

Part 2:
Boreal Forest Conservation and Management in Pechoro-Ilych Region,
Komi Republic
(RU 0007)

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Boreal Forest Conservation and Management in Pechoro-Ilych Region, Komi Republik

1. The Sub-project: Pechoro-Ilych Reserve (Securing Zapovednik)

1.1 General Background on Policy, Institutional and Legal Aspects

1.1.1 General Background

The Russian Conservation Strategy

The Russian Federation has long traditions in conservation. They are related both to protected areas and to forest protection. Protected areas are legitimised by the Law on Protected Territories from December 1995. Forest protection is managed through the Forest Code of December, 1997. The main agency responsible for the state conservation policy is the State Environmental Protection Committee. Forests are governed by the Federal Forest Service. Both agencies have their federal office in Moscow and regional departments in the regions.

Initially, the conservation system in Russia was built on the system of zapovedniks. National parks appeared much later (1983) and are based on experience from abroad. In 1988 there were 68 zapovedniks in Russia with the area of 18,3 thousand hectares. Then, the Russian Federation started to increase protected areas before future privatization. At present, there are 99 zapovedniks and 34 national parks. Their total area is about 2% of all Russian territory (1.5% zapovedniks and 0.5% national parks). 36 new zapovedniks were created at that period, and another 20 increased their territory. Among zapovedniks, 21 have a status of biosphere reserve. 15% of the Komi territory are protected areas of different types.

The State Environmental Protection Committee and the Federal Forest Service are both financed through the State budget. However, conservation activities are financed also through the Federal Programme "On State support of state zapovedniks and national parks up to 2000". Another source of federal financing is the Federal Environmental Fund. At present around 70% of all zapovedniks' and national parks' budgets is covered from such sources. In 1998, the support from the federal program was reduced substantially. All protected areas will get all together around 6 million USD.

Regional authorities have their own system of protected areas. They support them from their regional budgets. At the same time, regions started to support federal protected areas. There is also some assistance from the international community.

The view of WWF Russia

WWF Russia has the intention of elaborating a new strategy for conservation. It should include fixed real annual support from the state budget to guarantee at least some stability for planning purposes, development of management plans, etc. Prerequisites for the elaboration of a new strategy are based on the regional WWF conservation projects.

1.1.2 Legal and Policy Framework for Conservation and Protected Areas

The legal background of conservation in Russia is determined by the Federal Law “On the protected Territories” (Further Law) of March 14, 1995. It is based on the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Main Law), related Acts of the Federal Level (Forest Code, Law of the Wild Life Protection, Water Code, etc.) and Acts of the Regions (Subjects of Federation). The Law stipulates seven different types of protected areas in Article 2. They all are different in the level of protection and also have different functions. They are:

- State natural reserves or zapovedniks, including biosphere zapovedniks;
- National parks;
- Nature parks;
- State natural zakazniks;
- Natural monuments;
- Dendrology parks and botanical gardens;
- Recreational areas.

All levels of state authorities could determine by their decisions other types of protected territories.

Protected areas could have federal, regional or local status. This defines the basic difference in the level of protection in Russia.

1.1.2.1 Zapovedniks

Zapovedniks have the highest protection status. Their protection is so called “absolute”. All resources of zapovedniks are withdrawn from economic activity, and it is prohibited by Law to influence natural development.

Article 6 of the Law especially prohibits the changing of borders of zapovedniks.

Article 7 defines the main goals of zapovedniks:

- to protect natural areas in order to conserve biodiversity and to maintain protected objects in natural state;
- to do research;
- to do ecological monitoring;
- ecological education;
- to participate in state ecological examination of projects;
- to facilitate training for professionals in conservation.

The functions of zapovedniks are related to their goals. At the same time, there are some other functions related to the Russian specific approach to conservation (Art. 9):

- to ensure sanitary and fire protection;
- to prevent the possibility of natural catastrophes dangerous to human beings and their settlements.

Each zapovednik should have a special area around it with some specific protection status.

Article 10 especially is devoted to biosphere zapovednik. Such areas are included in the international system of biosphere reserves to ensure global monitoring of biosphere. Biosphere zapovedniks could be supplemented by biosphere polygons (buffer zones) to reduce the negative impact on zapovednik from economic activity on the surrounding territories.

1.1.2.2 National Parks

National parks also have federal status. However, their protection level is lower than that of zapovedniks. National parks can be located on lands with different ownership (federal, regional, municipal). Article 12 of the Law defines the main goals of national parks as protection, ecological education; recreational, monitoring, rehabilitation and raising of public awareness. That is why Article 5 of the Law determines zoning criteria for the national park land. National parks can have the following zones:

- highly protected with any recreation prohibited;
- protected with limited attendance;
- zone for ecological tourism;
- recreational zone;
- service areas;
- economic area with limited economic activity necessary to fulfill the functions of a national park.

All commercial activities outside of the goals of the national park are prohibited.

All other protected territories have much lower protection status.

1.1.2.3 Particularities of the Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik

The government of Komi expressed its concern about the situation of pristine forests in Komi Republic. After half a year of WWF lobbying, a social Order of the Governor "About Republican Earmarked Program" was issued to support the Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik (December 27, 1996). The same Order established the buffer zone for the Zapovednik. Due to the unclear legal status of the buffer zone, it was proposed to transfer all forests in the buffer zone to class 1 forests. This proposal was not supported at the federal level. Then the Governor issued a special order to treat all forests of class 3 within the buffer zone as class 1 forests. The status of the buffer zone was established by the same order. The main function of the buffer zone is to protect the Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik. At the same time some limited economic activity is allowed in the buffer zone. The Zapovednik was given rights to control the operation of the buffer zone. However, the order was not properly enforced and was not implemented due to inter-institutional conflicts.

1.1.3 Institutional Framework for Conservation and Protected Areas

1.1.3.1 General Aspects

At present almost all zapovedniks are under the supervision of the State Environmental Committee of the Russian Federation. It incorporates a special Department of Protected Areas that supervises all zapovedniks and appoints directors of zapovedniks, and also defines their organizing structure. Each zapovednik has its own status which is based on the Law and Status of the State Zapovedniks in the Russian Federation of December 18, 1991. Directors of zapovedniks are usually under the direct supervision of federal authorities.

In summer 1997, the Department of Protected Areas arranged a seminar on eco-tourism within protected areas. Its main issue was the discussion of possibilities and constraints of eco-tourism and of the possibility of using USA National Parks experience. A decision in favor of eco-tourism was made. It was decided to use the experience of the USA National Park and develop tourism under the supervision of the Department of Protected Areas.

Complementary remark of the evaluation team leader: It is underlined that there exists a written summary of that seminar. However, to our knowledge the facts of this seminar are not known in Komi. Furthermore, although the evaluation team also discussed this issue with the competent authorities, such facts were not mentioned at all, and only the conservative position of no-access to eco-tourists was reiterated.

National parks are mainly under the supervision of the Federal Forest Service. They have their own approach to conservation based on the results of the regular inventories of the forest fund. The Federal Forest Service has its regional departments that have under them national parks as separate forest units. National parks are under the direct supervision of the regional departments of the Federal Forest Service. The Directors of the National Parks are appointed by the Federal Forest Service. It also approves the status of the National Park. Its main activity is based on the Forest Code of the Russian Federation (1997). That is why they are mainly concerned about protection of forests within the national parks. All the forests are broken down into three classes:

- the first with mainly ecological importance,
- the second with limited ecological importance,
- the third where commercial wood-cutting is permitted.

Within each group some areas (watersheds, hills, areas of endangered species, etc.) could be selected with complete prohibition or additional constraints on commercial cutting.

Both, zapovedniks and national parks, could be created after the decision of the Government of Russia, supported by regional authorities.

Borders of national parks could be changed in principle with the change of ownership structure for the land in question. They could be also corrected, if changes are not more than 1% of the initial territory.

1.1.3.2 Particularities of Pechoro-Ilych

At present 15% of the Komi territory are protected areas. The major part of them belongs to the complex of:

- the National Park Yugyd Va, governing by the Regional Department of Federal Forest Service with strong influence from the Komi Government;
- the Zapovednik Pechoro-Ilych, governed by the State Environmental Committee, that is in federal property and protected by Law;
- the buffer zone of the Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik, with no clear legal status governed by one forest unit under the supervision of the Regional Department of Federal Forest Service. Possible influence of Komi Government on that territory could be rather high.

The WWF project deals only with the last two parts of that complex. This creates enormous difficulties in developing a unified conservation policy in the area. As it became clear from discussions, only the Zapovednik really has as its goal the protection of pristine forests as a complex including all its components. The neighbouring National Park had some serious problems because regional authorities were intending to change its borders. It was prohibited by Law (it is only possible to correct frontiers by 1% as maximum). Greenpeace, together with the local NGO "Save Pechora River", organised a strong campaign against it. A state ecological examination issued a negative decision on this proposal. The Federal Forest Service agreed with this decision. However, the regional authorities did not give up and still have plans under discussion to change frontiers.

The buffer zone is under supervision of the local Forest Unit. After the proposal of WWF, they agreed to elaborate a development plan for the buffer zone with the main stress on conserva-

tion, as economic activity is really at a very low level there. However, forest engineers have small experience in conservation. They do not want to involve the Zapovednik in their planning work. Potentially there is a serious threat of any kind of violation within the buffer zone as its protection status is at a very low level.

WWF did not succeed in influencing the very complicated inter-institutional relations around the Zapovednik and its buffer zone. They followed the existing situation and did not facilitate inter-institutional co-operation. Participatory planning was not developed at all, and participation of local population is still at almost zero level as it had been historically. Potentially, there is a huge place for co-operation with the involvement of all the experience of Center-Zapovednik and the creation of a new NGO to facilitate protection of the entire complex.

1.1.4 Financial Issues for Protected Areas

1.1.4.1 General Aspects

The issue of financing is one of the toughest for protected territories. Being financed mainly from budgets of all levels, there is no understanding of efficient management and operation, there were incentives for development, for raising public awareness, or getting the support of the local population. At present each of them has its own approach how to survive in difficult times. To our mind federal finances are and will in the future play an important role for zapovedniks and the role of the federal level should not be underestimated. Komi is a recipient region. It gets transfers from the federal budget. Sometimes the region even helps federal protected territories. However, they work under budget constraints. In other words, they are somehow insured by the federal budget. They could easily lose interest in protected areas if they are on their own. Moreover, they could decide to sell protected areas or their resources.

The Law defines other than state sources of finances for the zapovedniks (Article 11). They include income from scientific, educational and publishing activities, compensation of damage to the ecosystem from any corporation, voluntary support, expropriation of equipment used for poaching. Article 20 fixes financial sources for national parks. They are different in terms of the possibility of using them for recreation.

For the national parks, financing from other sources (tourism, penalties, tending) plays an important role (around 25 % of all costs).

In general, foreign assistance plays a substantial role in the financing of zapovedniks. Foreign grants covered 4.6% of their budget in 1997.

1.1.4.2 Particularities of the Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik

At present, the Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik is financed from the federal budget by 47%, by about 38% from regional budget and regional environmental fund and by 15% from WWF. There are increasing problems with federal financing. Its share is reducing each year. The regional support has been very stable so far. WWF Komi covered all missing items from the Zapovednik budget. However, no clear development plan was elaborated. The Zapovednik presented to the federal level a request for funds for 400 thousand USD. They planned their expenses based only on their experience. At present, the Zapovednik is financed for 107 thousand USD. No restructuring plans were elaborated and situation is very unstable now.

The buffer zone is in the same situation. So far it was financed from the forest unit budget. There is no money for conservation there. The future management plan for the buffer zone

does not include an estimation of costs and benefits. This is a clear problem for WWF in future if they want to include the complex in the sphere of the project interests.

Additional WWF assistance makes the situation even more complicated. Being rational in 1994-1995 during "survival period", it could not be the same during the transfer to efficient financial management. Having problems with the current staff of the Zapovednik, it is unclear how WWF office is going to cope with this problem.

1.1.5 Issues and constraints

The legal framework shows some new possibilities, but it is not really reform oriented (in the fields of participation, management plan, other sources of financing). Some legal contradiction concerning the differentiation between different authority level gives more "de facto" stability to zapovedniks, and does not hinder financial contributions from Komi level.

Previously Zapovedniks were completely closed (Article 9, where human influence is completely prohibited). The Law of 1995 allows only some opening as ecological education (Article 7). Based on Article 11, except from federal budget, some other sources of income are allowed. The Seminar on eco-tourism (1997, Department of Protected Areas of State Committee on Environmental Protection) is very important to promote that type of activity. With regard to Article 7 of the Law, ecological education and eco-tourism on a limited scale are not prohibited. Management plans are not mentioned as a tool in the Law on Zapovedniks, but are not prohibited.

Complementary remark of the evaluation team leader: It is underlined that according to the interviewees, the Zapovednik does not feel encouraged to define long-term goals and to elaborate a management plan as long as the situation of its financial resources is not clear. It also seems that some of the discussions held on federal level concerning major issues (management plans and eco-tourism) are not sufficiently known at the level of the Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik. For the team it is difficult to assess how far the authorities of the Zapovednik take the not clearly defined issues of the general framework as a pretext for its passive attitude.

The economic justification of the support for zapovedniks is not clear, and additional costs for the zapovedniks were not analysed. This could create new problems in future. The WWF project did not pay enough attention to the economic issues.

The legal status of the buffer zone is not clear; the proposal of change of category of status 3 to 1 of buffer zone has been refused by federal level; even class 1 forest does not exclude commercial cut named by responsible forest unit tending in this case; future management plan for buffer zone does not include estimation of costs and benefits from its development. This is a clear problem for WWF in future if they include the complex zapovednik buffer zone into the sphere of the project interests.

The Zapovednik Pechoro-Ilych is supposed to be included in the international network with obligations for monitoring and possibility of organising special sites for experiments for sustainable management of natural resources outside the protected area.

1.1.5 Conclusions

The WWF project had no real strategy in the legal sphere, and was isolated from activities in Moscow. However, we should take into account serious problems with the WWF-Komi office establishment.

Both WWF offices in Moscow and Komi should co-operate more closely to substantially contribute to the creation of a new concept of conservation in Russia.

The federal status of zapovedniks gives them a strong legal basis to cope with possible threats and the WWF project should not speed up regionalization too much in the current situation, but keep it as a long-term objective. A possible regional protection status for zapovedniks as well as the the status of national park is not sufficient under current conditions.

WWF-Komi should use all possible experience of WWF-Moscow with regard to new approaches to eco-tourism and ecological education.

The concept of the management plan should be explained to zapovednik staff and some additional work should be done urgently to arrange training and follow-up for a working group on the management plan. Also some basic features of cost-benefit approach and project analysis should be presented.

Further efforts should be made to establish some protection status for the buffer zone, and for co-operation with local people, another NGO is needed. With no clear protection status, no management plan for the buffer zone will be implemented.

Various institutions should be involved on the horizontal level to break down the isolation of zapovednik staff, to incorporate them into the movement of zapovedniks and international co-operation, with the clear view of possible co-financing of all activities (ROLL grants from US AID, GEF, other); it is necessary to make possibilities more explicit and try further discussions.

1.2 Technical Aspects

1.2.1 Targets

The targets for this project component as defined in WWF's 1995 project proposal to SDC are summarized in the following table 1. Targets are expressed as 'expected results' and are translated into activities which originate from the original log-frame plan of the 'Boreal Conservation and Management' project with subsequent refinements.

The Evaluation Team decided to provide an arbitrary numerical rating of achievements for each target in order to facilitate an overall assessment of the status of the project. The summary rating schedule is meant to serve as a very general reference guide to the reader of this report. The rating is arbitrary, based on the professional judgement of the evaluators. It therefore reflects an 'educated guess'.

Table 1 Targets and level of achievement for Pechoro-Ilych Reserve

Objective/Goals/Activity	Rating of Achievement *1	Probability to achieve within given time frame
Securing Pechoro-Ilych Reserve		
assure sustainable financing of operational costs	2	2
improve transport and communication	4	5
improve working condition of staff and mobility	4	4
secure long-term monitoring data for the Reserve	3	5
elaborate plan for the Reserve	n. e.	n. e.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate current staff structure • prepare long-term plan for staff structure • develop plan for infrastructure development 		
implement plan	n. e.	n. e.
train Reserve staff to meet future demands		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • train management personnel • enhance patrolling system • training for elaboration of fund raising proposals • train for fire fighting abroad • familiarize staff with new fire management policy • train staff in tourist management 	2 2 4 1 2 1	2 2 4 4 3 1
assess value of buffer zone and secure its status	1	2
elaborate management plan for buffer zone	1	1
survey and inventory pristine forests in support zone	1	1
evaluate selected forests	1	1
prepare proposals for protection of selected forests	1	1
secure selected pristine forests around the Reserve	1	1
clarify status of buffer zone	1	2
elaborate regulations for tourism in buffer zone	n. e.	n. e.
elaborate proposals for buffer zone	1	1
develop an eco-tourism plan for the buffer zone	5	5
assess possibilities to create endowment fund	n. e.	n. e.
implement environmental education of local societies*2		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop awareness campaign for local population • implement awareness campaign on sustainable forestry • 'educate' local society about value of Zapovednik 	n. e. n. e.	n. e.

Explanations:

- *1 rating from 0-5 (1=low to 5=fully achieved)
- n.e.: not evaluated / unknown
- *2 and *3: see chapter 3 (this part 2)

1.2.2 Achievements

a) Improvement of working conditions of Reserve staff. According to WWF's project proposal for the Pechoro-Ilych Reserve (1995), the offer of assistance was prompted by the rapidly deteriorating staff morale and dwindling staff dedication to the management of the Reserve, caused by the growing and chronic shortage of operational funds which threatened the ecological integrity of the Reserve.

WWF's first priority therefore aimed at the provision of funds for equipment needed to implement the protection program for the Reserve (i.e. boats, vehicles, uniforms, communication equipment etc.). This project component has been well received by the Reserve's staff resulting in a noticeable improvement in staff morale and work effectiveness.

b) Inter-institutional cooperation. The project has facilitated inter-institutional cooperation between the Reserve and Research Institutions. Working relationships have been established with the Academy of Sciences and the Syktyvkar University. Three educational nature trails have been established under the auspices of the Syktyvkar Forest Research Institute for the benefit of forestry students foresters. The working relationship with local representatives of the State Forest Committee seems to be improving as a result of project activities.

c) Training. Limited training has been provided to some Reserve staff. The Chief ranger took part in a one month training course on management and protection implemented by WWF Moscow. 8 research scientists from the Reserve were trained in a 4 days seminar on the preparation of fund raising proposals under the umbrella of the Biodiversity Conservation Center in Moscow with positive results. One researcher received 2 months training in Moscow on environmental education and awareness building. Two more researchers have benefited from repeated educational visits to Syktyvkar where they received some training in the production of educational materials related to forest ecology and on interactions with the Forest Committee regarding buffer zone management.

d) Securing operational funds. An agreement has been signed between the Komi Government and the Reserve to provide US \$ 70,000/a to the Zapovednik for operational costs until year 2000 on a voluntary basis. It is unknown to whether the project may be credited for this achievement. It may be safely assumed, however, that WWF's presence and good relationship with the Komi Government has contributed to this success.

e) Academic training. Thanks to the good relationship with Syktyvkar's forest research community some training has been provided in the Reserve to local forestry students; other students are currently involved in graduate research activities in the Reserve.

f) Tourism. An 8 months feasibility study for tourism development in the buffer zone has been sponsored by the project.

1.2.3 Issues and Constraints

a) Lack of permanent project presence. It appears that the absence of a permanent project office in the Reserve may be one of the most critical shortcomings of the project and the principle reason for the relatively low level of achievements. Interviewed key persons from the Zapovednik unanimously agree that cultural changes amongst Reserve staff result directly from contacts with the project which currently are rather infrequent due to staff shortage by WWF, lack of funds and access problems (i.e. two days arduous journey to reach the Reserve's headquarters from Sytyvkar by train and road). There is little doubt that a permanent project office staffed with a skeleton but dedicated WWF team may well have reached the ambitious targets set for this project component in a timely fashion. This applies in particular to hands-on training in the areas of management, protection and enforcement, monitoring, environmental education and awareness building, cooperation with support zone communities, preparation of an integrated management plan and liaison activities with the support zone (i.e. buffer zone). There is little doubt, that progress will continue to be very slow in absence of a permanent representation on site.

b) Too short a time frame. The three and a half years time frame set for this project component was too short to achieve the specified goals and objectives. A five year period would have been more appropriate for the elaboration and implementation of a management plan for the Zapovednik and support zone, assuming timely availability of a well trained and equipped WWF team with full-time presence on-site.

c) Lack of a Management Plan. To date no attempt has been made to elaborate a management plan for the Reserve. From the discussions at the Reserve it becomes apparent that the Reserve staff has neither the know-how or the real desire to elaborate a management plan; the need for a well defined long term view (i.e. vision statement) is not appreciated, neither the need for participatory planning which includes the support zone and stakeholders such as the Forest Committee, mining industry, hunters and fishers, forest industry and users of minor forest products as well as NGOs and persons interested in the tourism sector.

In absence of a vision statement and a long-term operational plan with well defined functions and work-programs, the Reserve staff continues to drown in day-to-day activities without future perspectives. To date, the WWF project has not assisted the Reserve in any planning except for some activity programming in the educational sector. Although a log-frame planning sheet has been prepared internally by the WWF office, identified activities still have to be transformed into a priority action program. The basis, however, should be the proposed long-term operational plan with major focus on support zone development.

d) Operational budget for Reserve. At the onset of the project the Zapovednik seemed to have no operational budget. Consequently, the staff could not fulfil the most basic functions for protection and management. Meanwhile, an operational budget of US \$ 70,000 has been provided annually by the Republic of Komi until year 2000 on a voluntary basis. In other words, operational funds are still unsecured after year 2000.

No assistance has been provided to date by the project to the Reserve staff in re-designing the proposed operational budget which seems inflated, out of proportion and not adjusted to priorities and/or the current economic crisis of the country. The proposed operational budget for the current year was US \$ 400,000, excluding wages, which seems extraordinary high and difficult to justify. A superficial analysis indicates, that the budget plan of the Reserve lacks transparency and clarity. Expenses are neither itemized or sufficiently explained. Obscure lumpsums covering un-identified activities compound the confusion.

It is the believe of the Evaluation Team that the current annual operational budget of US \$ 80,000 could be sufficient to implement the basic programs of protection, management, moni-

toring, environmental awareness building and support zone activities if streamlined and adjusted to priority needs.

e) Wasteful focus on esoteric research. The historic focus on research in Zapovedniks is currently ill afforded, especially esoteric research. The optimum solution to costly research programs would be staff reduction and staff retrenchment respectively. The first does not seem socially acceptable, the latter very difficult to achieve due to the rigidly structured system and unwillingness of established personnel to re-train. The second best most logical choice is therefore to re-direct esoteric research into applied research and practical monitoring programs.

The project has assisted the Zapovednik to deal with this complex problem. Three of the 10 researchers are still undergoing training for retrenchment in the areas of environmental education and awareness building; others have learned how to write fund-raising research proposals and how to apply for grants. However, assistance is needed in providing research staff with concrete guidelines for applied research and monitoring to be used for management and protection of the reserve. Assistance is needed to put the overall research program into perspective and help to streamline corresponding activities.

f) Questionable approach to staff training. The current training strategy of the project concentrates on taking people out of the Zapovednik in order to provide them with more exposure and an opportunity for wider interaction outside their familiar environment. Considering the very traditional and rather rigid structure of the system, it is questionable that this is the most appropriate approach to achieve training results and or changes in staff attitudes. Being used to live in isolation and to follow a well established work routine, Reserve staff may not be ready for radical changes yet. To take somebody out of a comfortable environment may be perceived as a threat which could become counterproductive to the expected learning experience. This may be confirmed through the fact that currently little use is made of the travelling funds made available to Reserve staff by the project for participation in seminars, meetings and educational events outside of the Zapovednik area. Under given circumstance it may be advisable to concentrate on on-site and hands-on training which may help to gradually achieve desired changes.

g) Ill-defined functions of the Reserve. In an effort to mobilize the staff of the Reserve and to capitalize on educational opportunities offered by the Zapovednik's old growth forests the project supports basic infrastructure development and the elaboration of educational materials addressed to the forestry sector. The rationale is, to provide local foresters and forestry students as well as members from the international forestry brotherhood (i.e. mostly European) with the opportunity to see and learn from some of the last remaining old growth forests in Europe.

The first question is, whether Pechoro-Ilych is the best choice for forestry training. Due to its isolation and access problems it may be very difficult to attract sufficient representatives of the target groups. Secondly, education confined to the one and only target group, the academicians within the forestry sector, may not be in the best interest of the Zapovednik. It seems more sensible to offer environmental education to a wider clientele without restricting nature trails and other educational facilities to forestry people. In the long run, it would be to the best interest of the Zapovednik to attract the support of a broad range of the general public. This may only be achieved in showing people on site what the Zapovednik tries to protect. Support will not be gained by excluding the public from knowing what is inside a Zapovednik.

It is the consensus opinion of the evaluation team that opportunities for forest training and forestry related education would be much better in the model forest area which offers pristine and old growth forests as well as a wide range of historic utilization regimes. The rationale for the sustainable forest project is exactly that: to demonstrate how sustainable management for biodiversity conservation can be practiced; an ideal learning ground for the forestry profession inside and outside of Russia.

h) Poor cooperation with the support zone. Until present, there is very little interaction between staff of Zapovedniks and the support zone communities. This has placed Zapovedniks into a precarious position of a self-imposed isolation which may well turn out to be counter-productive in the long run. The concept of Russian Zapovedniks precludes access to the public. The public, which always has been denied this access, may now see an opportunity to make up for the lost experience and do what they have been denied to do in the past. This may be the opportunity, to just learn what is inside such a strictly protected area, but also to harvest and collect forest products and wildlife in opposition to the long denied access.

Experience from around the world has shown that sustainable conservation of protected areas is only possible with the support of people neighboring such protected areas. This support can only be gained through good cooperation, mutual respect and proper understanding of the rationale for protection. There is little reason why controlled access should not be allowed. Controlled access will improve the relationship with the public and may result in the appreciation of such areas. On the other hand, a public excluded from protected areas will remain indifferent at best times but may turn hostile if the opportunity arises. In this light, every effort should be made, to inform, educate and include the public in the management of protected areas, including Zapovedniks.

i) Undefined support zone. A major shortcoming is the lack of a well defined support zone for the Zapovednik to the west and east. This leaves large parts of the Reserve vulnerable and exposed to potentially adverse impacts as may originate from uncontrolled development adjacent to the Reserve boundaries. Due to the notoriously poor relationship and practically non-existent cooperation with authorities responsible for neighboring lands (i.e. mostly the State Forest Service), the Zapovednik has little influence on land use decisions outside its boundaries. Only to the south ('bufferzone') and to the north (National Park) is protection provided through defined support zones. The 'buffer' zone to the south has been declared a 'class A forest' which precludes commercial resource exploitation. The same applies to the National Park. Both are under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service which proceeds with historic clear-cut exploitation regimes along the western park boundaries in accordance with traditional cutting plans (V.Kem, Chief Forester of the support zone, pers. comm.).

In this light it would be prudent to agree on support zones along the western and eastern boundaries of Pechoro-Ilych. The establishment of a support zone to the east may be difficult since the Reserve boundary follows the boundary of the neighboring administrative region. This requires intervention on the highest political level.

j) Lack of an integrated management / economic development plan. The project proposes the elaboration of a management plan for the Zapovednik and a separate management plan for the 'buffer' zone. According to V.Kem (pers. commun.), the Chief Forester of the 'Buffer Zone', he himself, together with one of his production forester, will produce a management plan for the 'Buffer Zone' within the next year. Staff of the Zapovednik may be consulted on 'biodiversity conservation' matters; but no other stakeholders are invited to take part in the planning process.

Without prejudices, the proposed planning team does not seem to have the technical know-how or skills to produce a meaningful management plan for the 'Buffer Zone' that integrates the aspects of biodiversity conservation; neither exists the know-how for a meaningful management plan for the Reserve amongst Zapovednik staff (see point c above). Furthermore, it seems to make little sense to produce two separate plans without integration and/or intensive interaction between all stakeholders concerned. In this light it would be logical to produce one single integrated development plan which singles out the Zapovednik as core area, but covers the National Park, the support zones to the west (and hopefully to the east) and the 'buffer' zone to the south. The proposed integrated plan would facilitate the accommodation of stakeholder interests, at the same time providing the Zapovednik with the desired protection.

An integrated development plan for such large and complex an area requires true commitment of all key players and a willingness of all stakeholders' to cooperate and compromise. Preliminary discussions regarding this proposal with key officials of the Komi Republic, the Forest Committee, and other key stakeholders in the Komi Republic were very encouraging. All persons contacted assured to be supportive of the idea. Discussions with E.Shvarts, the Chairman of the Board of the Biodiversity Center in Moscow, revealed, that the idea for an integrated development plan to include the two protection units (National Park and the Reserve) with their support zone has been proposed internally in the past. The GEF supported project on protected areas has already US \$ 80,000 earmarked for a management plan for the National Park. In this light it seems prudent to pursue the idea.

Complementary commentary of the evaluation team leader:

The evaluation team fully concurs with the opinion that an integrated management / economic development plan is the appropriate tool and should be incorporated as an overall goal. For its implementation, however, it is also of crucial importance how the institutional aspects and competencies are addressed and how the procedure is developed. Possible inter-institutional conflicts have to be carefully avoided. Therefore, two main options should be considered:

- 1. full inter-institutional co-operation in the elaboration of one plan that specifies the areas following the institutional competencies,*
- 2. inter-institutional co-ordination for the elaboration of 3 independent but fully coherent plans, where each plan refers to one area and the correspondent competent institution.*

k) Lack of a gap analysis and ecological sensitivity map. The targets set by the project include a gap analysis for the support zone in order to identify 'pristine' remnant forests for protection. A gap analysis, however, should only be the first step in the process of proper land use planning. The basis for integrated land use planning with optimum resource allocation as key factor should be the elaboration of an ecological sensitivity map which identifies all areas in need of special protection beyond the scope of pristine forests. Of particular importance in this respect are riparian ecosystems, wetlands, unstable and fragile sites and key wildlife habitat requisites. Such considerations have to be included in the proposed integrated development plan.

l) False expectations regarding eco-tourism. The question of eco-tourism development for the support zone should be approached with caution in order to avoid false economic expectations and potentially false hopes by people from the buffer zone and the region at large. There is little doubt that the region will have great difficulties in attracting any tourists in the short run. This is mostly due to its isolation and access problems, lacking infrastructure and poor attractiveness. It is difficult to believe that the region could ever become a prime tourist destination considering the numerous and more attractive destinations in Russia with better access and better infrastructure. If at all, the Pecho-ro-Ilych region will always remain a destination for a very small target group of dedicated people interested in forest ecosystems of the Urals, adventure tourists with interests in trekking and river-rafting / kayaking and possibly bird-watching. Potential target groups are very likely not part of the affluent tourist sector looking for a nature experience combined with common amenities. Tourism in the area will very likely play a minor role in the near future and certainly no major role in the distant future. Under these circumstances there is little justification for WWF becoming active on any infrastructure development and/or any tourism development plan.

m) Lack of support group for the Reserve. It would have been wise to establish a support group for the Zapovednik at the onset of the project. However, it is not too late to do it now. A support group should be typically composed of representatives of local communities and other regional stakeholders. Its principle functions would be to prepare the ground for cooperative

management of the protected area and its support zone, to take the lead in public relations and awareness building, to lobby protection and management schemes compatible with overall biodiversity conservation objectives and sustainable economic development in the support zone, and to slowly grow into a technical advisory group on issues related to the Zapovednik and support zone. The support group could assume a vital role in the project by providing liaison services for the project to the support zone community which would develop a relationship build on trust by being represented by members of their own ranks.

n) Poor ties between model forest area and support zone of Reserve. It seems prudent to establish a close working relationship between the model forest area and the support zone of the Zapovednik. Both areas fall under the jurisdiction of the Forestry Service. Since the model forest is meant to serve as a 'model' to be replicated in other parts of the Komi Republic, it would be to the benefit of both project components to develop a close working relationship. This applies in particular to the early phases of conceptual framework and policy development for sustainable forest management. This would be of paramount importance for the development planning of the support (buffer) zone of the Zapovednik. The early involvement of decision makers of the support zone will foster the development of ownership in the design of prescriptions for sustainable forest management, a critical prerequisite for the adoption of a new approach.

o) Untimely choice as World Heritage Site. Unfortunately, the declaration of Pechoro-Ilych and the National Park to the North as World Heritage Site was not well perceived in the Republic of Komi. Local authorities had neither been consulted or properly briefed on the rationale for this declaration. It was done with little cultural sensitivity which caused some political upheaval. Consequently, the declaration is politically simply ignored and is of no consequence. The Republic of Komi reject this outside imposition by UNESCO/IUCN and cannot be expected to be cooperative with either organization. It is realized that a 'World Heritage Site' is just another fictitious 'paper tiger' without providing any assistance and/or solutions to the economic crisis of the 'World Heritage Site' area. The Government of Komi feels that the declaration is merely being used as a political tool by Greenpeace.

Although the issue may not be directly related to the WWF project components in Komi, it adds to the basic mistrust by Russian authorities towards foreign intervention and mingling in internal affairs.

1.2.4 Conclusions

Although the project has made substantial contributions to the Reserve -especially through providing equipment for the protection program and facilitating some training-, overall achievements are rated relatively low. This is mostly due to the lack of permanent presence of the project on site, which was substantiated through discussions with Reserve personnel. Reserve staff places great value on interactions with WWF and project staff and there is no doubt that changes in institutional and staff culture may only be achieved through a continuous dialogue and on site/on-the-job education by informed outsiders.

The major goals for the Zapovednik should be: (a) to lead the Zapovednik out of its isolation, (b) to change the rigid corporate culture and (c) to open the mind of the staff to new ideas. This may best be achieved through permanent project presence on site, a continuous dialogue, invitation of recognized and respected experts in identified priority areas, exchange with other Protected Area staff inside and outside Russia and training in priority areas (financial and staff management, area and program planning including the support zone, applied research and monitoring needed for protection and management, environmental education, public relations and general awareness building). Staff re-trenchment may still be a valid option to increase performance efficiency without causing social hardships. The latter would be expected through staff reduction instead of retrenchment.

Due to its isolation, low population size and insignificant land use conflicts in the support zone the Pechoro-Ilych Reserve is not faced with immediate threats which jeopardize the ecological integrity of the area. Furthermore, staff wages are still being paid by the Federal Government and operational funds are provided by the Komi Republic. Therefore there does not seem to be an immediate urgency to achieve the specified goals. This is very important in the light that cultural and attitude changes have to evolve over time. This provides the project with some leeway in setting the pace for a harmonic development. Nevertheless, if achievements are to be made, the project should enhance and step up its activities and, more important, be present in the Zapovednik.

The current operational budget of the Zapovednik seems quite sufficient for the implementation of all management programs. The staff, however, has to learn how to deal with budget cuts; how to set priorities and how to streamline the programs. This applies in particular to research and monitoring. Assistance by the project may be needed in defining sector specific work-plans adjusted to available funds. This would best be achieved through involvement of all personnel in the elaboration of a long-range operational plan (i.e. 10 to 15 years) which sets the general framework conditions for the annual workplans specifying activities and work volumes adjusted to available means. Annual workplans and budgets have to be developed sector specific in order to remain transparent.

The need for a practical management plan with a well defined long-term vision is obvious. It is self-evident that the plan should be developed with outside assistance and should incorporate the support zone. The plan has to spell out the major management programs in detail and should follow generally accepted international guidelines for the elaboration of management plans for protected areas. Emphasis has to be placed on the support zone in order to prevent further entrenchment of the Zapovednik.

The project's focus on forestry training and education in the Zapovednik is not quite understood. It seems more appropriate and convenient to implement forestry related training in the model forest area where students and foresters may learn first hand of how to manage forests sustainably in due consideration of biodiversity values and conservation, once the concept for sustainable management and product certification is in place. The model forest area offers much better opportunities for training than the Zapovednik; furthermore, logistics are much easier.

In summary, if the project wants to achieve sustainable protection and management of the Zapovednik it has to establish its permanent presence on site with a full time commitment by at least one person with sole responsibility for all matters related to the area. Focus should be on establishing communication between the Zapovednik, support zone communities and regional stakeholders. Together, the process of regional sustainable, economic land use planning should be initiated. The Zapovednik should always remain the nucleus of the planning region.

1.2.5 Recommendations

The following options are recommended for future support to the Reserve and support zone:

- Create an independent full-time project office at Yaksha with sufficient funding and local personnel until the integrated management plan is elaborated and ready to be implemented (5 year time frame). This is the preferred but more expansive option.
- Hire a project manager for the Pechoro-Ilych component of the project to report to the current project manager but with sole responsibility for the Pechoro-Ilych component (5 year time frame and a budget for the establishment of a 2 person office at Yaksha).
- Cancel or put on hold the Pechoro-Ilych component of the project if sufficient funds for the establishment of a permanent office in Yaksha cannot be secured.

It furthermore is recommended:

- To continue logistic and training support to the Zapovednik as core area for an integrated regional development plan to include the National Park to the north, the support zone, of which the 'buffer zone' becomes an integral part. **Time frame: continue started activities and enhance the program within current phase.**
- To provide technical and financial assistance to the Reserve for the elaboration of an integrated management plan which should encompass the Reserve, the National Park bordering to the North, the support zones to the east and west and the 'buffer zone' bordering the Reserve to the south. Since technical expertise of physical PA planning seems to be lacking in Komi, it is suggested to contract an experienced expatriate planner to facilitate the participatory planning process. The facilitator should train a multidisciplinary team in the basics of integrated land use planning with emphasis on the preparation of an integrated management plan for Pechoro-Ilych and the NP to the north. The management plan should be adapted to local needs but should follow generally accepted guidelines and principles of widely accepted concepts of a NP management plan (i.e. long-term vision, zonation, six classic management programs including a support zone program). Major emphasis in the integrated plan should be placed on sustainable economic development of the support zone, compatible with the long-term biodiversity conservation goals. **Time frame: initiate within current project phase, to complete within second phase.**

Complementary recommendation of the evaluation team leader: the inter-institutional co-operation and the procedure for its elaboration and implementation should be carefully defined and treated in order to avoid inter-institutional conflicts and to minimise the risk of a non-adoption of the plan.

- To assist the Reserve staff in the preparation of sector specific annual workplans and budgets to be based on the proposed overall long-term operational plan. It is of critical importance to define and separate the six basic management programs of the proposed management plan in order to identify priorities and to achieve budget transparency. **Time**

frame: Start elaboration of the long-term operational plan immediately and complete within second phase.

- To provide guidance to research staff in streamlining the Reserve's research and monitoring program in accordance with the long-term operational plan for the Reserve; emphasis should be placed on applied research needed for protection and management. **Time Frame: start immediately and continue.**
- To pursue a dual approach to staff training. Firstly, priority should be given to on-site and hands-on training in consideration of the "home turf" syndrome. At the same time, training may proceed in a different environment to provide the opportunity of exposure and interaction. A third option would be a twinning program (i.e. exchange of staff), whereby contacts are established for an exchange program with protected area agencies from other countries and other protected areas within Russia. **Time frame: continue training using dual approach.**
- To shift the emphasis for forestry training from Pechoro-Ilych to the model forest area with easy access and an existing infrastructure which can accommodate visiting scientists, practising foresters and forestry students. **Time frame: initiate interaction immediately.**
- To include other target groups and the general public in the forestry and biodiversity conservation related educational program in the Zapovednik for the benefit of the Zapovednik. **Time frame: initiate immediately and continue.**
- Although noticeable progress has been made by the project in fostering relationships with support zone communities of the Zapovednik, it is recommended to increase efforts regarding public involvement in Reserve related matters beyond awareness building and environmental education. This applies in particular to providing controlled access and possibly guided tours to parts of the protected area. **Time frame: start lobbying the process as soon as possible.**
- To enter negotiations with the State Forest Committee regarding the establishment of a defined support zone along the western boundaries of the Reserve. Furthermore, efforts should be made to negotiate a support zone to the east with the neighboring authorities. **Time frame: start negotiations as soon as possible.**
- To assist in the preparation and lobbying for an integrated development plan which covers Pechoro-Ilych as core area, the National Park to the north, the 'bufferzone' to the south and the support zone to the west of the Reserve. Efforts should be made to include a to-be-identified support zone to the east. An integrated development plan would replace individual management plans. However, long-term operational plans with clear vision statements would still be needed for the NP and the Reserve in order to formulate meaningful annual workplans which have to be adjusted to the long-range plans. WWF should consider to take on the lead role in this complex exercise and possibly facilitate the process. WWF should locate and provide an experienced protected area planner to prepare and supervise the to-be-assembled interdisciplinary planning team. **Time frame: initiate in current project phase and complete within second phase.**
- To embark on a survey of ecological sensitive areas and areas of special protection needs in the support zone of the Zapovednik as soon as a support zone has been designated, but prior to the proposed integrated land use development planning. **Time frame: initiate as soon as possible and complete in current phase.**
- To put any plans for the development of eco-tourism on hold due to the overall poor potential of the region as tourist destination.

- To establish a support group for the Zapovednik with participation of the 'Save the Ilych' NGO, representatives of local stakeholders, a spokesperson for WWF and a representative from the Zapovednik. The support group should be financed by the project with WWF taking the lead role. **Time frame: to initiate immediately and to become operational within current phase.**
- To actively involve key foresters from the support zone of Pechoro-Ilych in the process of sustainable forest management from an early stage. This implies participation in brainstorming regarding policy and conceptual framework development, site visits where changes in logging practices and approach to silviculture are discussed and demonstrated. **Time frame: start immediately and continue.**

2. Sub-Project: The Model Forest - Sustainable Forest Management

2.1 General Background on Policy, Institutional and Legal Aspects

2.1.1 Legal and Policy Framework for Sustainable Forest Management

The Russian approach for sustainable forest management was established by the Forest Code of December 1997. It gives the basis for sustainable forest management through dealing with three different classes of forests. All forests are federal property. Regional departments of the Federal Forest Service have to implement sustainable forest management through separate forest units.

The regional departments of the Federal Forest Service establish the rules for forest territory licensing, calculate the main forest user charge (stumpage fee). The rules for calculation of the minimum stumpage fee are established by the federal level. Forest units manage forest territory, provide forest inventories contracting forest inventory enterprises, undertake forest protection and reforestation, implement fire protection policy. The main instrument to manage forest use is the calculation of "allowable cut". All protected areas should be excluded from this area. Besides, forest units are responsible for issuing "cut tickets" for loggers and to defining the stock of timber at the area for cutting.

Some innovative approaches to forest management are encouraged by the draft regional forest code, which stipulates model forests as a new approach to sustainable forest management. However, that status is not defined precisely. This creates problems with the implementation of the WWF project.

2.1.2 Institutional context of sustainable forest management

2.1.2.1 General aspects

Sustainable forest management is based on a broad involvement of all stakeholders in the decision-making process. This includes close co-operation of federal authorities (federal forest service) and forest units, regional government, local administration, local population, NGOs, forestry industry including timber processing, scientists, etc.

Certification could serve as an efficient promotion of sustainable forestry. Together with the future threat from the world market for uncertified timber it should be used at present as a process oriented tool. Preparation of independent certification will support sustainable forestry in the long run.

2.1.2.2 Particularities of the Objachevo Model Forest Sub-Project

WWF played an important role as facilitator of co-operation for the benefit of sustainable forest management. An efficient working group was created to discuss approaches to model forestry. An innovative department to solve sustainable forestry problems in the forest unit was established. An agreement with the forest inventory enterprise was signed to prepare draft plans for a model forest. The work of the team is controlled by the regional board under the chairmanship of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Komi.

The main engine of the work is WWF with strong support from the local industry which intends to use the model forest as a framework for efficient investments in the future. Local industry

already has an investment plan incorporating new environmentally friendly technologies with US, Swiss, Italian and Swedish firms. So far, one firm (IKEA) made the certification of timber in the model forest a condition for their participation.

Participation of local population and NGOs is especially promoted by the WWF project. However, it had to follow existing traditions of the country and first lobby local administration for the involvement of the local population. At later stages more active involvement of the local population is planned based on the creation of a new NGO to consider model forest issues. WWF project was not very quick in involving local people, but it has a clear concept of how to improve the situation and has already started to work on this aspect.

2.1.3 Financial Issues of sustainable forest management

The Forest Code defines the rules for the distribution of income from minimum stumpage fee. 40% should go to the federal budget, 60% should go to the regional budget. All extra income above minimum stumpage fee should go to the forest units. As for financing of forest management, the federal level should finance reforestation, and the regional level should finance forest protection.

Komi has its own forest law since 1990. They plan to adopt a new Komi Forest and Forest Users Code next fall. The main difference from the Federal Code is that they would like to establish regional ownership for the forests of the 2 and 3 classes and have a different system for distribution of stumpage fees collected. All money should go to the regional level. However, the federal level has to finance all forest management expenses.

It is worth mentioning that at present, the distribution of stumpage fees collected is based on the statements from the Basics of Forest Law from 1993, when all the taxes were sent to the local budget and they then sent 50% to finance forest units. That system is still in operation. Regions give 50% stumpage fees discount for secondary cut and 20% discount for primary selective cut. Average level of stumpage fee is 1.2 USD per m³ of timber. Thus, the existing system was designed to create incentive for sustainable forest cut. However, even with a low profit from logging the stumpage fee is too low to create any incentives.

Sustainable forest management includes sustainable financing of forest. So the WWF project has to analyse the existing system of financial flows in the forest sector (taxes, stumpage fees, monetary benefits including non-timber values, potential benefit from biodiversity conservation and carbon market, benefit from new policy of fire protection, etc.). It is relevant to analyse the establishment of a special fund to finance model forest at the beginning. In the long run sustainable forestry should be self-sustainable. Part of the benefits from its operation could be collected in the fund for the benefit of the local population. So far, the WWF project has not addressed such issues. It has to involve specialists in this field and use their expertise.

The first steps towards the diversification of the financing of the model forest were established by facilitating the participation of Komi, presenting this project, in Northern Forum. The experience was a successful one and creates potential for co-financing.

2.1.4 Issues and constraints

The new regional forest code is not yet approved. Up to now, it does not correspond with the federal code about property rights for forests and financial issues. WWF had no real strategy on how to use the law-making process to the benefit of the project.

The current approach to conservation on forest land is aimed at forest protection (class 1). Strict norms for class 1 forest management and logging leave little room for innovation in this area. There is as yet no legal term of “model forest”. WWF should find the way to achieve experimental forest unit status for the model forest, and rules for a new type of forest management should be clearly defined in legal documents. As the region is interested in the development of the forest sector, some innovative approaches in forest management could be lobbied at the regional level, especially with regard to the effective forest management and new policy of stumpage fees.

Sustainable forest management is developing with no competition of logging companies. This creates difficulties to use BAT and apply any economic analysis. WWF should analyse all benefits and costs of sustainable forest management and lobby results of the research for the benefit of the region during implementation of the forest industry restructuring program.

The certification process does not have clear status yet. However, a lot is done at the federal level. WWF Komi should not be isolated from this work. It should play an active role in the establishment of an independent certification procedure, elaboration of national and regional standards, and promoting the process and not only results.

The forest industry crisis created a lot of social problems. Therefore, the support of the local population is vital for the project. WWF has a clear strategy of their involvement in the project and should implement it.

2.1.5 Conclusions

“Model forest” should be continued with more attention to legal and economic aspects. It is necessary to create a concept of a model forest with regard to economic sustainability and use this information to determine the scale of project.

WWF had some activity in the legal sphere; this should be strengthened, especially with regard to the status of model forest. WWF should give further emphasis in contributing towards the establishment and enforcement of transparent and implementable rules for forest management and use.

The working group and the initial innovation group form a stable institutional basis for the model forest development.

Economic analysis should form the basis for sustainable forest management, as well as a broad participation of the local population.

It is necessary to look for co-financing of the project, more active use resources of Northern Forest in this respect and produce a feasibility study to attract private co-financing for the project.

2.2 Technical Aspects

2.2.1 Targets

The targets for this project component as defined in WWF's 1995 project proposal to SDC are summarized in the following table 2. The background information on targets and activities as provided for the Pechoro-Ilych Reserve apply also to this project component.

Table 2 Targets and level of achievements for the Model Forest

Objective/Goals/Activity	Rating of Achievement *1	Probability to achieve within given time frame
Development of Models for Sustaining Boreal Forests		
select and establish model forest area in Komi	5	5
develop guidelines for sustainable forestry	2	4
implement survey of pristine forests in model forest area	4	5
secure pristine forests in the model forest area	5	5
secure monitoring data from the Reserve	n. e.	n. e.
elaborate, save and make available relevant data from pristine taiga	n. e.	n. e.
develop a management plan based on landscape planning	1	1
develop harvest rate plan with spatial pattern considerations	1	3
elaborate long-term economic development plan	1	2
prepare guidelines for sustainable forests in Scandinavia	n. e.	n. e.
develop value added wood product industry	n. e.	n. e.
facilitate business contacts with western companies	1	3
arrange 'publicity' and initiate international contacts		
• develop project brief	n. e.	n. e.
• lobby agreements on national and regional level	n. e.	n. e.
• produce films about Reserve and pristine forests	n. e.	n. e.
• produce written materials about area and forests	n. e.	n. e.
Training and Environmental Education		
establish training program for forestry sector:		
• train foresters in sustainable forest management	1	2
• train foresters for certification	1	2
• train foresters to deal with foreign investors	1	2
• provide training in landscape planning	2	4
• assess needs for training infrastructure	n. e. n. e.	n. e.
• provide infrastructure for training		n. e.
prepare model area for forestry training and education		
• develop and establish a training and education program	n. e.	n. e.
• establish visitor facilities (for forestry related persons)	n. e.	2
• develop and implement study tours for Russian forestry personnel and students	n. e.	n. e.
• develop program for international forestry students, foresters and scientific personnel	n. e.	n. e.
• implement economic development plan for education	n. e.	n. e.
• develop demonstration sites and study tours		n. e.
stakeholders are familiar with sustainable forest management	3	4
Environmental Education and Public Awareness is achieved		
develop 'education'/awareness plan	n. e.	n. e.
inform and educate local population on principles for sustainable forest management	1	3

Explanations: *1 rating from 0-5 (1=low to 5=fully achieved)
n.e. = not evaluated / unknown
*2 and *3: see chapter 3 (in this part 2)

2.2.2 Achievements

a) Identification of Pristine Areas and Moratorium. The project has been highly successful in the identification and preliminary protection of 'pristine' forests left in the model forest area. Although the degree of 'pristiness' and corresponding values in terms of biodiversity still need to be defined, the current moratorium placed on these areas provides protection until final decisions can be made on the most appropriate protection and use of these areas.

b) Establishment of a GIS Unit. The project has successfully established a two person GIS Unit which now is operational. The unit is fully equipped with computers, plotters and software, the team has received basic training in data digitalization, the use of plotters and basic map production. Further training will be provided as required. The GIS unit is integrated into the Forest Service as a separate entity. This is of mutual benefit, providing the unit with access to the forest data base regarding the model forest area and the Forest Service with access to much needed digitized maps.

c) Market Research. The project has successfully established first contacts with foreign companies within its efforts to search for suitable markets for value added wood products to be produced in the model forest area. Of particular interest in this context seems to be the Swedish furniture Company IKEA with a vested interest in the project.

d) Inter-institutional Network. The project has effectively lobbied the rationale of sustainable forest management at highest Government levels on a regional and local basis. Good working relationships have been established with the Forest Committee, Academy of Sciences, Syktyvkar University, and several other institutions. Some of the working relationships have been formalized in form of MoUs.

e) Concept for Sustainable Forest Management. A serious effort has been made to conceptualize sustainable forest management and to adapt international guidelines to local conditions. This process is being implemented participatory, involving an inter-disciplinary group of academicians with affiliation to the forestry sector. Although the process has not been concluded, noteworthy progress has been made.

2.2.3 Issues and Constraints

a) Gaps in Institutional Structure / Project administration. The rationale for using the existing administrative framework with a well established structure to manage the selected model forest area seems convincing. Under given circumstances the creation of a separate administrative entity would not have been acceptable by the authorities neither would it have been desirable and/or in the best interest of the project. It is apparent that by utilizing an existing structure the 'baggage' which comes with it has to be absorbed as well. By adding new components to the administrative structure (i.e. innovation group etc.), the project strategically resolved the problems of how to incorporate the new approach into an existing structure, at the same time circumventing a structure which shows little flexibility.

One of the important elements missing in the current structural constellation are planning issues. If not addressed properly at an early stage, the lack of clear planning responsibilities and authority may soon grow into a serious stumbling block, jeopardizing the entire project. To date the project has not given sufficient consideration to how to incorporate the different planning elements into the existing structure.

The role of corporate planning should not be underestimated. The Forest Service with overall responsibility for the project, has to assume this responsibility. Under the old system corporate

planning was not required; it was handled centrally in form of 'corporate propaganda'. The new approach, however, has to be presented to the outside world and will be critical in forming the new image of the Forest Service in taking the lead in sustainable forest management with emphasis on sustainable biodiversity conservation and wood product certification. This requires a completely new policy concept, the development of long-term goals and objectives and the planning of strategies of how to achieve them. The project has to identify how corporate planning can best be handled, whether through a small inter-departmental sub-unit of the Forest Service, or an inter-institutional team. It should be understood that a corporate plan is binding and therefore of critical importance to the key players.

The project proposes an integrated management plan for the model forest. This will be a very ambitious undertaking due to the size and complexity of the area. Again, the planning authority has to be assigned to somebody and some institution has to take the lead role. For a detailed discussion on this plan it is referred to issue (c).

Sub-Unit plans, currently elaborated on a Leskhoz level, have to be adjusted to the new guidelines for sustainable forest management. This requires training of the planners and guidance in the planning process until the know-how has been acquired. This has not been addressed sufficiently by the project. The same applies to logging plans which have to incorporate complex new rules and regulations which still have to be worked out.

Annual workplans on a Leskhoz level with sound budgeting for the new responsibilities have to be adjusted to the expected changes. Again, this requires substantial training of forestry personnel which to present concentrates on production forest and commercial forest exploitation. The new functions of the foresters will be more directed towards environmental aspects and proper silviculture rather than production forest. Again, this requires training and a change in culture which has to be addressed in the project.

b) Low Recognition on Federal Level. There seems to be insufficient recognition of the Komi 'model forest' project on the federal level. The Canadian Forest Model concept seems to be the favoured version as a result of strategically incorporating the Federal Agencies on the highest level into the Canadian scheme from the first start of the project. It does not necessarily reflect a better quality concept. For whichever reasons there is a need for further lobbying in order to gain the full support on the Federal level.

The Komi concept for sustainable forest management seems to be progressive and environmentally sound than the Canadian model. The Komi Model has a clear focus on sustainable biodiversity conservation, the integration of pristine forests into the integrated management plan and general environmental issues related to logging practices. There is an urgent need to carry this message beyond the Komi Republic.

c) Too Large a Size Planning Area. To elaborate a practical and meaningful integrated economic development plan for an 800,000 has area is a very ambitious undertaking which requires a lot of manpower, cooperation and funds. It is doubtful that such a large area can or should be handled by the project. To develop a working model for sustainable forest management, not more than 10 000 has are needed in boreal forest. Given the degree of disturbance through commercial logging in the Komi region, an area of 100 000 has would seem more appropriate. It is believed that an area this size can supply the required diversity in logging history and biodiversity in order to practice and demonstrate sustainable forest management under different forest prescriptions.

The current area historically has experienced a lopsided development, directly linked to access; accessible areas have been over-exploited, the rest remained untouched -except for fires. An overall economic development plan will have to address access and past use problems in order to evenly distribute harvest pressure and, at the same time, accommodate de-

mands for protection forest and biodiversity conservation. That means development and financing an access plan as well as site specific management plans with inventory information on a 1 : 10 000 scale level. Road access, especially all-weather roads constructed to environmentally acceptable standards in the area of interest, will be extremely costly due to unfavorable terrain (i.e. poor drainage, deep organic soils etc.). It is apparent that 'pilot areas' have to be chosen in order to start the process; to make the choice without causing social unrest especially within economically less privileged areas, will be very difficult. All this could be much easier accomplished within a smaller size area.

d) Too short a time frame, too small a budget, no presence on site. It is obvious that the time frame of three and a half years is much too short and the budget much too low for a project this size. Taking the need for a cultural change in participating institutions into consideration and the time requirements for the development of a conceptual framework for sustainable forest management, five years would be the absolute minimum for the project to become operational. A time frame of 10 years would be even more realistic considering the need for the establishment of markets for timber and non-timber forest products and to achieve the dramatic changes required by a new forest practices code with respect to sustainable forest management.

One of the key questions is which role WWF and/or the project is expected to play. Will it be sufficient to remain the facilitator and provide some guidance to the process or is there a need for the project to get involved in certain areas of project implementation. Either way, neither the current funding or the proposed time frame is sufficient to provide the system with self-sustainability.

There is little doubt that a permanent project office on site would accelerate the process of self-reliability of the model forest. Capacity building, lobbying, public participation, supervision and guidance would be much more efficient if done by project personnel on site than from Syktyvkar. However, the problem of isolation is much less significant than for Pechoro-Ilych. The distance between the project office and the model forest area is much shorter and communication much easier. Nevertheless, a permanent presence in the area, or at least one project person with full time responsibility for this project component and seat in the Syktyvkar office is required. The current project manager has too much of a work load already.

e) New forest practices code. The need for a new forest practices code adjusted to the sustainable forest management concept has been addressed by the project. However, the complexity of such code which has to cover logging operations, silviculture and stand tending, wildlife habitat and general biodiversity conservation issues, conduct by key players, rehabilitation, roads construction and maintenance etc. may be under-estimated. Also the matter of urgency does not seem to be fully appreciated. The practices code should be available prior to the issue of logging permits.

The same applies to the enforcement of the new code and guidelines. Responsibilities have to be assigned for enforcement and training offered accordingly. The question remains, whether the enforcement will continue to be the sole responsibility of forest rangers and State foresters, or whether to involve an NGO and/or other stakeholders as impartial arbitrators.

f) Confusion regarding Education, Awareness Building, Training and Public Relations. The liberal use of terms such as 'education', 'awareness building' 'training' and 'public relations' causes much confusion. The confusion starts already with WWF's original proposal to SDC where no clear distinction is made between environmental education and training and no clear distinction between target groups.

It would be to the benefit of the project to make a clear distinction as follows, and adjust program activities accordingly:

- **environmental education** including formal and informal education is generally addressed to the public as principle target group, including school children and the lay-person;
- **formal education** generally addresses two target groups: school children and University students.
- **environmental awareness building** is usually directed towards the general public, but may also single out specific target groups such as politicians, community leaders etc.
- **training** may address a wide range of target groups, but predominantly professionals. This includes teachers, in the case of the project foresters and biological scientists, Reserve managers etc.
- **public relations** has little in common with the other terms. The materials for public relations may be provided through one or the other component from the education, awareness building, and/or the training sector. Public relations is only the presentation of the corporation to the outside world. It is an image building process with responsibility within the organization - in this case WWF.

For clarity reasons and a better understanding of project activities it would be to the benefit of the project to make these clear distinctions between programs, activities and target groups. At current, Komi project components are mixed in with activities run by the Moscow office, local on-site training with seemingly unrelated international training.

g) Lack of Needs Assessment for Specified Target Groups for Training. The project should urgently focus on a needs assessment for training requirements for the sustainable model forest area. Target groups should be identified and training modules elaborated accordingly. Target groups would range from foresters on the Leskhoz level to logging operators, contractors and forest workers. The training modules should cover rules and regulations from the to-be-elaborated new forest practices code for sustainable forest management (i.e. legal requirements and policy framework) as well as ecological baseline knowledge as applied to biodiversity conservation in managed forests. Skill development should be considered for operation of environmentally friendly logging equipment, horse logging, reforestation, stand tending, silviculture and proper wildlife habitat management.

h) Unidentified Beneficiaries of Project. It would be useful to identify the beneficiaries of the model forest area in order to justify the project. Sustainable forest management for biodiversity conservation may well be the driving principle but stakeholder benefits may be of equal importance. Of special significance are potential benefits through the project to economically less privileged villagers and communities with high unemployment as caused through lay-offs in the forestry sector after the breakdown of the system. Emphasis in the project has to be placed on the creation of job opportunities in the forestry sector, the utilization and commercialization of minor forest products and the wood processing industry. The project should favor an innovative approach to job creation with focus on isolated and forest dependent communities.

i) Insufficient Stakeholder Involvement. To date emphasis has been placed on lobbying the project at the regional and local Government level and the development of the policy and conceptual framework for sustainable forest management. The success of this concerted effort is noteworthy. Now it would be the time to pull in other stakeholders, in particular logging companies, local operators, NGOs and forest personnel from the Leskhoz for a participatory development of the economic development plan for focal areas of the model forest. Of particular

importance are communities with dependence on the model forest area. It seems that stakeholders have been involved to date more on a 'consultative' basis rather than participatory. Development of ownership in the concept of sustainable forest management can only be achieved if stakeholders begin to identify themselves with the process.

j) Questionable Motives for Sustainable Forest Management. From discussions with key persons related to this project component it became apparent that some stakeholders seemed to be interested in sustainable forest management only in order to receive the much discussed certification of wood products. This interest is clearly for the wrong reason. Every effort should therefore be made to convince stakeholders about the need for sustainable forest management for the sake of resource and system sustainability. This is much easier to appreciate if practical examples are chosen to convince stakeholders about this necessity. Sustainable protection of water resources in order to maintain high quality drinking water, for flood prevention, soil and aquatic habitat protection and to enhance fish populations. Of special importance to local communities are proper wildlife habitat management and conservation of productive areas for minor forest products (i.e. berries and mushrooms) which may best be achieved through sustainable forest management.

k) Lack of Identified User Rights for Non-timber Forest Products. It seems prudent to include non-timber forest products in the general equation of economic forest values due to their critical importance to rural populations. Of particular interest are berry crops and mushrooms which constitute the most important source of income for many families of the model forest area. Somehow, this use of non-timber products should be regulated and formalized in order to prevent future conflicts.

l) Need for Marketing Non-timber Forest Products. It would be very beneficial to the forest dependent communities of the model forest area to provide assistance in marketing non-timber forest products. It is noteworthy that first attempts in this direction have been made by the project. Efforts, however, should be stepped up and contacts be established with entrepreneurs interested in exploring this market niche. This seems a matter of urgency. To provide help to the poorest would surely contribute to a better appreciation of the sustainable forest management concept. A practical example is more convincing than the best environmental education campaign.

m) Need for Partnership with Hunting / Fishing Community for Habitat Management. It would be to the best interest of sustainable forest management to confirm the alliance with the generally powerful hunting and fishing lobby. Hunters and fishers have a vested interest in proper wildlife habitat management which may best be achieved through sustainable forest management. The hunting and fishing lobby worldwide is one of the strongest ally for wildlife habitat protection.

n) Confusion Regarding Protection Forest. As a first step in the 'landscape' planning process the pristine forests in the 800,000 ha model area have been identified and delineated on the base map. Since pristine areas are considered the backbone of biodiversity conservation in the model forest area a moratorium has been placed on these forests. It implies that no logging or other interventions are permitted until a final decision on the best use of these areas has been made. In this context there seems to be some confusion within the Forestry Service on what to protect. The Evaluation Team has been informed that the intention is to place 10% of the model forest area under protection. This needs clarification since random protection of 10% does not make sense. It is understood that it should read 10% to be protected of each ecosystems or biogeoclimatic zone instead of a blanket protection of a random 10% area.

o) Need for EIA in Overall Program. Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) should be included in the forest practices code for the sustainable forest management concept. The need for EIAs may be of particular importance for development projects and/or logging operations in environmentally sensitive terrain; this applies to equipment use in logging operations, road and bridge construction, linear development projects, quarries, drainage and many other activities with potentially adverse environmental impacts. The code should specify the conditions and technical requirements for EIAs. EIAs should also address land reclamation and rehabilitation needs which may be required on completion of a development project. In this context, technical guidelines should be developed for rehabilitation of skid- and logging roads but also for road maintenance requirements.

p) WWF's Lack of Corporate Background in the Forestry Sector. There seems little corporate experience within the WWF family in forest management. It therefore would be to the best interest of the project to network with experienced European forestry services, private companies and institutions with proven corporate experience in this sector. Of particular interest could be the German Forestry Sector with 200 years of sustainable forest management experience and sound knowledge in the development of progressive conceptual framework conditions and policies for social forestry and sustainable forest management for biodiversity conservation.

The project seems to focus too much on the Scandinavian experience which is not necessarily known for best forest management practices, especially not for sustainable forest management for biodiversity conservation. In-house expertise seems insufficient in WWF to tackle 'model concepts' for sustainable forest management without a sound network outside the organization.

2.2.4 Conclusions

This project component receives an overall high rating for achievements on the political, project awareness building level. It is noteworthy that all institutions and Government agencies affiliated with the model forest area in the Komi Republic are well informed about the rationale of sustainable forest management and future needs for wood product certification. The current approach of the project to manage the model forest area participatory through the existing administrative framework of the Forestry Service seems sound and is supported by the Evaluation Team.

Further work is needed to clarify and delegate corporate and technical planning responsibilities. There is a need for a transparent, practical and simple practices code tailored to sustainable forest management. The code has to include technical guidelines for environmental impact assessments and land rehabilitation and spell out the conditions for the requirements of EIAs.

A serious effort should be made to identify beneficiaries of the project, in particular amongst the needy forest dependent communities which actively should be involved in the planning and management process.

The model forest area seems to be much too large for practical economic planning purposes. It should be considered to maintain the current size for the overall landscape planning approach which seems to be wanted to identify areas of special protection needs. However, to practice sustainable forest management it seems prudent to concentrate on one much smaller sized priority area (less than 100 000 has) which offers opportunities for the required range of different scenarios. A down-scaled demonstration area would be much easier to handle from a logistical and practical view.

The need for intensive networking, in particular the German speaking areas of Europe, seems to be of great importance in the light of lacking corporate experience in forest issues by WWF as project executant. This would be of special benefit for training and personnel exchange.

The Evaluation Team recommends stronger emphasis on non-timber forest products which in the current market economy are of vital importance to rural populations in the model forest area.

Although the project has done well in preparing the 'theoretical' framework for sustainable forest management, there seems some urgency to move on to practical implementation and to a demonstration of how the concept can be applied successfully. If this is not done soon, the project may lose momentum and enthusiastic politicians their interest.

In summary, the model forest project has been quite successful to date. The project is well embedded in the world-wide drive towards sustainable forest management and can provide a significant contribution for sustainable management of boreal forests, provided, sufficient funds can be found for a second phase with a time-frame of five to seven years minimum. Anything less than five years would be much too short for meaningful achievements.

In this light it is recommended to provide further technical support to the project and to increase financing in order to enable the establishment of a project office on site. Project presence on site seems of critical importance to success, especially as a result of tireless lobbying and awareness building which assists in achieving cultural changes in the still rigid administrative structures of the Forestry Service.

2.2.5 Recommendations

It is recommended:

- To identify who will be responsible for the different planning needs, how planning will be done and how the training for the development of the required planning skills can best be achieved. **Time frame: Immediately and to be finished within first phase.**
- To focus on a two and five year corporate plan which presents the new concept of sustainable forest management to the outside. **Time frame: Immediately and to be finished within first phase.**
- To concentrate on lobbying a well defined concept of sustainable forest management, highlighting the most salient points of biodiversity conservation as guiding principle, at the Federal level. To develop a strategy accordingly. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**
- To re-assess the question of a more realistic size area where sustainable forest management can be demonstrated. **Time frame: Immediately and to be finished within first phase.**
- To recruit at least one forester with sole responsibility for the model forest area. The same person should closely interact with the project person to be hired for the Zapovednik and the liaison officer for the Zapovednik and its support zone. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**
- To extend the time frame for the project by a minimum of five years in order for the sustainable forest model to become operational and a true working model to be replicated elsewhere. The available budget has to be augmented accordingly, either through a second phase financed by SDC, or own financing by WWF. The progress made justifies an extension of the project. **Time frame: For second phase.**
- To urgently initiate work on a new forest practices code and identify most suitable enforcement mechanism. **Time frame: Immediately and to be finished within first phase.**
- To clearly differentiate between the various categories of education and training, awareness building and public relations which should be reflected in a better distinction within work programs. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**
- To implement a needs assessment directed at target groups to be identified in accordance with the new forest practices code and a systems approach with respect to sustainable forest management for biodiversity conservation. **Time frame: Immediately and to be finished within first phase.**
- To identify beneficiaries of the project and to use this information for the justification of further investments into the project. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**
- To identify pertinent stakeholders and to include them in participatory planning of the economic development plan for the model forest area. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**
- To concentrate on convincing stakeholder about the long-term logic of sustainable forest management for other reasons than obtaining wood product certification. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**

- To quantify and qualify the use of non-timber forest products and to formalize user rights. To assist users of non-timber forest products in marketing their exploits. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**
- To include the local hunting and fishing clubs into the planning process for the model forest area, also to be included as partners in public awareness campaigns with focus on explaining the concept and need for sustainable forest management. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**
- To specify the need for environmental impact assessments in connection with development projects and logging operations in the model forest area and to develop technical guidelines for the implementation of EIAs. **Time frame: Immediately and to be finished within first phase.**
- To develop guidelines and requirements for rehabilitation and land reclamation after environmental disturbances with potentially adverse impacts on biodiversity conservation. This applies in particular to construction and maintenance of all weather roads and logging roads (i.e. including skid trails). **Time frame: Immediately and to be finished within first phase.**
- To incorporate the guidelines for EIAs in the forest practices code for the sustainable forest concept. **Time frame: Immediately and to be finished within first phase.**
- To develop a sound network -besides Scandinavia- for the development of the conceptual and policy framework for sustainable forest management for biodiversity conservation with special consideration of the German Forestry Sector which grandfathered the concept. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**
- To make optimum use of the expanded network for a continuing exchange of foresters and for general training purposes including the logging sector. **Time frame: Immediately and continuing.**

3. Sub-Project: Training and Education

3.1 Purpose

Following the project proposal, the purpose of this component is:

“Develop an education and training centre in boreal forest ecology, protection and management for national and international target groups at Pechoro-Ilych Reserve”.

3.2 Targets

The targets for this project component, as defined in WWF's 1995 project proposal to SDC, are summarized in the following table 3. The background information on targets and activities as provided for the Pechoro-Ilych Reserve apply also to this project component. However, in analyzing the original project proposal more carefully, the evaluation team felt that the separation of Education and Training as a distinct third component from the other two is rather artificial (see in this part the chapters 3.5 Conclusions, and 3.6 Recommendation 6), and that expected results and expected activities do not always correspond very clearly. Therefore the achievements of the project component Training and Education are assessed not strictly following the structure of the original project proposal, but mainly on the basis of achieved activities:

- incorporating the few training and education aspects of the sub-project (1) Securing Zapovednik,
- excluding the numerous training and education aspects of the sub-project (2) Model Forest, which form the major part of the project and are discussed under chapter 1 and 2 of this part.

Table 3 Targets and level of achievement

Targets (Objective/Goals/Activity)	Rating of Achievement *1
Training and Education (in Komi Republic)	
1. Develop programme for education and study tours for national students and experts	3
2. Develop programme for education and study tours for internat. students and experts	3
3. Organise facilities for visitors	2
4. Carry out an economic development plan for education	1
5. Secure monitoring data from the Reserve	4
6. Compile and review existing knowledge about pristine taiga and make it available	4
7. Arrange publicity and initiate international contacts for the Reserve	3
8. Produce written materials about the Reserve and the pristine taiga	4
9. Produce films about the reserve and pristine taiga	4
10. Survey of valuable forests outside the Z. as an education activity for Komi students	1
11. Carry out education of local society, promoting the values of the protected areas	2
12. Training of Zapovednik staff to increase its abilities to meet new demands	2

Explanations:

- *1 rating from 0-5 (1=low to 5=fully achieved)
- n.e.: not evaluated / unknown

3.3 Achievements

Where appropriate, recommendations on the detailed level of the activities' assessment have been added. The recommendations under 3.6 are of more general character, referring to the project component as a whole.

3.3.1 Develop programme for education and study tours for students, scientists and foresters from Russia in Pechoro-Ilych Reserve

A curriculum in “Biodiversity and Sustainability of Pristine Boreal Forest” for students in biology and in forestry from Syktyvkar University has been elaborated. Five “Education Trails” in the pristine forest of Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik have been set up as integrated parts of the curriculum, serving as study resource for the practical part of the curriculum. So far, approximately 30 students have taken part in this official, mandatory course and have passed the final examinations. In addition, a similar but much shorter course, including a study tour to the Zapovednik, is in preparation for foresters of Syktyvkar.

Main constraints are the relatively high costs to get to and to stay at the Zapovednik, amounting at approximately US\$ 200.-/P. for a two weeks trip, and the poor or even not-existing facilities for accommodation in the Zapovednik.

The task has been started successfully. However, the follow-up costs for a sustainable use of the new opportunities have not fully been taken into consideration. If the original purpose of the project component is to be fulfilled, additional funds for covering travel costs for students and foresters visiting the reserve must be found. The same is true for an improvement of the basic infrastructure (e.g. transformation of former Kindergarten into a modest guesthouse for groups), regardless of their future management by the Zapovednik or by private persons. In order to reduce the high dependency on financing through WWF, this objective should be achieved as much as possible through co-financing. In any case, additional education trails - even if not in truly pristine forest - should be created at a closer distance to Syktyvkar. Furthermore, partnerships with Forestry Faculties of other Universities (e.g. Archangelsk, St. Petersburg) should be built up step by step, in order to implement similar curricula in other academic centres of the same region.

Rating: 3

3.3.2 Develop a programme for education and study tours for international students, scientists and foresters

In the last few years, more than 100 students and experts from outside Russia have found their way to the Zapovednik, mostly on an individual basis. According to the project coordinator, the potential number of scientists, students and foresters, especially from Western countries, interested in a visit to the reserve is high. The expected number of visitors could be increased considerably, provided that the reserve is known outside Russia, that study tours are being organized and that the infrastructure corresponds to a minimal standard.

Main obstacles are the remoteness of the site, lack of institutional and personal relations between the Z. and potentially interested groups outside Russia, the poor accommodation facilities and the language problems.

Currently, a programme for courses and study tours for students from Scandinavia is in preparation. An extension to target groups in German speaking countries is planned. With regard to the sustainability of these programmes and as part of the general strategy for more openness, partnerships with foreign Universities, Institutions and Interest Groups in the field of Forestry, Biodiversity and Conservation should be established. This is only possible if Z. staff achieves better skills in English. The present attempt to get a native English speaking guest teacher to the Z. is therefore a valuable step in the right direction, even if this kind of language training will hardly eliminate all communication problems with foreign visitors.

Rating: 3

3.3.3 Organise facilities for visitors

According to the project co-ordinator, this task has been excluded from the project, restricting its support only to the facilitation of field activities, especially in setting up education trails.

Some limited travel and accommodation facilities to and in the Zapovednik and its Buffer Zone do exist, mainly thanks to the project which provided cars, boats, motors, fuel and other basic equipment to the Reserve. However, these infrastructures are mainly intended to facilitate the proper management of the Reserve, and not to serve guest visitors. Therefore, a visit without personal relations, own travel equipment and the right attitude to a very basic lifestyle is still practically impossible at the moment.

A study of the possibilities of eco-tourism in the reserve and its buffer zone has recently been carried out by Mrs. I. Anderegg. A translation into Russian is presently under way by the project staff. Some general recommendations of the otherwise rather descriptive study present valuable indications in which direction improvements should go. However, the question remains open by whom and with which money these improvements should be achieved, and who shall take the responsibility and risks of running the business later (see Recommendation 3).

Rating: 2

3.3.4 Carry out an economic development plan for education

To our knowledge, not much has been done in this direction up to now. The present economic situation makes it extremely difficult for individuals as well as for institutions in Russia to cover any extra costs for studies outside the universities and their immediate surroundings. Any prediction on the future economic development seems to be extremely difficult.

In this respect, the evaluation team perceives it as a short-coming, that the possibilities for co-financing through existing credit-lines of different agencies have not yet been explored systematically.

The economic development plan should be finished by the end of phase 1 and should come up with proposals how and where additional funding for educational activities focused on forest issues could be found. In view of the increasing awareness the global community is assigning to the protection of forests, respective opportunities do exist.

Rating: 2

3.3.5 Secure monitoring data from the reserve

The Z. staff has been provided with modern computer equipment by the project and seems to use it skilfully. According to the staff, important monitoring data are constantly entered and processed.

The task has successfully been started. Despite the huge amount of formerly collected data which must be transformed and entered in an agreed form, the target seems to be achievable without major problems.

Rating: 4

3.3.6 Compile and review existing knowledge about pristine taiga and make it available

The elaboration of a bibliography of all relevant studies and books of the last 70 years is in its final editing stage and will be available at the end of phase 1. An English version is planned.

Rating: 4

3.3.7 Arrange publicity and initiate international contacts for the Reserve

A considerable number of articles by international journalists, some of them having visited the reserve on the invitation of the project coordinator, have been published, and several TV presentations have been broadcast outside Russia. Work is under way to make information on the Zapovednik available on Internet by the end of phase 1. (For international contacts, see chapter 3.3.2).

However, a really conceptual approach to continuous media and PR work outside Komi and Russia is missing. To fully achieve the target, this should be done by a specialist and should take advantage of the opportunities of interested groups, as e.g. the WWF network.

Rating: 4

3.3.8 Produce written materials about the Reserve and the pristine taiga

Several publications are in preparation right now:

- a short illustrated introductory guide to the Reserve, which will be published also in English and German
- a more comprehensive volume, presenting the Reserve in a popular way, but with scientific background
- a richly illustrated book for children about the Reserve, combining fiction with encyclopaedic information

However, a number of important questions as translations, printing, and marketing still remain still to be asked.

Rating: 3

3.3.9 Produce films about the Reserve and the pristine taiga

Provided with semi-professional video equipment by the project, a team of two naturalists/TV specialists work on four 20 minutes films on topics such as pristine forest, P-I Z., traditional and sustainable forestry. These films will be shown repeatedly on the regional Komigor TV channel and will be distributed, together with additional didactical material, to schools for educational purposes ("school package").

Equally with support of the project, the same team produces the new 30 minutes Nature Magazine "Ver Va" for Komigor TV, which presents 3-4 different topics in each issue and is broadcast 3x/month at different times until end of 1998.

Despite the costs, which are higher than expected, the task is successfully under way. In view of the importance of TV as mass media and its potential for building up awareness, this project line should by all means be continued until the end of phase 1. To fully achieve the target, a closer cooperation between project team and TV team should be sought, in order to find optimum synergy. In addition, a more in-depth analysis of the TV productions by a Russian specialist could help to further improve the quality.

Rating: 4

3.3.10 Survey of valuable forests outside the Zapovednik as an education activity for Komi students

The co-operation of Komi students is integrating part of the Survey of pristine forests (see 3.1.). As a result of the considerable delay in making this survey, the question of co-operation with Komi students has not yet been addressed. Most probably, this will be no longer possible before the end of phase 1.

Rating: 1

3.3.11 Carry out education of local society, promoting the values of the protected areas

In 1997, an official Education Department within the Z. structure was created, staffed with 4 people. During last summer, approximately 50 school classes from the region with 600 pupils have been received at the Zapovednik Yaksha Headquarters for a half or full day standard programme. Facilities for this programme such as video equipment and seminar room, establishment of a special nature trail and a new exhibition in the Museum were provided by the project, as well as the audio-visual equipment and the covering of the travel costs for the approx. 100 lecture visits to schools in the region by Z. staff during winter.

A sociological survey of the local population has been financed by the project, showing clearly that the presence and necessity of the Z. are generally accepted, but that there is no special interest and no imagination on how to support it. Obviously, in the current situation of a Zapovednik closed to the public, the local population has other problems than caring about the Reserve.

Even if education and awareness building are considered as official tasks of the Z. now, there is no obvious enthusiasm to be felt among the staff. The respective training courses provided by the Environmental Education Centre Zapovedniki (see part 3) are considered as very helpful, but only one staff member has taken part yet. Therefore, the didactical skills within the Education Department - mainly former researchers - are still rather limited.

To better achieve the target, continuous training and exchange of experience (through the Environmental Education Centre Zapovedniki, see part 3) and coaching “on the spot” by an education and awareness building specialist of the project team should help to improve the professional quality. Teachers training courses to get a “multiplier effect” and improvement of the accommodation facilities (“Kindergarten”) are further prerequisites for increasing the still modest number of students contacted inside and outside the Reserve. Finally, simple assessment methods should be introduced to get a direct feedback from the school classes and their teachers on the education and awareness building activities.

Rating: 2

3.3.12 Training of the Zapovednik staff to increase its ability to meet new demands

(see further comments on this issue in part 4)

Up to now, staff training has taken place in the fields of Legislation and Ranger Services as well as in Education and Awareness building - both 2-week courses provided by outside institutions (see parts 3 and 4) - each attended by 1 member of the Zapovednik staff -, and in grant / fundraising skills for scientists and in handling new computers, both internal courses provided by the project. All external and internal training courses have been positively assessed by the participants from the Zapovednik staff. Further training activities such as Fire Protection (to be held in Canada) and Learning English (internal training) are in preparation.

Even if training activities have taken place, they are still far from substantially increasing the staff's abilities to meet all new demands. To fulfil the target, a need assessment should be carried out to define clearly in which fields internal and external training opportunities should be sought with priority.

Rating: 2

3.4 Issues and Constraints

The ambiguous attitude of Russian society towards the profound challenges perestroika imposes on them influences awareness building, education and training as well as other aspects of the project work. Little individual initiative and flexibility, strong belief in vertical hierarchies and lack of tradition in participatory processes, to mention only a few characteristics, hamper education and awareness building work considerably. To find dedicated, open and competent persons willing to co-operate with the project, either as staff members or as partners in institutions and administration, is therefore a main prerequisite for any progress in the programme. It is understood that under the present circumstances, this task is difficult and time consuming and might not only have been an obstacle for faster progress in the past two years, but also will be a permanent constraint for the years to come.

Similarly, building up professional competence and capacity is a process which takes much time. This is not only true for the education and training work as the proper task of this project component, but also for the project team itself: good trainers must be trained in an even better way. Environmental education as well as awareness building in the local population need modern didactical skills which are not yet commonly known in Russia. Even if there are very promising initiatives in this field (e.g. Environmental Education Centre Zapovedniki, see part 3), it will take a long time for the new approach to be implemented on a broader scale.

Learning, education and awareness building are generally not linear, but very complex processes, influenced by numerous factors and often only with long term effects. Therefore an assessment of results stemming directly from such activities is hardly possible. Education and awareness building are too often conceived as short term instruments to achieve concrete conservation goals - a misunderstanding which often results in defining utopian targets and finally ends in frustration. This project component is no exception in this direction.

Finally, the shortage of funds is an ever present constraint. To repeat: if there is no money to cover the travel costs for Russian students and experts to come to the Zapovednik, and if no solution can be found to improve the travel and accommodation facilities, the overall purpose of this project component ("To develop an education and training centre in Pechoro-Ilych Reserve") will not be achieved.

3.5 Conclusions

In view of the major obstacles and constraints mentioned above, the project component awareness building, education and training - as far as it concerns the Pechoro-Ilych Reserve - has started in a generally satisfactory manner. Thanks to the clear and competent leadership of the project executant, Dr. Przemyslaw Majewski, and to his dedicated young staff, all activities according to the project proposal are either under way, have just started or are in an advanced stage of preparation. Especially the development and implementation of a mandatory education curriculum for students in forestry and biology is a remarkable step forward. The chances of fulfilling most of the targets by the end of phase 1 are fair.

Nevertheless, there are some considerable delays according to the original schedule, partly due to the known difficulties, partly due to an underestimation of the manifold problems or to an overestimation of the possibilities of all project partners. In the multitude of daily problems to be solved, a high self-discipline is required to focus on the priority tasks as they are set by the original project proposal.

The project team's approach to the fulfilment of education, awareness building and training tasks is a very pragmatic one, using the limited capacities in staff, all opportunities and the (few) experts wherever and whenever they could be found. However, this approach has the disadvantage of not always being very systematic, giving a rather fragmented picture of the respective activities. In addition, professional expertise in the field of education and awareness building is lacking in the project team and can only partly be compensated by an outside expert (Luc Delarzes from WWF Intl.). To fully reach the targets, the project team should permanently dispose of professional capacity in education and related issues, and should further be assisted by the WWF Intl. expert. A closer co-operation with the Environmental Education Centre Zapovedniki could help the same purpose.

Throughout the Komi programme, a multitude of expressions such as education, environmental education, ecological education, awareness building, training, information etc. are used. It is not always clear to which targets, activities and focal groups these expressions refer. Clearer definitions of education, awareness building, training and related tasks, as well as realistic targets and appropriate methods for monitoring and evaluation could help to avoid further confusion and to better focus the work up to the end of phase 1.

The component education, awareness building and training is closely linked to the two other components of the Komi programme. Therefore it seems not logical that it is presented as an additional task with separate targets and with a separate budget line. An integration of education and related issues into the two other components would emphasise their importance as a prerequisite for achieving their goals and would give a clearer picture of the real costs for these components. Education as a separate component with a separate budget would be justified in case environmental education on a Komi wide level is to be introduced, as it is under consideration for phase 2 right now.

Analysing the needs in nature conservation and sustainable development in Komi Republic, and taking into consideration the limited capacities of WWF/SDC, the following priorities should be set (see also Recommendation 5):

- 1) first priority in education, awareness building and training in phase 2 of the programme should be given to the Model Forest project.
- 2) with second priority, a Komi-wide environmental education programme should be developed and introduced, provided that the official school system is ready and able to carry it out.
- 3) with third priority, the ongoing education project in Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik should be continued, but fully concentrating on securing its purpose as "education and training centre for boreal forest ecology and conservation for national and international students and experts".

3.6 Recommendations

Regarding Phase 1:

1) Look for an Education/Awareness building specialist

in order to bring professional competence and additional capacity into the project team. Therefore the right person should be sought with high priority inside and outside Komi Republic, in order to have him/her ready for the beginning of phase 2 at latest. In any case, continue the cooperation with Luc Delarzes/WWF Intl.

2) Improve the co-operation with the Environmental Education Centre Zapovedniki

in order to get professional assistance and exchange of experience in the field of awareness building.

3) Help to improve the accommodation facilities in the reserve

in order to reach a minimum standard for national and international guests, in initiating and supporting (ev. co-financing) private initiatives and in training local people how to run their own respective business.

4) Clarify definitions and targets for education and related tasks

in order to properly focus the remaining time and means on commonly understood activities.

5) Establish a workplan with clear priorities

in order to focus the remaining time and means on the fulfilling of the activities and targets fixed in the project proposal.

Regarding Phase 2:

6) Integrate education, awareness building and training into the programmes and budgets of the project components Pechoro-Ilych Reserve and Model Forest

in order to get a clearer picture of measures and costs for each of these two programme components.

7) Concentrate training, education and awareness building on Model Forest project

in order to concentrate the limited funds on the priority needs in conservation and sustainable development of Komi Republic. Further support of the Pechoro-Ilych Zapovednik should be restricted to facilitating education work and study tours for national and international students and experts.

8) Initiate a Komi-wide environmental education programme

by proposing and preparing a respective concept, in close co-operation with Komi education authorities and other stakeholders. The programme should be implemented by the official school system, with support from the project for teachers training, didactical material, etc. Make use of all possible synergies by close co-operation with the Environmental Education Centre Zapovedniki.

4. Generic Issues

4.1 Co-operation of the WWF Project with Governmental Institutions and Counterparts

In this chapter, the achievements of the Komi-Project are analysed exclusively with regard to its co-operation with governmental institutions (GOs). The planning document does not give clear indications concerning the institutional strategy; only during implementation has it been developed by the project step by step. Therefore, the approach applied is integrative and does not focus on specific results but on generic or comprehensive aspects. Questions are raised whether the strategy was well oriented.

(Rating of related objectives: see in chapters 1, 2 and 3).

4.1.1 Achievements

In the field of co-operation with the governmental institutions, the following achievements are observed at a general level:

- "the ice is broken": the initial negative GO's attitude towards the project has changed towards co-operation,
- the accreditation of the WWF Komi office is achieved,
- agreements with different institutions are signed: Committee of Forest of Komi (9/96), Institute of Biology of Russian Academy of Science (9/96) and Government of Komi (1/97), Archangelsk Forest Institute (97), Northern Forest Inventory Enterprise (98).
- the regional board, established to monitor the project, is an adequate institutionalisation of the co-operation with the institutions,
- the WWF Komi office has contributed in a very substantial way to the capacity building at institutional level,
- the applied grant-scheme is under the current situation the most flexible and efficient way to take advantage of existing human resources and to facilitate change (informal approach),
- the Komi Government presented the WWF project at the Northern Forum and invited WWF for a direct participation in the next meeting.

Particularly concerning the Zapovednik the WWF project has:

- contributed to some initial changes of the organisational structure of the Zapovednik,
- WWF Komi facilitated the counterpart-contribution of Komi Government to Zapovednik (from regional budget and regional environmental fund),
- started to facilitate the development of a plan to involve the buffer zone in the conservation area.

Particularly concerning the Model Forest the WWF project has:

- achieved that the concept of a Model Forest has been signed at Republican level, and is adopted as an overall Komi forest policy (definition of a regional programme), although until now it has focused mainly on technical aspects,
- achieved a sound positioning of WWF within the institutional context,
- well established a working group with stakeholders,
- created the innovative group (for Forestry Unit), although it is functioning until now outside the unit,
- achieved the strong support of local logging companies,
- established contacts with one foreign company (IKEA), which motivates the participating stakeholders to follow the overall goal and to start certification process,

- established very good relations with the local administration and is lobbying at that level for a broader participation of local people.

4.1.2 Issues and Constraints

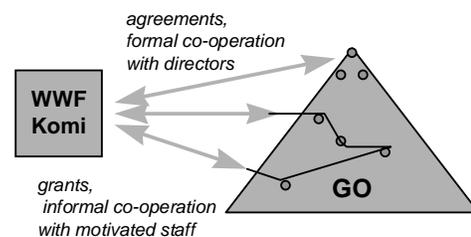
4.1.2.1 Overall co-operation of the Komi Project

The project is and/or has been confronted with the following obstacles:

- vertical inner-institutional structures hinder decision making, management and participatory approaches,
- generally the attitude of GOs to NGOs is reluctant, although this is gradually improving
- reluctant attitude of GOs to the involvement of local stakeholders, although this is gradually improving.
- Institutions' lack of problem oriented strategies,
- institutional transition towards the young and dynamic generation is still at the beginning.

a) The grant scheme, an optimal solution to cope with the obstacles at institutional level

The project was very flexible and highly efficient to cope with its obstacles at institutional level, by adopting a grant-scheme that allows to contract young and motivated staff of GO institutions for project specific tasks. At current situation this scheme seems to be the most flexible and efficient way to take advantage of existing human resources and to facilitate change at institutional level (informal approach).



It widens the range of the project, is flexible and provides good results.

Some interviewees mentioned the wish that the grant scheme were transformed into a more formal co-operation, where the director of the respective institution would assume the responsibility over the grants and decide which staff should be involved and which goals should be taken into consideration.

Federal institution representatives also criticised the fact that with its grant scheme, WWF Komi "starts acting through governmental institutions, carrying out its project within the state institutions and interfering in such a way with the state interests", although they also underlined their full recognition of the generally good co-operation and the important input of the NGO.

Despite the critics from institutional side, as mentioned above, the evaluation team is convinced that the scheme is very effective at the current situation, and should be continued.

It seems to correspond rather well with the possibilities of WWF as an NGO. If, at the same time, WWF's role were further concentrated on or shifted to the one of a facilitator (and differ more clearly from a co-operate partner in technical co-operation), the grant scheme would most probably also get a better support at the institutional level.

4.1.1.1 Securing the Pechoro-Ilych Reserve (Zapovednik)

Although the planned objectives concerning the institutional strengthening are mainly achieved, we consider as short-comings at conceptual level that:

- no agreement with the Zapovednik was signed,
- the institutional relation of project to Zapovednik is mainly bipolar, and the role of WWF Komi does not seem soundly defined,
- the strategy of WWF towards Zapovednik consists primarily in subsidising state functions, and its current role is not fully coherent / optimal with the one in the long run as a facilitator of changes in inter-institutional relations,
- the sustainability of investments in Zapovednik is not guaranteed, future operational costs were not assessed,
- a "working group" for the Zapovednik (similar to Model Forest) has still not been established,
- the participation of the local population is not as advanced as it should be.
- a rational management of the funds of the Zapovednik does not seem to have been achieved.

a) Physical project presence at the Zapovednik ?

For the establishment of an intensive working relationship with the Zapovednik, WWF encountered mainly the following obstacles:

- the site of the WWF Komi office in Syktyvkar and its distance to the Zapovednik (more or less 1 working day by train),
- difficulties to find young professionals to work permanently at the Zapovednik site,
- conservative organising structure of the Zapovednik, and no desire for any changes,
- Zapovednik staff is in a much better position in comparison with settlements of loggers surrounding it; this hinders motivation for reforms,
- Zapovednik staff is used to isolation and is afraid of opening to the world.

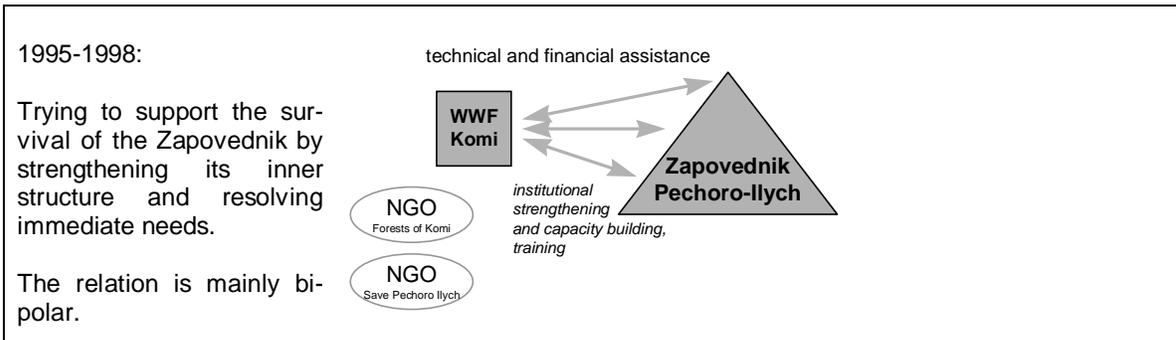
In consequence:

- its relationship and technical assistance with the Zapovednik is not intensive, in our consideration not intensive enough to achieve its overall goals,
- and in order to avoid time-consuming trips, it is mainly directed from Syktyvkar (the Zapovednik staff visits the WWF Komi office); thus, the role of the technical assistant is converted figuratively into a co-ordinating one (given also the fact of its financial responsibilities and contributions).

b) The adequate role and strategy in the co-operation with the Zapovednik Pechoro-Ilych?

When WWF Komi started in 1995/96 to establish its co-operation, the Zapovednik Pechoro-Ilych was passing through a deep crisis of financing, motivation and geographic as well as institutional isolation, and required reform. In accordance with the planning document, the project gave emphasis in the provision of technical and financial assistance. Following several interviewees, WWF Komi facilitated the counterpart-contribution of the Komi Government to the Zapovednik (financed from regional budget and regional environmental fund). Thanks to the project, the Zapovednik has at current situation a better basic equipment and higher motivation, and thanks to the additional resources from the regional level, its financial situation has improved substantially. However, neither an opening of the Zapovednik from its isolation, nor a shift to a younger generation have been reached.

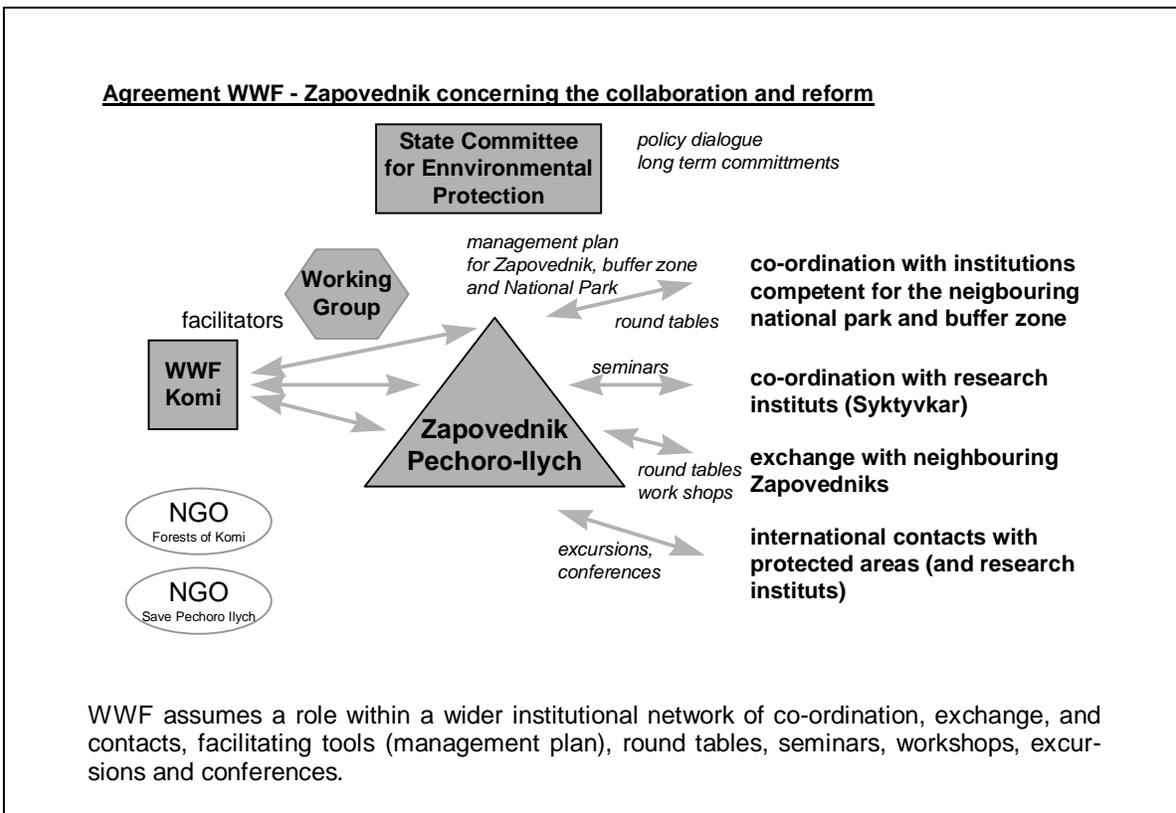
With regard to the past, the strategy of the WWF Komi concentrated on the institutional strengthening and capacity building, and its role was mainly one of technical and financial assistance. Although it seems that this strategy and role were essential in the past, it is questionable whether they are the most optimal and efficient ones for an eventual future collaboration. If the disposition and capacity for inner reform of the Zapovednik is not given, should WWF not change its role towards facilitation within a network of wider relations of the Zapovednik?



If any second phase were approved:
Finance mainly the reform, by facilitating the policy dialogue and inter-institutional co-operation ! (???)



No longer subsidise state responsibilities but supplement optimally assistance towards reform ! (???)



c) Economic aspects of the co-operation with the Zapovednik

When the co-operation started, the Zapovednik Pechoro-Ilych had no real long term strategy but short term survival attitude, due to its overall financial crises and scarce resources. In consequence the equipment provided by WWF seem to have satisfied mainly the immediate needs, but did not embody a long term objective. For example, 8 computers were bought, we guess basically for the 8 researchers, without it being defined whether WWF should contribute in strengthening the research programme.

The question remains: who will assume the operation cost (including maintenance) of all equipment provided, once the Swiss financing is finalised? Although we understand that the financial support was in accordance with the planning document and was highly essential and relevant to improve the physical infrastructure and basic operations of the Zapovednik, further financial co-operation should clearly be subscribed to an overall plan, and should guarantee maintenance of the capital investments.

A further question to ask is whether an NGO should subsidise over a long period what are really the responsibilities of the Government itself? It is true that WWF Komi has done a very good job by facilitating the Komi contribution to the Zapovednik. With a view to the future, we conclude that such a contribution should be guaranteed in the long run (where WWF could play again a role of facilitator), and we believe that the potential of further co-financing is still not explored.

d) Contribution to a reform of the Zapovednik ?

There is no doubt that the project contributed to the physical strengthening of the Zapovednik. However, it did not give emphasis to a structural reform, and the main crucial issues of the policy are not really addressed (see chapter 3).

e) An agreement with the Zapovednik, the basis for reform ?

While WWF Komi signed several agreements with Governmental institutions and institutes, it decided not to sign a similar one with the Zapovednik, as the spirit for co-operation developed mutually very well.

We are fully convinced that a future co-operation with the Zapovednik should be well oriented towards the reform of the crucial policy issues, and therefore the willingness of the Zapovednik to make structural reforms and the willingness of the competent parties to continue financial support (e.g. as proposed by the WWF Moscow office, by fixing a percentage of the budget for the Zapovedniks) should be a condition. It would also allow WWF to move from subsidising governmental responsibilities towards facilitating supplementary actions that are directly oriented to the opening of the Zapovednik and to its reform.

4.1.1.2 Development of Models for Sustaining Boreal Forests (Model Forestry)

As mentioned above, the positioning of the project within the institutional context of model forestry seems very soundly designed. In addition to the direct institutional co-operation, an independent, inter-institutional "working group" has been established, and a clear vision of WWF Komi exists on how to develop and integrate an "innovation group" in the Priluzye Forest Unit.

Furthermore, with the Forestry Planning bureau, WWF has found a technically competent partner for the practical implementation of forestry planning and could also play a key role for the multiplication of the model forest experience. However, its mayor constraint is that its approach still does not give attention to the participation of the local population in the planning process.

Although the project generally follows its planned activities, the following conceptual shortcomings were observed:

- the concept of model forest is still rather general,
- until now, no economic analysis of model forest has been made,
- the structure for inter-institutional co-operation has never been assessed concerning financial sustainability,
- no real strategy exists for any policy dialogue concerning the crucial factors for any reform towards sustainable forestry (tax, economic instruments and incentives, institutional aspects).
- no network with international partners for technical assistance in forestry, and no alliances are established.

On the other hand, we observed as potentialities:

- that regional program for model forest is accepted as Komi overall forest policy (it focuses on technical aspects only!)
- that the role of competent state institutions is well addressed, providing a pool of human and financial resources for the multiplication of the experience,
- the overall awareness that timber exportation will be subject to international certification, and that even at federal level certification might be introduced.

a) Main constraint: the lack of institutionalised experience of WWF International in co-operation in the field of sustainable forestry, and the role of WWF in its co-operation towards sustainable forestry (model forest)

In the process of building up and promoting the theoretical concept of model forest, WWF Komi successfully played a role as facilitator and reached a sound position within the institutional context.

However, it is so far not clear what role WWF shall and can optimally play in the future, particularly in the field of the practical implementation of a model forest. The evaluation team is mainly concerned with the fact that WWF International has only little institutionalised experience in forestry, and WWF Russia, Moscow office, has no forester in its team. WWF International and Russia will neither be in a position to give adequate professional support, nor to provide a network of alliances for a technical co-operation in forestry.

However, WWF has experience in facilitating the process towards certification.

Therefore, WWF should concentrate in facilitating the process towards sustainable forestry, building-up institutional and public awareness, assisting the definition of criteria, matching inter-sectoral contacts, and playing out its role within the global alliance with the World Bank. For

the practical implementation, however, the alliance with competent co-operating partners in forestry should be promoted.

b) Need for economic tools

Although it was not planned, we consider it as a conceptual short-coming that not enough attention has been given so far to economic aspects and tools. Particularly there is an urgent need of an economic analysis of cost and benefit of model forest. It should include non timber benefits, and specify different types of beneficiaries.

It would not only be a tool in the co-operation with the institutions involved but also very valuable towards the participation of the local population.

c) Potential for success and a multiplication / transfer of model forest ?

For the successful achievement of sustainable forestry (model forest) the following questions are important:

- Are there under the current situation any economic interests for the logging and the commercialising companies to shift to sustainable forestry?
- Which are the legal, institutional and financial conditions that promote the change?

Economic aspects will play an important role for the successful achievement of model forest, and also with view to a possible multiplication of the experience and its transfer to other areas. It is pertinent to underline:

- According to the World Bank, investment cost in Russian Forestry will not have sufficient return in the near future.
- Federal representatives interviewed by the team, mentioned that in some other schemes of model forest, investment cost is assumed by the co-operating party.
- WWF Komi has not the intention to assume investment cost for the practical implementation of its model forest scheme.

We consider the position of WWF Komi as crucial to concentrate on its role as facilitator and providing training and education, and not to contribute substantial investment cost (infra-structures, equipment, etc.). There is greater probability that the scheme might have a chance for multiplication.

Otherwise it would even be questionable from the point of view of international market rules. As long as the legal, institutional and financial framework is not sufficiently developed towards a multiplication of model forest, it would even be questionable whether the commercialising companies of certified timber produced in the model area are not the final beneficiaries of subsidised investments in the area.

Although we reconfirm basically the position of WWF Komi, we also conclude again that without an economic analysis of cost and benefits of the sub-project it is not possible to address the above questions in a correct way.

d) Contribution to reform ?

Apart from economic aspects, the framework conditions for the successful multiplication of the model forest concept seem at this stage to be a wide ranging institutional and policy reform, particularly:

- the reform of the tax-system and the introduction of economic instruments (incentives),
- a institutional reform (inter-institutional co-operation, inner-institutional structures and functions, training) and additional human and financial resources.

So far, the project is focusing in a rather general way on aspects related to policy. However, the crucial limitations for a policy dialogue and a successful multiplication of the model forest seem not to be well addressed. It is questionable, therefore, how far the sub-project will contribute to real reform.

The evaluation team is conscious that such a reform takes time and needs efforts that go far beyond the range and reach of the project itself; however, the basic questions should be raised and the objectives and methods be compatible as well as the information be collected, processed and presented in such a way that it can be used in the discussion of policies.

4.2 Project Management, Organization and Development

4.2.1 Achievements

At the level of Project management and organisation, the evaluation team affirms with admiration that WWF Komi Office can show some quite important achievements, which are listed as follows:

- good motivated team and net of associated experts are established,
- grant system widens the range of the project, is flexible and provides good results,
- well organised scheme for administration of grants and accounting,
- process oriented planning seems to be correct approach in the changing context, and considering that WWF has initiated its work only in 1995 (see also short-comings),
- accounting system combines optimally budget-lines (according to WWF-I) and logframe-code (according to project activities),
- logframe introduced and implemented, providing a basis for structuring the strategies (see also short-comings).

4.2.2 Issues and Constraints

The evaluation team observed the following short-comings:

- the team and the net of associated experts are not sufficiently interdisciplinary (lack of economist, specialist in education and training, lawyer),
- the process oriented planning has the risk that crucial strategic aspects are not well addressed (see also achievements),
- the elaboration of several logframes is not sufficiently based on participatory methods; among others, the initial logframe was done only at office level by 2 persons (see also achievements),
- lack of economic analysis as management and planning tool (concerning the Zapovednik and the Model Forest),
- despite existing tools, not enough attention is paid to financial management,
- lack of a monitoring system,
- no feedback from WWF-I and SDC to reports,
- there is no steering committee (WWF Komi, WWF-I and SDC),
- there is no strategy for co-financing and fund-raising and the potentials are not evaluated,
- although the Moscow Office has a substantial budget in this project, little input is perceived from the Komi perspective, and the co-ordination has functioned only in recent months; the contribution of the Moscow office is directed mainly to other forest projects and only little to Komi.

The following obstacles were observed:

- lack of capacity and particularly overload of project co-ordinator to attend to staff and grants, and to dedicate the necessary time to all further tasks; lack of capacity of permanent technical staff to dedicate sufficient time to inter-institutional relations,
- distance of WWF Komi office to two project areas and in between the two projects increases operational costs and consumes too much travelling time,
- reporting takes too much time (WWF-I; WWF-UK, Komi Government).

With a view to the future, the following potentialities exist:

- of superior importance is that the capacities created, as well as the work-organisation and the well functioning, are a good basis for further and more efficient activities,
- potential for co-financing seems relevant, what would contribute to a reduction of the dependency on Swiss funding and would integrate some activities better in a network of different sources and achieve better sustainability (e.g. according to interviewees, EBRD has

a budget-line to finance training; ROLL provides grants for the replication of lessons learnt and could finance activities of local counterparts).

Last but not least, the following constraints were observed:

- the distance of the WWF Komi office to and in between the two project areas hinders the originally intended combination and synergy of the approach to the Zapovednik and the Model Forest (in the buffer zone),
- the organisational structure is too "horizontal",
- the lack of a WWF decision concerning its engagement with Komi (time horizon) is a constraint for the development of a clear office strategy,
- the high dependency of the Komi project and the WWF Komi office on Swiss funding is a high risk for sustainability.

a) Process oriented planning

Considering the relatively young institutional experience of WWF in Komi and Russia, and the speed and complexity of the transition and the change of the Russian context, the process oriented planning approach, as applied by WWF Komi, seems highly appropriate.

However, the advantages of a wider flexibility may turn into risk if such a planning tool is not complemented by further instruments and the risks of such a planning are not well handled, for example:

- How to orient the re-planning, if no overall strategy exists?
- Need for basic analysis to guide the re-planning (e.g. economic analysis of model forest),
- How to guarantee some continuity, efficiency and sustainability of investments, when the objectives may change within short periods?
- How to monitor activities?

As evaluators we found that:

- it was sometimes difficult to know to which document we should refer our assessment,
- that the changes generally made the assessment more complex,
- and finally, that the project did not really cope with the disadvantages of the approach.

b) Time consuming reporting, no feed-back, as well as lack of monitoring

The Komi office is reporting to the Russian Government as well as to WWF International, for each party following its specific scheme. Double efforts are the consequence: however, this seems to be unavoidable.

The evaluation team confirms the usefulness of the reports as a source of information for the assessment of achievements and obstacles, and for the general understanding of the evolution of context and project. The reports have a good quality and rather systematic presentation.

However, according to the Komi project co-ordinator, reporting takes too much time, and feedback is little to nothing. Based on the interview, it seems obvious that the reports are more an administrative charge than a management tool.

Furthermore, the evaluation team observed the lack of a systematic monitoring of the project activities. The consequence is that some activities are behind the time schedule without any correcting measures being taken.

The ways to improve the current situation are:

- introduce a systematic and lean monitoring of the project activities,
- further systematise reporting,
- design monitoring and reporting in a compatible way,

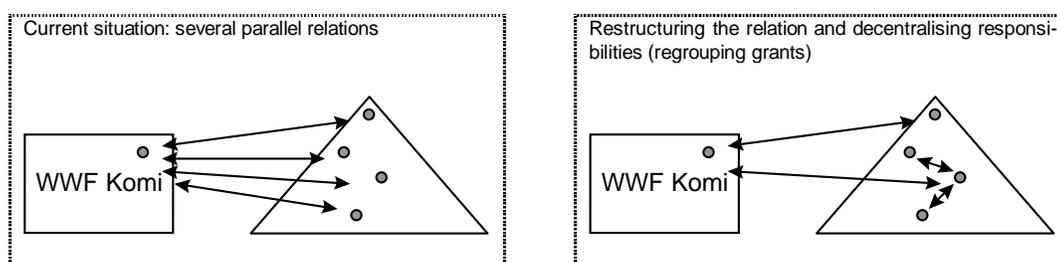
- feedback by WWF International and SDC is necessary, the most practical solution could be through the introduction of a "steering committee".

c) Permanent overload of the project co-ordinator

In response to the vertical schemes in the Russian institutions, WWF has opted for a rather horizontal scheme of organisation. Although, on paper, both schemes seem to differ completely, in practice they turn out to be rather similar. In fact, all important responsibilities and tasks rely on the project co-ordinator who holds direct relations with most of the associated experts and with the institutions. In consequence, the WWF project co-ordinator is permanently overloaded with work.

In general terms, there is a clear need for a diversification of the responsibilities within the team, and parallel to it for additional specialists who assume sector responsibilities.

It is also obvious that the current grant scheme with several parallel relations with experts of one institution could be optimised through a further restructuring of the relations as shown in the two following graphs:



In the same way, it seems to the evaluation team that in a possible second phase of further transfer of responsibilities to the institutions and a clearer distinction of roles should be a way to go (e.g. in the search for a diversification of the sources of financing, WWF can match contacts with further financial sources, however the institutions themselves should care for the rest).

The overload of the project co-ordinator is also a consequence of the high diversity of activities. Small activities and grants are in administrative terms often as time-consuming as big ones. A further prioritisation and regrouping of activities would contribute to further reduce the overload of work of the co-ordinator.

With view to a possible second phase, it is worth mentioning that the management capacity should be taken well into consideration during the planning process.

d) The relation between the WWF Komi and WWF Moscow office

Up to this year, WWF Komi received its funds directly from WWF International by bank transfer, except for the budget lines that were within the competence of the Moscow Office. The country team has decided to change this scheme and to involve the Moscow Office in the money transfer.

The evaluation team analysed the schemes and concludes from an independent point of view:

- the financial operations of the Komi office have well functioned in the past and should remain as independent as possible, each additional party may make administration only more complex and slow, and might be a basis for conflicts,
- a decentralised scheme seems more appropriate to develop a regional strategy and to achieve financial sustainability,
- however, the technical co-operation and the exchange of experience between the 2 Offices has not been well defined (WWF Komi knew in the past very little about the contributions of

the Moscow office to this project, although it has a substantial budget for it) and should be intensified on the basis of partnership.

e) High dependency on SDC financing

In the past, WWF Komi had to financial resources: WWF-UK, and Swiss funding through WWF International. However, since the contribution by WWF-UK has been completed, the WWF Komi office and its project depend exclusively on Swiss funding.

The evaluation team is concerned about such situation, as it puts at risk the sustainability of the Komi office and the project itself.

The basic question for any development of a strategy to reduce the dependency on the financial source is: what is the long term policy of WWF towards its Komi office. Shall it be transitory and maintained only during period of Swiss financing, or shall it be established as permanent basis, situated in the eco-region Ural?

Considering the efforts and investments made in order to establish relations, to build-up capacities and to overcome obstacles, it seems rather inefficient and costly, if Komi Office would be closed after Swiss funding ends.

If WWF Komi Office were defined to become permanent, it should develop its own strategy for fund-raising.

Furthermore, with view to the sustainability of the Swiss funded project, it is pertinent:

- to achieve maximum guarantees for adequate financing at federal and regional level of the Zapovednik,
- to promote and achieve maximum co-financing of partner specific activities (e.g.: cost for study trips and education courses at the nature trails should not be financed through the project itself, but through existing budget-lines, as provided by EBRD; or activities that consist basically in the replication of lessons learned could be promoted to ROLL, WWF should only match the contacts, however leave the application directly to the institutions involved),
- to promote and match more counterpart-financing of the institutions and institutes involved,
- not to substitute cost of participating parties, wherever possible.

4.3 Co-operation with other NGOs

So far, the history of NGO's in Komi is rather young. NGOs still play a marginal role in Komi, nevertheless, in the last decade some environmental non-governmental organisations have been established and have started activities. Out of 4 environmental NGOs, worth mentioning, two are internationally based (WWF and Greenpeace).

The WWF Komi office has facilitated the creation of the NGO "Forest of Komi" that has acquired official registration in September 1997. With the assistance of WWF, this NGO develops activities in the fields of scientific research, environmental protection and ecological education. It has organised one exhibition devoted to pristine forests, and several excursions with schools to the museum. Up to date, the NGO has no other financial resources than the ones coming from WWF; however several institutions have been collaborating "in kind" for the realisation of the exhibition. The representatives of the NGO are conscious about the risks related with its financial dependency on WWF, activities to cope with that situations are planned (including local fund raising).

WWF Komi also co-ordinates successfully with the NGO "Save Pechoro River". This non-governmental organisation has been established in 1989 (in times of perestroika, at a moment when public interest for change was at a peak). The organisation has around 200 delegates that represent, following the interviews, more or less a population of half a million. Its main objective is related with the river pollution. The network of "Save Pechoro River" is a potential for WWF. Representatives of the NGO work together with WWF under the grant scheme.

In conclusion, although environmental NGOs are of rather new appearance for Komi, they play without any doubt an important role in the transition process. So far, WWF Komi has played an active role in networking at Komi level with NGO's.

Furthermore, its international basis and background, together with its attitude towards co-operation with governmental institutions situate WWF Komi in an highly potential and relevant role.

(See as well comments on WWF Moscow and Centre Zapovednik in part 3.)

4.4 Stakeholder and Public Participation

There is consensus amongst the Evaluation Team that stakeholders and the general public have been **insufficiently** involved in the project. This applies to both project components. Regarding the Zapovednik, better cooperation between the Zapovednik and the support zone (buffer zone) authorities/local population is needed. In the model forest there is very little communication between forestry authorities and rural forest dependent communities.

Public participation is of particular significance in the model forest area, especially in the light of the dependencies on each other. Management of the forest will only be possible with assistance of the local people, which constitute the work force. Without work force there will be no economic model. And without institutional framework with management responsibilities for the forest area, management would not be possible. In this light it seems logical that good communication between the two factions is developed: of vital importance to a successful working relationship. Stakeholders have to learn to constructively communicate with each other, which eventually will lead to mutual trust, a critical element in Russia's democratization process.

The project could play a key role in facilitating the much needed communication process. Great opportunities have been lost through not involving the public in the log-frame planning process in the project. In general, it seems that logframe planning, as a vital tool for initiating communication between different factions has not been fully understood by the project. The rationale for log-frame planning is:

- to establish communication amongst stakeholders and the public which leads to a continuing dialogue; in this light it is crucial for a successful implementation of log-frame workshops to identify and invite key representatives of all interest groups which must have proven trust of their constituents;
- communication and participation in a workshop serves as a basis for the development of a relationship build on trust and mutual respect; this is vital in the case of the project, in particular with respect to the tedious process of democratization;
- visualization: participants see the products of their contributions displayed in public (written messages displayed on pin-boards); they develop a pride in ownership of ideas which assists in achieving consensus solutions and willingness to cooperate and actively participate in the process.

It should be understood that the most important results of log-frame workshops are the willingness of the participants to actively contribute to the work and to work together. In this light it is suggested to make an effort to choose the right tool for the right occasion. Log-frame planning should mostly been applied as a tool to achieve communication between stakeholders who for social and/or political reasons generally do not have the opportunity to meet and to discuss issues of common interest. 'Brainstorms' should be used for the development of conceptual frameworks and can be confined to key persons with a thorough understanding of the issues at stake. For a simple problem evaluation, a 'SWOT' analysis seems the most appropriate.

Complementary commentaries of the evaluation team leader:

- *The evaluation team attests that within the context of transition the complexity of public participation is high and most of the parties involved have little experience in it, or are reluctant in promoting it.*
- *No doubt there are risks for WWF Komi if public participation were promoted without the necessary care for the overall political processes and the reactions of the state stakeholders involved.*
- *We agree with WWF Komi that participation has to be promoted in a well organised manner, and wrong expectations should not be raised. We therefore support the WWF vision of a well structured procedure.*
- *However, it is underlined that the objectives on participation were not clearly defined in the project document (1995/6), and that WWF indeed could have played a more active role in this field if there had been a specialist at work continuously throughout the project period.*
- *Last but not least, it is also stressed that the criteria of transition, such as public participation, have gathered increasing importance within SDC and were not agreed in such an explicit way in the plan-*

ning period.

4.5 Conclusions

4.5.1 Cooperation of WWF Komi with governmental institutions

4.5.1.1 Overall co-operation of the Komi Project

Quite a number of activities are behind the time-schedule and several technical gaps have been observed.

The Komi project was initially confronted with diverse obstacles at institutional level; however it has successfully coped with most of them. Several of them are substantially minimised.

It has substantially contributed in capacity building. Particularly its contribution to awareness building at institutional level is recognised everywhere and has been relevant.

WWF Komi has established a sound network of contacts that enables it too improve substantially its performance.

The probability for a successful achievement of the objectives is considered generally as good, however not within the time-frame given. An additional period of 3-5 years seems justified and adequate.

Main preoccupations of the evaluation team concerning the future development of the project are:

- the lacking capacity of the project (overload of work),
- the lacking inter-disciplinarity of the project team and its associated experts,
- the high (nearly exclusive) dependency on Swiss funding, what puts sustainability at risk.

4.5.1.2 Co-operation for securing the Pechoro-Ilych Reserve (Zapovednik)

- The relation with the Zapovednik is well established, although it is not intensive enough, furthermore it is too much directed from and based in Syktyvkar. The physical presence of the project at the site of the Zapovednik is low. It is not consistent with the objective of direct technical co-operation.
- The co-operation with the Zapovednik is still too bi-polar. Not enough emphasis is given in facilitating inter-institutional relations and opportunities of contacts (round tables, conferences, excursions) for the opening of Zapovednik from its isolation.
- The strategy is too concentrated on strengthening the Zapovednik Pechoro-Ilych in its fight for survival, rather than on reducing its isolation, facilitating institutional opening and inter-institutional relations. It is oriented towards change from inside, rather than towards reform from outside.
- The project objectives are not sufficiently oriented towards the crucial issue of contributing to a reform of the federal policy on Zapovedniks. The direct contacts with the federal level are insufficient (also as a result of inner capacity) and the co-ordination with the WWF Moscow office have not been adequate.
- The lack of an agreement with the Zapovednik does not enable WWF to make a willingness to reform a condition for its co-operation.

- The initial difficulties of an inter-institutional co-operation of WWF with the Zapovednik are resolved, and the relation is developed in accordance with planning.

- The investments made during phase 1 satisfied mainly immediate needs and were not well directed by a long term strategy. Thus, in consequence, the role of WWF went too much into subsidising state functions.
- With regard to SDC principles: The Zapovednik sub-project is playing a role in the transition process and it is fully consistent with the intention to better combine bilateral projects with international efforts concerning environmental issues (implementation of major conventions, EU criteria, etc.). However, its strategies towards an institutional reform of the Zapovedniks are not yet clearly established (see also conclusions concerning legal framework and policy, as well as participation).

4.5.1.3 Co-operation for developing of models for sustaining boreal forests

- WWF Komi has a clear vision concerning its institutional positioning, and about how to proceed step by step. Until the end of the phase the institutional positioning of the WWF will be rather sound. All major institutional stakeholders and the private sector are involved.
- The financial sustainability of the working group is at risk.
- The lack of institutionalised experience of WWF-International in the field of co-operation in forestry (except the ecological aspects) is a major constraint for the practical implementation.
- Regarding SDC principles: The Model Forest sub-project is playing a role in the transition process, however, its strategies towards an institutional and policy reform are not yet clearly established (e.g. taxes and economic instruments to promote sustainable forestry, public participation in forest planning and implementation).

4.5.2 Komi Project management and organisation

- Project management is well established. The combination of core team with a network of associated experts through grant scheme is an optimal solution.
- There is a permanent overload of project co-ordinator, and a lack of technical capacity in the core team. Without any further strengthening of the team, the project objectives are at risk or the time-schedule will not be achieved.
- There is also a lack of inter-disciplinarity within the project team and the network of associated experts (e.g.: economist, specialists for "public participation" as well as for education).
- There is little presence of the project at the two target areas.
- The high dependency on SDC resources is a risk for the long-term sustainability of Komi Office in general, and of the project activities in particular.

4.5.3 Stakeholder and Public Participation

Within the context of transition, the complexity for public participation is high and most of the parties involved have little experience in it, or are reluctant in promoting it. Although WWF Komi cares for a well structured participation process, its results on public participation are so far not very concrete. It is underlined that the objectives on participation were not clearly defined in the project document (1995/6).

4.6 Recommendations

4.6.1 Co-operation of WWF Komi with Governmental Institutions

4.6.1.1 Overall co-operation of the Komi Project

If SDC and WWF-I approved a second phase for the overall Komi Project:

- transform the 3 sub-projects into 2, by up-grading the current Zapovednik and Model Forest sub-projects into independent projects and by integrating the education and training sub-project directly in the respective new projects,
- increase the capacity and the inter-disciplinarity of the project team,
- define the long term WWF policy concerning its Komi office,
- develop and implement a strategy to reduce the dependency on Swiss funding until end of phase 2 (defining clear financial targets), and increase co-financing of activities.

4.6.1.2 Co-operation for securing the Pechoro-Ilych Reserve (Zapovednik)

For a decision about the future of this sub-project, the following options can be taken into consideration:

- preparedness approach: considering that there are no immediate threats for the area of conservation at the Zapovednik Pechoro-Ilych, WWF does not continue strengthening the Zapovednik but observes and monitors the evolution from its office in Komi, and keeps readiness for action, if ever any serious threats should appear (less cost solution, however does not make profit of the efforts made in phase 1),
- preventive approach, through continued strengthening of the Zapovednik: WWF continues its strategy of phase 1 and further strengthens the Zapovednik in order to prevent any break down of the system with eventual consequences for conservation; it emphasises the essential tools and guaranties the sustainability of its own investments made in phase 1,
- reform approach, giving emphasis to the facilitation of external contacts and directly oriented towards the reform of the Zapovednik: WWF shifts its role from direct co-operation towards facilitation and gives emphasis to setting-up a network of inter-institutional relations; the management plan is understood as a tool of inter-institutional co-operation.

If SDC and WWF-International approved a second phase for the Zapovednik sub-project:

- Sign an agreement with the Zapovednik and make basic conditions that allow for reform (elaboration of management plan, guaranteed financing of federal and regional level, etc.).
- Transform the role of the WWF office into that of real facilitator.
- To SDC: assume as GO a more active role in the policy dialogue.

4.6.1.3 Co-operation for developing of models for sustaining boreal forests

If SDC and WWF-I approved a second phase for the Model Forest sub-project:

- concentrate and further strengthen the WWF role on facilitation.
- cope with the lack of institutionalised WWF-International co-operate experience in forestry through the establishment of alliances with competent institutions and co-operate experience in forestry in Western Europe (e.g.: training, courses, exchange with WSL, ETH-Z, IC), as well as with Forest Administrations (e.g. at Swiss federal and cantonal level).

4.6.2 Komi Project management and organisation

If SDC and WWF-I approved a second phase for the overall Komi project:

- simplify reporting and, for efficient feedback and project orientation, introduce a steering committee for the Komi Project (WWF Komi, WWF-I, SDC),
- reorganise sub-projects by upgrading the sub-projects Zapovednik and Model Forest to 2 independent projects and by integrating the current sub-project education and training in the 2 new projects,
- maintain decentralised scheme of Programme administration (direct financial flow from WWF-I to WWF Komi, and strengthen the technical co-ordination between Moscow and Komi Office,
- further delegate and transfer responsibilities of Komi Project to team, partners and counterparts,
- play a more active role in facilitating counterpart financing for capital investment in Zapovednik and co-financing for training courses,
- define WWF policy towards Komi (time horizon) in order to define adequate strategies for the Komi Office,
- develop and implement a strategy to reduce the dependency on Swiss funding until end of phase 2 (defining clear financial targets), and increase co-financing of activities.

4.6.3 Stakeholder and Public Participation

If SDC and WWF-I approved a second phase for the overall Komi project:

- planning should design specific objectives and targets for public participation,
- the activities should be planned and realised in collaboration with a specialist in this field.