

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT, ACTION AND FUNDRAISING PLAN

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Prepared

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Background

It is vital for a dynamic equilibrium to exist within a community of organisms. In such a community, genetic, species and ecosystem diversity remain relatively stable and is subject to gradual, accountable changes through natural processes. It is therefore imperative that at any point in time there is a natural balance in every ecosystem. It is within this context and in conformity with the Cameroon law no. 92/006 of 12th August 1992 and its decree of implementation no 92/4551PM of 23rd November 1992, that the Association “Ecological Balance” was registered on 31st of December 2016. Eco Balance is an apolitical, not for profit, civil society organisation with registration No 660/G.37/D14/VOL/III/SAJJP and headquartered in Buea, South West Region-Cameroon. It uses the environment as a tool for social change as we seek to reconcile conservation to local livelihoods.

Eco Balance seeks to support the sustainable management of ecosystems by empowering and supporting local communities to independently undertake actions that will bring about balance between society’s increasing demand for natural products and benefits, and the preservation of ecosystem health and diversity.

Given the increasing depletion of the ecosystem and continues need for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation around the world, this organization seeks to put into action the policies that have been set to preserve our ecosystems and protect our environment vis-à-vis human demand for natural products. Ecological Balance is based in Cameroon and for this early stage of the organization, projects will be carried out exclusively in Cameroon. All projects of Ecological Balance are designed to involve community engagement in conservation and environmental protection taking into consideration the conspicuous presence of community needs. Within less than a year of existence, Ecological Balance is building resilience to coastal flooding in the Cameroon Coastal Mangrove Forest Zone.

Our main challenge at this beginning stage is the unavailability of sufficient funds to realize our already designed projects.

Principle

Ecosystem conservation is most successful and sustainable if it is led by people living adjacent to it and if it contributes to their livelihoods.

Vision

We envision a world where every action is environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable for present and future generations.

Mission

Our mission is to empower biodiversity-rich communities to independently undertake actions that guarantee the long term conservation of their adjacent ecosystems.

Values

In synergy with donors and partners we are committed to achieve tangible sustainable impacts in all our projects. We uphold Integrity (honesty, respect, trust worthy, pride, responsibility, keeping promises, helping others) and portray transparency in all our dealings.

Within the team we encourage an environment first mentality, good stewardship, dynamism and flexibility. We thrive in an environment of mutual respect amongst timely, resourceful and creative individuals.

For our beneficiaries, we envisage change from within & solidarity and we encourage them to pursue empowerment not aid

Colours

Our colours are dark or forest green that signifies the rainforest, dark brown for soils, navy blue for water and yellow signifying our happy beneficiaries.

Objectives and key priorities

Objective 1: To stimulate mind shifts about, and encourage action geared at mitigating environmental challenges through conservation education

Environmental education has been a frequently used tool in an attempt to foster positive attitudes towards the environment. Unfortunately, environmental education by providing objective information alone has proven to have little to no success in a permanent attitude change. However, education based on experience and links to emotion may have a higher potential to success. We thus use situations that trigger emotions to drive home messages. For example, mangrove conservation education from the flood point of view.

Priority 1: Cause change in attitude towards the environment. To trigger the critical thinking that local people need to understand the complexities of ecological problems and hence act on their own to conserve natural resources and use them in a responsible manner.

Objective 2: To promote actions geared towards preservation and regeneration of natural resources

Rewild water catchments/shades and deforested landscapes in Cameroon using the innovative and efficient Miyawaki method of reforestation.

Priority 2: Preserve and regenerate natural resources. Incite the safeguarding of natural resources at the community level

Objective 3: To promote local cottage industries for the transformation and marketing of forest and agricultural products by rural women.

Cottage industry connotes the adding of value to raw products. Value is added by taking a raw product to at least the next stage of production. Adding value increases quality, shelf life, ease preparation and ultimately income generated.

Priority 3: Train user groups on sustainable gathering, adding value to and marketing nature based finished goods

Objective 4: Support the conservation of IUCN and CITES listed species and habitats

In order to support the conservation threatened species and habitats, there is often the need to ensure that wild species and their habitat are protected from severe decline/degradation and that viable populations are maintained and where possible, restored. In managing species at risk, it is critical to determine the relative security of all wild species and sort them into categories based on the risk of becoming endangered.

Priority 4: To identify species, landscape and/or ecosystems that are at risk and preserve them while ensuring that others do not becoming at risk.

Plans

Marketing and communication plan

Goals

- Build awareness about Eco Balance’s work and impact locally, nationally and internationally.
- Build local understanding of the relationship between human needs and the environment and hence train individuals at the grass root level to serve as effective advocates.
- Create/forgo partnerships with key partner organizations, citizens and policymakers in the region.
- Increase visibility and raise profile as a credible organization which achieves results in the conservation of habitat/biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources while including people in developing and delivering solutions to environmental challenges.

Table 1: Marketing and communication plan

Target group	Strategy	Tools	Timing	Expected feed back
Communities living adjacent to and depending on natural ecosystems	General Conservation education on the effects of uncontrolled depletion of natural resources to them and their children	-Sensitization campaigns in communities (door to door, social gatherings, community radio)	Quarterly	-Meeting participation -Observed change in attitude towards the environment in community members
Farmers	Training on climate smart agriculture	Hands on training (workshops and seminars)	Semester	-Workshop participation -Incoming inquiries -Observed implementation of taught sustainable

Target group	Strategy	Tools	Timing	Expected feed back
				practices
Students/pupils (for posterity)	School environmental education (EE)	Former lessons, outdoor activities and school eco-clubs	When opportuned	Knowledge evaluation
Journalist (for advocacy)	Environmental reporting	Exchange visits	When opportuned	-Participation - Changes in local and national environmental policies
Government agencies	Partnership	Newsletters, website	Quarterly	-Website usage analytics -Response rate to newsletter
Funders and technical partners	Partnership	Project partnership proposals, newsletters, website	& Always	-Website usage analytics -Response rate to newsletter. -Volunteer referral -Online fundraising rates -External nominations

People Development Plan

Training and development entails formal, ongoing efforts that are made within an organization to improve the performance of its employees. It entails the sharpening of skills, concepts, changing of attitude and gaining more knowledge to enhance the performance of employees. In a bid to maximize the effectiveness of training and development, Ecological Balance has assessed and identified her employees' current training and development needs for the overall growth of the organization as enumerated below. This falls within the context that when an organization invests in improving the knowledge and skills of its employees, the investment is returned in the form of more productive and effective employees.

Table 2: People Development Plan

Area of Development	Specific action	Timing	Cost
Development of need based Conservation education tools (outdoor games, lessons, documentaries etc)	Online course on EE curriculum development	When available	\$500
Resource mobilization (grant writing, charity events, fundraising strategies)	Attend workshops on resource mobilization and practice (at least one proposal developed and submitted every month)	When available	\$1000
Map production	Attend GIS and map production course online	By Oct 2020	\$400
Business plan development	Undertake business plan development course with an expert	By Aug 2021	\$1000
Vegetative propagation techniques including mushroom cultivation	Hands on training in vegetative propagation techniques with Agro-complex Bafut	By Nov 2020	\$600
Others as need arise			\$800

Management Plan

The technical bench of Ecological Balance is made up of the office of the Executive Director (major decisions), the various programs and different projects per program.

Eco Balance operates at the intersection point of the functional, pre-bureaucratic and team organizational structures.

In functionally structured organizations, individuals are grouped by the specific functions they perform. At Ecological Balance, the functional structure will operate at the level of programs. That is, people will be recruited into the various programs by virtue of their skills and educational backgrounds in order to encourage expertise and professionalism. However, in order to prevent people from focusing only on their responsibilities at the expense of the general health of the organization, at the project level, there will be no standardization of tasks. All major decisions will be made by the Executive Director and communication will be done on a one on one basis. This is to enable the Executive Director to keep tract of organizational growth and development. Within each project, teams (with designated team leaders) will be set up to achieve objectives in order to synergize individual competencies to achieve newer dimensions and encourage leadership.

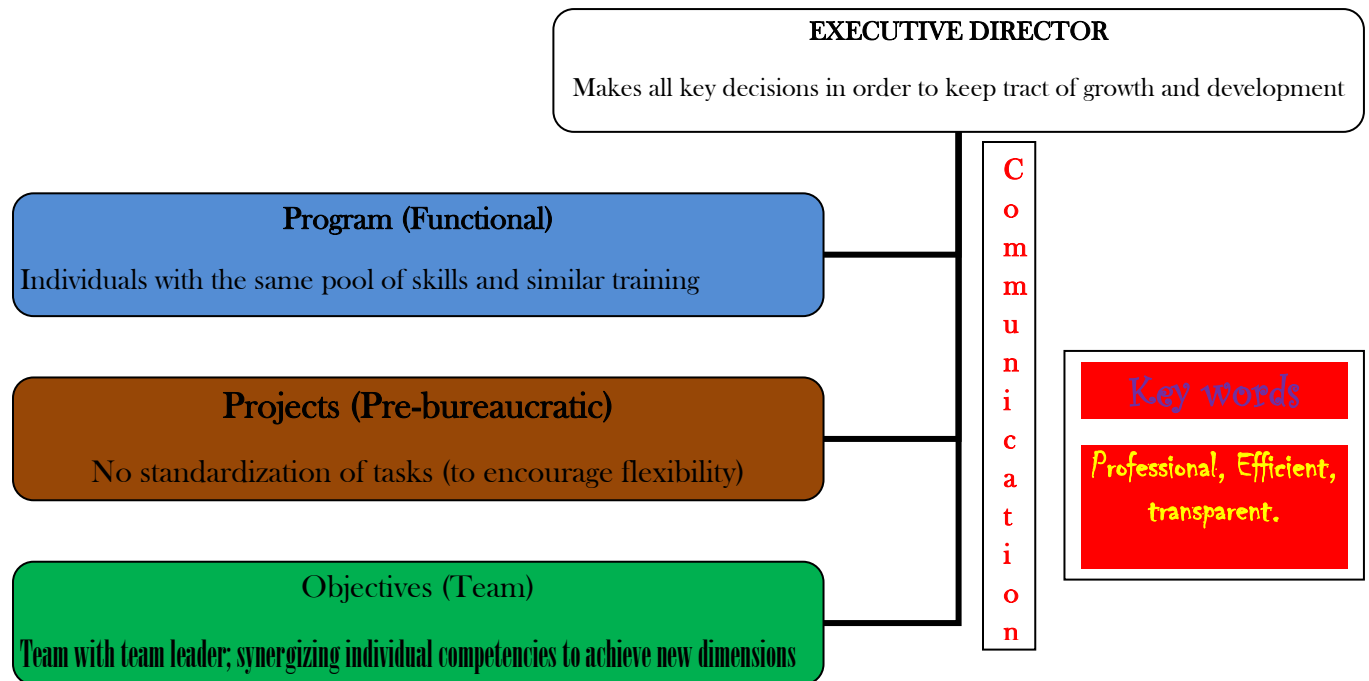


Figure 1: Organizational structure of Ecological Balance

Action plan

Expected output, outcomes and impact of the Strategic Plan

Activities	Output	Outcome	Impact
Objective 1: To stimulate mind shifts about, and encourage action geared at mitigating environmental degradation through conservation education			
-Baseline socio-economic and socio-cultural surveys to identify the causes, routes and key players of environmental degradation in each community -Analyze survey data to ascertain the need for conservation education in a particular aspect -Design conservation education curricula that capitalize on past community experiences and emotional events -Use conservation education to raise awareness on environmental degradation through sensitization campaigns	Specific areas of intervention known Development of critical thinking to understand the complexities of ecological problems	Intrinsic action towards conservation of natural resources Sustainable use of natural resources	Ecological balance
Objective 2: To promote actions geared towards preservation and regeneration of natural resources			
-Survey communities to identify origin, course and other uses of water bodies used for community water supply in each community -Analyze the need and degree of degradation of identified source of water supply	Community participation in management of water resources	Independent community initiated and led actions to conserve water resources	Long term reliability on community water resources

<p>-Mobilize all stakeholders to put in place a participatory action plan for the revitalization and/or conservation of the water source.</p> <p>-Initiate/support the implementation of the action plan (community led water conservation education, village water management committees trained and installed, routine tree planting at watersheds and water catchments, routine fire tracing at water catchments).</p> <p>-Plant Miyawaki forests where necessary</p>			
<p>Objective 3: To promote local cottage industries for the transformation and marketing of forest and agricultural products</p>			
<p>Identify and train user groups on sustainable agriculture and gathering.</p> <p>Train groups on adding value to crops</p>	<p>Increased yields</p> <p>Increased shelf life</p>	<p>Increased incomes</p>	<p>Local cottage industry</p>
<p>Objective 4: Support the conservation of IUCN and CITES listed species and habitats</p>			
<p>Identify and rank the relative security of all wild species (General status)</p> <p>Identify and implement actions designed to restore species at risk to viable, self-sustaining levels</p> <p>Prevent declines of other priority species by addressing recognized threats as soon as possible</p>	<p>Scope, scale and urgency of risks determined</p> <p>Species that are sensitive to human activities and require special management identified</p>	<p>Adaptive management</p>	<p>Recovery of species and ecosystems</p>

<p>Develop landscape-scale habitat conservation strategies using the state framework.</p> <p>Conserve, restore, and enhance habitats using available tools</p>	<p>Recovery plans</p> <p>Single-species/multi species conservation stewardship projects designed</p>		
<p>Objective 5: Monitoring and evaluation</p>			
<p>Functional and effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting system that enables regular learning and adaptive management.</p> <p>Programmes and projects comply with the network’s Project & Programme Management Standards (PPMS)</p>			

Operating Budget/fundraising plan

SN	Activities	2020/\$	2021/\$	2022/\$
Expected Income				
	Grants	35000	42000	50000
	Contributions from board members	2000	2000	2000
Total		37000	44000	52000
Expected Expenditure				
A	Administrative cost			
	Staffing Costs	12000	14000	16000
	Office running costs	3000	3000	3000
	Staff development	1000	1500	1800
	Marketing	800	600	500
Total		16800	19100	21300
B	Program/project cost			
Objective 1: To stimulate mind shifts about, and encourage action geared at mitigating environmental degradation through conservation education				

1	Baseline socio-economic and socio-cultural surveys to identify the causes, routes and key players of environmental degradation in each community	800	1000	1200
2	Analyze survey data to ascertain the need for conservation education in a particular aspect	500	500	600
3	Design conservation education curricula that capitalize on past community experiences and emotional events	500	2000	3000
4	Use conservation education to raise awareness on environmental degradation through sensitization campaigns	4000	4000	5000
Objective 2: To promote actions geared towards preservation and regeneration of natural resources				
5	Survey communities to identify origin, course and other uses of water bodies used for community water supply in each community	700	700	700
6	Analyze the need and degree of degradation of identified source of water supply	500	800	1000
7	Mobilize all stakeholders and put in place a participatory action plan for the revitalization and/or conservation of the water source.	1000	1500	2700
8	Initiate/support the implementation of the action plan (community led water conservation education, village water management committees trained and installed, routine tree planting at watersheds and water catchments, routine fire tracing at water catchments).	3000	4000	5000
Objective 3: To promote local cottage industries for the transformation and marketing of forest and agricultural products				
9	Identify and train user groups on sustainable agriculture and gathering.	500	500	1200

10	Train groups on adding value to non-timber forest products and crops	800	500	300
11	Train groups on marketing of finished groups	500	800	1000
Objective 4: Support the conservation of IUCN and CITES listed species and habitats				
12	Identify and rank the relative security of all wild species (General status)	1000	2000	2000
13	Identify and implement actions designed to restore species at risk to viable, self-sustaining levels	5000	5000	5000
14	Prevent declines of other priority species by addressing recognized threats as soon as possible	400	400	500
Objective 5: Monitoring and evaluation				
16	Functional and effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting system that enables regular learning and adaptive management.	1000	1200	1500
17	Ensuring that programmes and projects comply with the network's Project & Programme Management Standards (PPMS)	0	0	0
Total		20200	24900	30700
Net Surplus /Deficits		0	0	0

SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization is built on the existing gap between conservation and local livelihoods • Dynamic and flexible team (botanist, wildlife and ecological biologist, microbiologist, gender sociologist, economist and ICT/electrical engineers). • All team members are looking forward to a career in conservation. • Team members are bilingual (English and French), young, full of energy and experienced • The organization has the support of renown conservationists and researchers 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization is very young thus there is the lack of a track record to boost image and hence grants • The organization lacks a fiscal sponsor that could facilitate inflow of funds
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing awareness on the need to reconcile conservation with livelihoods • New techniques and the use of modern technology in the field of conservation • Good contacts with government environment department • Social business (availability of funding for startups) • The organization focuses on biodiversity rich, relatively 'virgin' (in terms of research) and somewhat neglected ecosystems • Constituted of individuals with good track records in conservation 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad name given to conservation organizations by predecessors • The existence of more experienced competitors • Resistance from the local communities as some consider conservation a scheme to deprive them of natural resources • The presence of administrative bottle necks • Limited funds to run the organization

Risk Register

Risks Identified	Controls in place	Responsibility
Grant funding is scarce and resources are not available to cover the operating costs of the organization.	Good relationships with government officials. Expertise in grant writing in house. Diversity of income sources developed	Executive Director
Resistance from the local communities	Good conservation strategy put in place	Conservation education team

Success Measures

Measures of Success:	Timeline
Meeting/workshop participation.	After every field visit
Incoming inquiries (life chat, letters of inquiries etc)	Monthly
Website usage analytics	Quarterly
Response rate to direct mail and newsletter.	Quarterly
Volunteer referral	Semester
Online fundraising rates	Monthly
External nominations	Annually

Sustainable development goals



Expected impact

Objective 1: At least 50% of people living around biodiversity rich ecosystems understand their role in ecosystem management

Objective 2: At least 9 Miyawaki forests created to revamp natural ecosystems and recharge ground water

Objective 3: There exist online platforms for the effective selling of beneficiaries' finished goods at much better prices.

Objective 4: About 10% of neglected IUCN/ CITES rich species and/or habitats in Cameroon conserved