

C.8. Afroalpine Ecosystem Conservation Project, Ethiopia

Project Area: Afroalpine highlands of northern Ethiopia, in North Shoa, North Wollo, South Wollo and Gondar. Communal lands under overall jurisdiction of Amhara Regional Government

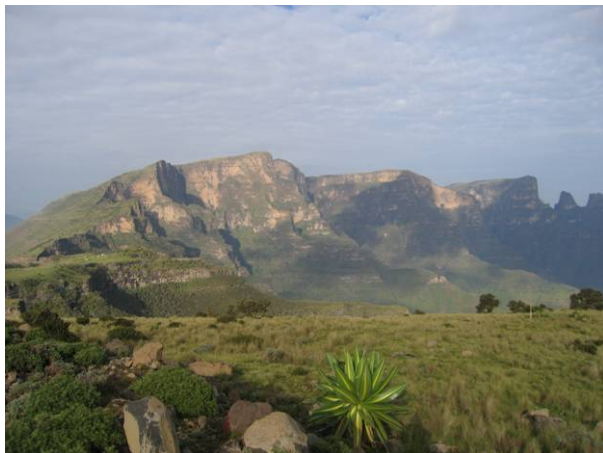
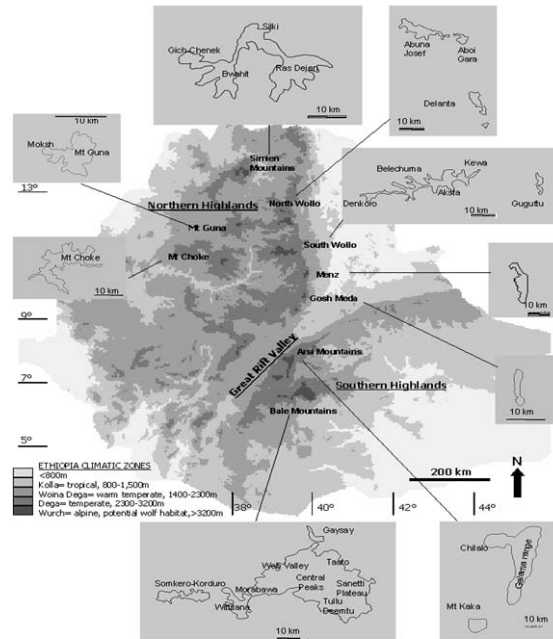
Status: No formal recognition at present in any area, but the Guassa Area in North Shoa is managed by a community association, with formal bye-laws.

Geographical Location:

North of rift valley in Ethiopia, covering all land over 3500m *asl*

Area: ~1500 km² Afroalpine *i.e.* 10% of global habitat

Project Partners: Amhara Regional Authorities, Simien National Park Authority, Guassa User Committee, Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme



Description:

The area encompasses afroalpine grasslands (Ethiopian montane moorlands ecoregion), including Giant Erica forests, alpine meadows and montane escarpments. Steep sided valleys and plateau areas predominate. All areas are important watersheds and water catchment areas for major river systems, including the Blue Nile and Awash Rivers.

Justification in terms of FZS Global Strategy:

FZS Priority Biome: Montane

Globally threatened and rare species:

Ethiopian wolf, Gelada baboon, Walia Ibex, Ankober Serin

Endemicity: High levels in mammals, birds

International Recognition

Eastern Afrotropical Biodiversity Hotspot (Conservation International)

UNESCO World Heritage Site (Simien Mountains)

Endemic Bird Area (Birdlife International)

Class 1 Conservation Intervention Priority (High biodiversity and high threat) WWF.



Strong tradition of community based natural resource use (Guassa, Menz). No other NGOs are involved in the areas, although the Austrian Government has been assisting the development of the Simien Mountains National Park

History of Project:

FZS has supported conservation activities in Ethiopia intermittently for over 30 years, but was reinstated in 2002, through this project. Initially the project, run through the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme, focussed on keystone species monitoring and threat mitigation, including that from canid diseases, for direct protection of the endangered Ethiopian wolf. However, habitat protection gradually took on a larger portion of the work and building on efforts to reinstate an indigenous system of common property resource management in the Guassa area of Menz, FZS took over and managed the team directly in 2005, and changed the emphasis of the project towards supporting community based natural resource use.



Project Goal:

To improve the conservation status of the Afroalpine ecosystem of Amhara National Regional State of Ethiopia through the active participation of adjacent communities.



Project logframe 2005-2010:

FZS-Africa Objective 1: Protected area operations.

No activities

FZS-Africa Objective 2: Policies, plans and awareness

FZS Outputs	AECF Activities
2.1. A legal framework and legislation for the protection of afroalpine areas developed	i. Design legislation, by lawyers and environmental experts through a participatory approach and a series of workshops and meetings ii. Preparation of bylaws by communities living around afroalpine ranges for the protection and sustainable use of natural resources iii. Field trips and workshops for communities living adjacent to these areas to share experiences iv. Legislation submitted to regional authorities and advocacy provided for legislation approval

2.2 Conservation advocacy carried out	i. Visits to regional and district development offices to check for submission of development plans. Activities developed accordingly
2.3 Public awareness activities conducted	i. Identify environmental education needs and priority areas in and around afroalpine ranges ii. Develop environmental education programmes with other stakeholders, including schools, peasant associations and technical training schools, non-governmental organisations iii. Production and distribution of environmental education materials to school children and communities at large iv. Dissemination of environmental education through mass media to outreach information to the general public v. KAP (Knowledge, attitudes and practices) surveys of local community attitudes to afroalpine habitat, flagship species and conservation in new project areas
2.5 Site-specific participative planning supported	i. Finalise General Management plan for Guassa, Menz ii. Facilitate and support fully participative management plans for Abune Yoseph and Denkoro areas and seek approval from Local, district and regional authorities, building on activities in 3.1

FZS-Africa Objective 3: Community Conservation

FZS Outputs	AECP Activities
3.1 Support for developing policy and procedures for community based natural resource management (CBNRM)	i. Visits of communities in Abune Yoseph and Belechuma to Guassa to learn from the experience of Guassa in community-based natural resource used and conservation, regulation of resource use and devising and enforcing community conservation bylaws
3.2 Natural resource use and needs understood and community management plans development	i. Identify key stakeholders in Abune Yoseph and Denkoro areas and how communities are structured in terms of afroalpine resource use ii. Develop a database of resource use information in afroalpine areas, particularly Guassa, Abune Yoseph and Denkoro, identify exceptional resources in the area that need maximum protection and quantify resource off-take by the community and assess sustainability iii. Conduct a series of participatory workshops in both Abune Yoseph and Belechuma areas for all stakeholders to develop a strategic action plan for their area iv. Prepare draft conservation action plans, disseminate to stakeholders and incorporate feedback received v. Facilitate and support fully participative management plans for Abune Yoseph and Denkoro areas and seek approval from local, district and regional authorities, building on activities in 3.1 vi. Evaluate the effectiveness of community-based conservation in terms of ecosystem health and meeting the need of communities
3.3. Target communities supported in establishing CBNRM institutions	i. Meet regularly with the Guassa users committee to identify areas where support is required in re-establishing and embedding indigenous CBNRM system. Activities developed accordingly ii. Facilitate formation of natural resource user groups to represent community stakeholders in Abune Yoseph and Denkoro

3.4 Community-based patrolling and monitoring systems developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Training provided to community scouts in Guassa in patrolling, legislation and bylaw implementation, user rights and conflict resolution ii. Workshop for police and local judiciary to explore legislation and form consistent and cohesive response to bylaw infringements iii. Simple community monitoring system devised, training provided on data use and storage and feedback to user committees to set resource use levels
3.5 Conservation-compatible development activities supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Tree nursery re-established, in collaboration with communities, in target areas to mitigate natural resource extraction ii. Fruit tree nursery and demonstration plots established iii. Investigate appropriateness of methods of agriculture improvement
3.6 Costs and benefits to communities from wildlife better understood and mitigated/enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Study of conflict between gelada baboons and agriculture supported in Simien Mountains ii. Ethiopian wolf-livestock conflict investigated and mitigated iii. Meetings with local communities to explain the endangered status of rare and endemic species like the Ethiopian wolves and gelada baboons and how to avoid livestock and crop losses

FZS-Africa Objective 4: Knowledge

FZS Outputs	AECP Activities
4.1 Strategic ecosystem monitoring plans developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Simple community-based monitoring scheme devised in order to assess effect of resource use on ecosystem health and thus determine use levels.
4.2 Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Key wildlife populations monitored, particularly the Ethiopian wolf, gelada baboon and rodents in existing target areas ii. Field surveys carried out to identify extent and quality of afroalpine habitat in Mt Choke (Gojjam) and Gishe-Rabel (North Shoa), including the extent of human use, biodiversity inventories, rodent density, and attitudes of the local communities to afroalpine habitat and wildlife.
4.3 GIS-based monitoring tools developed for adaptive management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Extent and quality of afroalpine habitat in Amahara Region assessed and mapped ii. Existing data collated and entered into GIS database with layering system for habitats, land use, key resources, human impacts etc. iii. Aerial photos and, if possible, satellite images obtained and analysed for changes in land use extent, location and type.
4.4 Applied research on priority issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Resource use (e.g. grass cutting, livestock density, firewood collection) monitored in target areas ii. Extent of human-wildlife conflict between Ethiopian wolves and gelada baboons determined
4.7 Veterinary research and monitoring supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Research on cost-effectiveness of oral and parenteral vaccination of dogs and Ethiopian wolves facilitated
4.8 Information dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Scientific and conference papers published ii. Conferences attended

FZS-Africa Objective 5: Sustainable financing

FZS Outputs	AECP Activities
5.2 Technical assistance for revenue generation	i. Development of ecotourism initiatives in Guassa-Menz and Abune Yoseph facilitated and supported
5.4 Technical support for funding applications	i.. Additional financing for the implementation of the Guassa-Menz area General Management Plan procured

FZS-Africa Objective 6: Special programmes

FZS Outputs	AECP Activities
6.3 Impact of infectious diseases	i. Incidence of rabies in domestic dogs around selected priority areas (Guassa-Menz, North Wollo South Wollo and Simien Mts) reduced through dog vaccination for Ethiopian wolf protection ii. Dog population dynamics monitored in target areas
6.6 Tourism development	i. Information guidebook and maps will be produced for selected eco-tourism sites ii. Development of eco-tourism facilitated such as camp site development iii. Tourist guide training in the interpretation and community-based tourist activity for local guides iv. Partnerships facilitated between local communities and private stakeholders interested in developing community-based tourism in Abune Yoseph and Guassa-Menz v. Private partners sought to help develop capacity of local communities in provision of tourism services

FZS-Africa Objective 7: Human resources

FZS Outputs	AECP Activities
7.1 Short and long-term training opportunities	i. Continuation of BSc sandwich course for field assistants Wondo Genet Collage of Forestry ii. Regional staff trained supported at international Diploma and MSc courses in natural resource management
7.2 <i>In situ</i> training opportunities	i. Training of project staff in distance sampling techniques, resource mapping and wildlife monitoring ii. Training for Woreda and Regional natural resource conservation experts in environmental conservation, community-based conservation and wildlife population surveys and monitoring