hence the cost per hectare was lower than planned
9)	Establishment of village nurseries	U	50	59 ²	100	As far as possible, the nurseries must be brought closer to the reforestation sites
10)	Evaluation and monitoring of fauna and flora	F	1	1	100	Forest inventories organized for 370,000 ha of forest reserves and 630,000 ha of protected area (not planned), Operating inventory in 2007 Fauna monitored 3 times a year since 2005 Counting of fauna in 2007
11)	Increase in the ungulate load	%	300	--	--	Delay in monitoring fauna; it is too early yet to talk of increase in the ungulates
12)	Installation of hives	U	5 000	2,223 ³	44	Delay in the start of IGAs which took off in 2004.
13)	Honey production	T	75/yr	3	4	Delay in the take off of IGAs which took off in 2004.
14)	Installation of fish ponds	U	15	0	0	This activity has already been taken into account under another project (PADPPA)
15)	Fish production	T	12	0	0	Same as item 14)
16)	Conduct of an inventory of tourist sites	U	1	1	100	Identification of tourism potential, 2 sites developed
17)	Construction of a bungalow	U	5	1	20	Delay in project start-up
18)	Construction of look-out towers	U	5	0	25	BDs prepared, procedure suspended on ABEDA's recommendation
19)	Construction of ecological paths	Km	5	12	240	Path opened by the committees
20)	Promotion of cassava farming	Ha	60	0	0	Activities taken into account by other projects at national level (PDFM and PDRT)

¹ 47 provisional reforestation monitoring committee, 35 CVDD and 5 CEGRN

² An annual average of 59 nurseries established : 39 in 2003, 41 in 2004, 84 in 2005, 120 in 2006 and 8 in 2007

³ 768 beehives in 2004 and 1455 in 2005

	Activities	Unit	Est.	Actual	%	Justification of Difference/Remarks
21)	Bottomland development for rice growing and market garden	Ha	80	21.8	27	Delay in the start-up of IGAs which started in 2004. Complexity of activities under the project especially considering the participatory approach
22)	Rehabilitation of the cashew nut plantation	Ha	600	445 ha	75	Rehabilitation process ongoing; diagnostic study conducted; out of 600 ha, 557 can really be developed. Three-Year Rehabilitation Plan prepared
23)	Support to the improvement of rural development techniques (number of farmers assisted)	Farmers	1300	951 ⁴	73	Complexity of the activity (development technique, supply, supervision...) considering the participatory approach
24)	Establishment of Fulfulde Committees	U	3	24	800	The large number of committees established makes it possible to better control cross border migratory herding
25)	Construction of vaccination pen	U	3	0	0	Priority to raising grass-cutters so as to control poaching
26)	Construction of veterinary input warehouses	U	3	1	25	1 warehouse completed and delivered provisionally and 2 in the process of completion
27)	Stockbreeders equipment	U	30	112 ⁵	373	Breakdown of the number of stockbreeders around the 3 stands
28)	Customized training for women in economic activities	U	500	753 ⁶	150	Need to accept all women wishing to develop activities within the groups
29)	Financing the purchase of products for women	Groups	30	447	147	Ditto
30)	Organisation of inter-village exchanges	Particip..	100	127 ⁸	127	Selection of 2 rice-growers per site, 1 representative per CVC and all grass-cutter breeders of the first group
31)	Specific training for staff	Agent	25	28 ⁹	112	Need to train staff directly involved in the field
32)	Intermediate level training for staff	Agents	20	22 ¹⁰	110	Idem
33)	High level training	Officer	13	9	69	Training sessions are phased
34)	International Symposia	Officers	10	2	20	No opportunity
35)	Granting of credit to logging cooperatives	--	--	0	0	The PAPs were adopted only in 2006 and their implementation started up in 2007. Loans were converted into resources for the purchase of logging equipment
36)	Supervision of candidates for animal traction	U	26	0	0	Need to introduce animal traction following the adoption of zoning
37)	Granting of credit for cassava and food crop production	Women	113	419	371	Need to accept all women wishing to develop activities in the groups
38)	Granting of credit to stockbreeders	U	30	112	373	Priority given to the raising of grass-cutters with a view to controlling poaching
39)	Granting of credit to beekeepers	U	220	349 ¹¹	159	Breakdown of the number of stockbreeders around the 3 stands. Lucrative activity that also protects natural resources
40)	Granting of credit to fishermen	U	50	0	0	Activity already taken into account by the PADPPA at national level
41)	Creation of credit association or groups	U	30	45 ¹²	150	Need to organize socio-professional groups into associations

⁴ 216 rice-growers, 112 grass-cutter breeders, 349 beekeepers, 139 women shea nut producers, 20 members of the cashew plantation rehabilitation technical committees, 115 seed growers

⁵ 112 Grass-cutter breeders

⁶ 419 women for the VSLW and 139 women shea nut producers, 32 women grass-cutter breeders, 10 seed growers and 3 beekeepers, and 150 women rice growers

⁷ 12 women's groups processing shea nut and 32 women's groups beneficiaries of the VSLW

⁸ 11 rice farmers and + 48 grass-cutter breeders in 2004, 35 grass-cutter breeders in 2005 and 33 members of CVC in 2006

⁹ Field workers receive customized training regularly to assist the beneficiaries of IGAs (22 ADL + 2 Coordinators + 4 branch managers)

¹⁰ At least 22 drivers of administrative vehicles trained and about forty forest officers receive training every year on reforestation techniques

¹¹ 125 beekeepers in 2004 and 229 in 2005

¹² 21 credit groups and 4 associations of groups of women producers of shea nut and 20 associations of beekeepers

	Activities	Unit	Est.	Actual	%	Justification of Difference/Remarks
42)	Construction of 1st and 2 nd category feeder roads	Km	1 171	162,7	25	BD launched for 162.7 km of feeder roads. Reduction of this objective given the insignificant forest surveillance works. As a result of the delays in the bidding document process, the construction of the feeder roads postponed to a second phase
43)	Construction of a culvert-type structure	U	13	11	75	11 small ponds built in the context of the rehabilitation of the feeder roads in the Agoua forest reserve in the MORO area
44)	Construction of culvert crossing	U	160	--	--	Activities taken into account in the construction of feeder roads postponed to the project's second phase
45)	Construction of lodging/office premises	U	9	6	75	6 office/lodging premises provisionally delivered; 3 office/lodging premises in the process of completion
46)	Construction of administrative buildings	U	4	2	75	2 administrative buildings completed and 2 in the process of completion
47)	Construction of accommodation	U	4	2	75	2 housing premises completed and 2 in the process of completion
48)	Construction of guest premises	U	4	2	75	2 guest premises completed and 2 are being finalized
49)	Construction of conference halls	U	1	1	100	Conference hall available in the project headquarters
50)	Construction of guest huts	U	3	2	75	2 guest huts completed and 1 in the process of completion
51)	Construction of project management offices	F	1	1	100	The offices of the fuel wood project phase 1 (PBF 1) have been transferred to the PAMF.
52)	Construction of ecological	U	1	1	100	Ecological Centre built, delivered and commissioned
53)	Construction of dispensaries	U	6	1	25	1 health centre completed and delivered provisionally; 5 in the process of completion
54)	Construction of schools	U	12	2	25	2 modules of 3 classrooms completed and delivered provisionally and put at the disposal of the beneficiaries; 10 being completed
55)	Construction of honey production units	U	4	2	75	2 honey production units completed and delivered provisionally and 2 in the process of completion. Procurement of honey production equipment
56)	Construction of stores for local economic operators	U	30	6	20	Construction of 4 stores/workshops and 2 warehouses completed and commissioned
57)	Drilling of boreholes	U	17	16	94	16 boreholes completed and delivered (including 13 manual and 3 electric operated pumps) provisionally, 1 tube well not positive
58)	Construction of ponds and small dams	U	5	0	0	Late adoption of grazing areas. Proposal for sites made by stockbreeders. Discussions ongoing with village chiefs on the title deeds of the sites in question prior to the pro-forma invoice for the said infrastructure
59)	Recruitment of national staff	Lump sum	F	F	100	93 staff as at 31 December 2003 89 staff between 1st January 2004 and 31 December 2006
60)	Recruitment of international experts (technical assistants)	h/ms	195,15 ¹³	194,233	99.53	175 p/m of international experts initially projected but increased after agreement to extend the date of project completion
61)	Recruitment of national experts	h/ms	106	106	100	All national staff have been recruited
62)	Conduct of audits	F	05	07	140	External audits of project accounts (2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007-1 st quarter 2008) 5 internal audits by the General Inspectorate of the Supervisory Ministry
63)	Installation of shea nut processing workshop	4	-	4	100	Activity not planned but implemented because raw materials were available and because of its impact on women

¹³ Initially, provision was made for 175 p/m of international expertise, but following the agreement to extend the project completion date, the capacity building and production development expert will stay on until March 2007, bringing international expertise services to 187.36 p/m.

Project Disbursements**Trend of ADF Loan Disbursements in UA million**

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
Estimated	1.73	2.01	2.41	2.31	2.08				10.54
Actual	0.21	0.42	1.32	2.69	1.44	3.69	0.54	0.11	10.42
% cumul. disbursed	2.01	5.96	18.47	44.02	57.68	92.69	97.80	98.81	98.81

Trend of the ABEDA Loan Disbursements in UA million

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
Estimated	3.24	0.80	0.71	0.77	0.03				5.55
Actual	-	-	0.03	0.93	0.10	0.92	0.54	0.47	2.99
% disbursed cumul.	-	-	0.45	17.15	18.99	35.59	45.33	53.86	53.86

Trend of the National Counterpart Fund Disbursements in UA million

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
Estimated	0.72	0.18	0.17	0.08	0.25				1.40
Actual	0.04	0.32	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.12	0.04	0.07	0.78
% cumul. disbursed	2.93	25.71	30.57	35.21	39.86	48.21	50.71	55.79	55.79

List of the Main Contracts Signed Goods

Contract Number	Provider	Description	Amount in CFAF	Procurement Method Estimated	Procurement Method Used
914	SOBEPAT	Provision of 25 motorcycles	26,250,000	CFEN	CFEN
1017	ELECTRO HALL	Micro-computer and other materials	43,944,749	CFEN	CFEN
1238	TECHNOCOM	Portable computers, software and network	52,020,590	CFEN	CFEN
1018	SONAEC	Photocopiers	21,306,100	CFEN	CFEN
1119	SONAEC	Dumper trucks and generator sets	112,560,000	CFEN	CFEN
1020	SOCAR	Pick-up, trucks motorbikes	254,175,000	CFEN	CFEN
1021	SOBEPAT	Toyota, land cruiser and Prado	99,750,000	CFEN	CFEN
81	SOCOREP	Radio equipment	224,009,295	CFEN	CFEN
82	SAVEN	Honey production equipment	346,736,000	CFEN	CFEN
430	ETS LES ARCHANGES	Various materials	16,104,000	CFEN	CFEN
429	QUI VIVRA VERRA	Various materials (package 2)	17,485,000	CFEN	CFEN
431	CIA	Various materials (package 3)	89,175,000	CFEN	CFEN
432	QUI VIVRA VERRA	Various materials (package 4)	21,684,300	CFEN	CFEN
The contract is being signed at the level of the Ministry of Finances (ABEDA funds)	QUI VIVRA VERRA	Provision of mobile saws and small forest logging materials	158,016,438	CFEN	CFEN

SERVICES

Contract Number	Provider	Description	Amount in CFAF	Planned Procurement Method	Actual Procurement Method
915	DFS	Technical assistance	1,951,876,552	Short List	Short List
Amendment to contract 915	DFS	Amendment to technical assistance	75,242,115	Short List	Short List
996	SAGEC	Staff recruitment, procedures manual and accounting software	16,500,000	Short List	Short List
1168	OKANLA AHANDA & ASSOCIES	Audit of accounts 2002	21,980,000	Short List	Short List
634	GAHOURI-BTP	Consulting Engineer	135,242,500	Short List	Short List
Amendment to contract 634	GAHOURI-BTP	Amendment consulting engineer	50,296,500	Short List	Short List
1576	MAPS	Aerial photos and orthophotoplans	111,475,000	Short List	Short List

Contract Number	Provider	Description	Amount in CFAF	Planned Procurement Method	Actual Procurement Method
174	OKANLA AHANDA & ASSOCIES	Audit of 2003 and 2004 accounts	17,495,000	Short List	Short List
82	OKANLA AHANDA & ASSOCIES	Audit of 2005 and 2006 accounts	13,270,000	Short List	Short List
Amendment to contract n 82	OKANLA AHANDA & ASSOCIES	Audit of 2007 accounts and 1st quarter 2008	7,000,000	Short List	Short List
37	GEF INTERNATIONAL	Midterm review	20,351,980	Short List	Short List

WORKS

Contract Number	Provider	Description	Amount in CFAF	Planned Procurement Method	Actual Procurement Method Used
231	CERAB-TP	Buildings (1st tranche)	199,308,232	CFEN	CFEN
232	CAAM	Buildings (1st tranche)	125,590,788	CFEN	CFEN
233	Afrique Inter	Buildings (1st tranche)	246,408,126	CFEN	CFEN
83	ETENOC-BTP	Buildings (2 nd tranche)	63,916,204	CFEN	CFEN
90	Trinity Company	Buildings (2 nd tranche)	236,803,045	CFEN	CFEN
88/2006	Pivot Bénin	Boreholes	30,576,000	CFEN	CFEN
89	Canal Eau	Boreholes	111,693,000	CFEN	CFEN
92	SICONEC	Construction of 4 honey production facilities (package 1)	35,744,602	CFEN	CFEN
88/2007	PIERRE ANGULAIRE	Construction of 4 honey production structures (package 2)	38,880,372	CFEN	CFEN

Performance Evaluation and Rating
Implementation Performance

Component Indicator	Rating (1 to 4)	Remark
1. Adherence to Time Schedule	2.5	The project's implementation fell slightly behind schedule: the project was to be implemented over a 5-year period, i.e. from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2005. Activities actually started up in January 2002 and the completion date was 31 June 2008 after three extensions of the last disbursement date (on 31/12/06, 31/12/07 and 30/06/08). The actual duration of project implementation was thus 6 years and 6 months (from 1st January 2002 to 30 June 2008), making a difference of a year and 6 months which can be justified by the time it took to establish the participatory approach adopted.
2. Adherence to Cost Schedule	2.5	The actual cost of project implementation was lower than the cost estimated at appraisal (or UA 14.26 million at completion against UA 17.56 million at appraisal). This difference is justifiable by the delays in the disbursement of ABEDA funds (disbursed to the tune of 54%) and the problems encountered in mobilizing the national counterpart fund (disbursed to the tune of 56%). ABEDA and the Benin Government did not honour their financial commitments.
3. Compliance with Covenants	2.5	All the conditions precedent to loan effectiveness were met within reasonable timeframes, with the exception of the appointment of the project manager which took place in December 2000, or 9 months after the date the loan was signed (March 2000).
4. Adequacy of Monitoring and Evaluation and Reporting	3	The activity programmes and annual budgets, the quarterly reports and annual project activity reports were prepared regularly and sent to the Bank. Conversely, the project's monitoring-evaluation mechanism was unsatisfactory because it was impossible to objectively determine the project's effects.
5. Satisfactory Operations	3	Apart from some activities not implemented because they were already taken into account by other projects, or because of the delay in the implementation of the PAPs, the project's physical implementation rate was 84%. The implementation rate for reforestation was higher than 100%.
Total	13.5/20	
Overall Assessment of Implementation Performance	2.7/4	Overall implementation performance was averagely satisfactory.

Performance of the Bank

Component Indicator	Rating (1 to 4)	Remarks
1. At Identification	4	Although the Bank did not take part in project identification, which is not necessarily its mission, the relevance and opportunity of the project are still real and meet the expectations of the grassroots populations.
2. At Preparation of Project	3.5	The Bank contributed greatly to the project's preparation phases through its involvement in the project's pre-formulation mission and in the funding of the feasibility study whose findings led to the project's appraisal.
3. At Appraisal	3	Some activities that had been planned in the appraisal report were cancelled because they had already been covered by other projects. The project took into account many activities that involved all sectors of rural development; it was therefore an integrated project and not a forest management project. Apart from these aspects, the specific objectives were in correlation with the actions described in each component. However, the appraisal report should have pointed out the need for a reference situation as of Year 1 of the project's implementation in order to monitor and evaluate performance indicators and measure the project impacts both on the protection of natural resources as on the economic benefits for the beneficiaries.
4. At Supervision	3.5	The Bank supervised the project regularly and organized 10 supervision missions. These missions made it possible to address problems that could have hindered project implementation. Appropriate measures were taken during these supervision missions to back the Project Management Unit in planning and implementing activities both from the standpoints of compliance with procedures and specific actions to undertake.
Total	14/16	
Overall Assessment of Bank Performance	3.5/4	The Bank's performance has been highly satisfactory

Project Outcomes

N°	Component Indicator	Ratings (1 to 4)	Remarks
1.	Relevance and Achievement of Objectives		
i)	Macro-economic Policy	4	The actions launched by the project are in line with the macro-economic objectives for poverty reduction and those of the Millennium Development Goals...
ii)	Sector Policy	4	The project is in accordance with the sector policy for the protection and sustainable management of the country's natural systems and in particular the protection of the forest ecosystem and biodiversity.
iii)	Physical Outputs (including production)	3	All forest management projections (preparation of management plans, enrichment of 28.000 ha of natural forests, 1500 ha of artificial stands and the rehabilitation of 600 ha of old cashew plantations) were fully implemented. 136 km of feeder roads were built out of a projected 1171 km. On the other hand, given the deadline for preparing and adopting the Participatory Management Plans, there were not implemented (test phase only). In addition, the construction of community infrastructure fell behind schedule.
iv)	Financial Component	2	The project's financial rate of return could not be illustrated at its completion since the activities implemented under the project which should have generated considerable income at full development were yet to reach optimum operation, and other activities initially planned at appraisal were not implemented. However, some activities generated considerable income (production and transportation of seedlings, establishment and maintenance of plantations, surveillance of the forest stands, lighting of general early fires, income-generating activities) and helped to improve somewhat the living conditions of the beneficiaries concerned by these activities. The project financial rate of return will depend on the forest logging measures and the actual implementation of the Participatory Management Plans for the forest stands.
v)	Poverty Reduction	2.5	Attainment of the poverty reduction objectives will depend on: i) the pursuit of the income-generating activities launched; ii) the implementation of the management plans especially the forest logging component; iii) the pursuit of pilot forest management activities (plant production, reforestation...).
vi)	Environment	4	Specific environmental protection measures were taken: surveillance of stands, lighting of early fires, suspension of hunting, limited poaching, strengthening of 125 village seed growers for plant production, reforestation, support to 33 Village Hunters' Fraternities.
vii)	Private Sector Development	4	The project sub-contracted most of its activities to private especially national service providers (suppliers, consulting engineering firms and contractors).
2.	Institution Building		
i)	Institutional Framework	4	Establishment of a joint management institutional framework centred on the decentralization organs. However, for the smooth running of this institutional framework it must be monitored. The Technical Management Unit put in place under the responsibility of the General Management of Forest and Natural Resources will pursue activities after project completion. Nonetheless, the necessary means will have to be mobilized and put at the disposal of the said Unit
ii)	Financial and Management Information Systems including Audit System	3.5	From project start-up up until 1st quarter 2008, the year of the project completion, external audits of accounts and finance were conducted regularly.
iii)	Transfer of Technology	4	The high number of private service providers and the beneficiaries who took part in the project's physical implementation brought about a transfer of technology from the project to them. The Management Plans are a national reference model on a pilot basis.
iv)	Staffing by Qualified Persons	4	It was notice that the PAMF staff members and those of other service providers who implemented the project were satisfactorily qualified.
3.	Sustainability		
i)	Continued Borrower Commitment	3	The Benin side showed motivation and resolve to preserve the project's achievements. The concrete acts that consolidate this political will are: the establishment of the Technical Management Unit (1 Unit/M, 1 branch manager and 8 Management Unit Heads) that ensure with what means they had on the surveillance of the stands, the pursuit of income-generating activities and the supervision of the local communities through the various CVDDs and CEGRN. In addition, the Benin Government allocated CFAF 75 million for 2008 to continue the activities and budgeted CFAF 200 million for 2009.
ii)	Environmental Policy	1	This will depend on the measures aimed at protecting the environment to be taken within the framework of the advisory/support strategy to be applied (environmental monitoring, reforestation, bank protection, treatment of borrow areas).
iii)	Institutional Framework	3.5	Establishment of a 3-tier joint management institutional framework (village, commune and inter-forest) centred on the decentralization organs allow for greater accountability of the grassroots populations. This institutional framework must be strengthened and energized to be more operational and sustainable

iv)	Technical Viability and Staffing	3	The General Directorate of Forests and Natural Resources which took over from the project after its implementation phase has set up a Technical Management Unit to preserve the project's achievements. The administrative and socio-community infrastructure completed and delivered were transferred to the appropriate structures (DGFRN, Communes). Those that have not yet been completed must be completed and transferred so as to meet the expectations of the populations. The technical monitoring and maintenance databases that were prepared for this infrastructure should enable a better management of the latter. ABEDA, providing the funds for the infrastructure agreed to postpone the closing date of its financing to September 2010.
v)	Financial Viability including the Cost Recovery System	2	The participatory Management plans (PAP) prepared, adopted and endorsed made provisions for levies to be paid by each user of the forest reserves. These charges will help to cover part of the recurrent management charges. Concerning the socio-economic infrastructure (manual boreholes) management committees were set up to take care of their maintenance. The project's financial viability was also dependent on the implementation of the PAPs, especially forest logging through timber sales.
vi)	Economic Viability	2	Although small and unquantifiable, the project's economic impacts include in particular: (i) the production and sale of forest plants for non-project structures; (ii) the production and marketing of honey; (iii) higher incomes for women through the VSLW and marketing of shea butter; (iv) creation of jobs during project implementation and consequently a decrease in the exodus of youths to Nigeria, and better incomes for providers of such services as reforestation and forest surveillance; (v) opening up some villages thanks to the access roads developed and thus to lower transport cost. The economic rate of return would be 19% if all activities had been implemented, but only 8% if account is taken of the incomes from activities implemented during project implementation.
vii)	Environmental Viability	3.5	Reforestation with local species, forest surveillance against logging and poaching, lighting of early fires, migratory herding control and the sensitisation campaigns will help to protect the environment and regenerate the natural resources.
viii)	Operation and Maintenance Facilitation (availability of recurrent funding, foreign exchange, spare parts, workshop facilities, etc.)	3	The Government of Benin already earmarked CFAF 75 millions in 2008 and intends to budget CFAF 200 in 2009 for the partial maintenance of the plantations, the procurement of spare parts and for repairing vehicles. The various beneficiaries will be responsible for running the shea butter processing workshops and for the maintenance of the manual pumps.
4.	Economic Rate of Return	1	Since the PAPs have not yet been implemented and the IGAs have yet to reach full development, it is impossible to determine the economic rate of return at project completion.
	Total	61/80	
Overall Assessment of Outcomes		3/4	The performance of outcomes has been judged satisfactory.

Matrix of Recommendations and Follow-up Measures

MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNT / RECOMMENDATIONS	FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS	RESPONSABILITY
<i>Formulation and Project Rationale</i>	The project is in keeping with the Government's poverty reduction and food security objectives. It is also in line with the Bank's CSP. However, the project takes into account numerous activities that made it complex to implement. The Project Management Unit found itself managing activities that were not within its remit (stockbreeding, agriculture, credit, constructions, etc.)	Reduce project activities, entrust implementation of some activities to specialized structures	ADB/Project Management Unit
<i>Compliance with loan conditions and covenants</i>	The Borrower complied with the loan conditions and covenants even though that relative to the appointment of the project manager fell well behind schedule. This was attendant on issues of a political nature.	As far as possible respect the deadlines for fulfilment of the conditions/covenants	Government
<i>Performance Evaluation and Outcome of Project</i>	Although in terms of physical outputs the project was satisfactory (some activities did better than planned), overall performance evaluation was rated poorly 2.7 out of 4. The timeframe required for the introduction of the participatory process made it impossible to implement the PAPs. Similarly, the IGAs did not reach the development phase. The financial and economic rate of return was therefore low: in reality 8%, but 19% if all activities had been implemented).	Implementation of the PAPs, study of the industries in view of their profitability, adequate monitoring-evaluation system	Government/ADB
<i>Sustainability</i>	The project's long-term sustainability depends on the implementation of the PAPs, a better running of the participatory institutional framework set up, adequate financial and human means to make the Technical Management Unit more efficient. Actions have been undertaken or are planned to ensure the sustainability of the outputs in the short-term, in particular: allocation by the Government of Benin of a minimum of resources for partial maintenance	Implementation of Participatory Management Plans: arrange for the financing of a second phase of the project	Government/ADB

MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	LESSONS LEARNT / RECOMMENDATIONS	FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS	RESPONSABILITY
	<p>of the plantations, procurement of spare parts and vehicle repair (2008 and 2009), beneficiary responsibility for running the shea butter processing workshops and maintaining the manually-operated boreholes, a degree of self-sufficiency of the women beneficiaries of the Micro-credit, payment of dues by each user of the forest reserve to cover part of the recurrent project charges, establishment of management committees maintain the socio-economic infrastructure.</p>		

Sources of Information

- 9.4 PAMF Appraisal Report
- 9.5 Borrower Completion Report
- 9.6 Midterm Review Report
- 9.7 *Aide mémoires* ADB Supervision Missions
- 9.8 Annual Activity Reports (2002-2007)
- 9.9 Report of the Socio-economic Impact Assessment
- 9.10 Financial Statement Audit Reports
- 9.11 Environmental Monitoring Report