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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its inception in 1994, the development of the Institute of Environmental Studies (IES) has been characterised by a generally positive track record. The strengths of IES have been its ability to:

- Access funds for environmental research better than single discipline departments at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ).
- Conduct good local and regional courses.
- Develop an expert database, which enables it to readily access experts.
- Set up regional networks, and
- Publish an impressive number of papers and books written by members associated with the Institute.

Identified challenges have overallly emanated from the high degree of compartmentalization and the inadequate funding of the University as a whole. Personnel in post in the Institute have been clearly overworked due to the inadequate number of posts and there has been limited expertise in the field of the urban environment. The opportunities open to the Institute can be found in the readiness of the international community to fund environmental initiatives. However there are threats to accessing these funds due to increased competition from both local and regional environmental initiatives.

This second five-year strategic plan of the IES seeks to capitalise on the identified strengths and opportunities; to overcome the recognised challenges and to address the threats. The strategic plan is a result of an extensive consultative and participatory process within the IES, with its management and with its stakeholders from the area of the environment.

The IES and its stakeholders have strategically redefined its services as:

- (a) Research and Development*
- (b) Education and Training, and*
- (c) Information, Consultancy and Networking.*

The vision of IES has been set as:

To be (and to be recognized by stakeholders¹ as) a centre for excellence in environmental research and education, for environmental advisory services and as a focal point for environmental networking in Zimbabwe, southern Africa and abroad.

The mission of IES is:

To contribute to stakeholders' sustainable utilization of natural resources, poverty alleviation and prosperity through education, research, advisory services and networking on the environment.

Five main outputs are required to ensure that the above mission is realized. These are:

- Output 1:** The IES is efficiently and effectively managed.
- Output 2:** Human capacities to tackle environmental problems (i.e. to plan and implement environmentally sustainable interventions) are strengthened.
- Output 3:** Contributions to the scientific basis for the management of urban and rural environments are improved.
- Output 4:** Up-to-date information for improved awareness of environmental issues is provided and effectively disseminated.
- Output 5:** Dialogue amongst stakeholders, including scientists, policy makers, and civic society is promoted/facilitated.

The major activities necessary and sufficient for delivering the outputs are specified in the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) summarising the design of the strategic plan (Annex A).

Major performance indicators for the work of the Institute have been set to include:

- A 3% increase in the IES general fund per annum.
- Proper management so that IES is managed with minimum negative deviations from approved plans (e.g. budgets, staffing etc).
- A maximum annual increase of 3% in the number of post graduate students and participants in IES-linked short courses.
- At least three UZ departments are collaborating on postgraduate environmental training by 2003.
- Publication of at least one paper in an international journal by each researcher in IES or researchers in IES write at least one book that is published by an international publisher per year.

¹The stakeholders will include: small holder farmers, the business community, environmental lobby groups, government extension agents, national regional and international research and development organizations, and other university departments

- At least one policy brief produced per year and used to influence environmentally related policies.
- At least two technical/institutional options can be traced to the research of IES-linked projects in the 5 years.
- A minimum of 5 research projects in any one year that will link IES with at least 10 institutions.
- At least three faculties of the UZ are actively participating in joint initiatives under the recognised facilitating role of IES.
- An IES network/networks with at least 100 persons is/are in operation annually.
- An IES web-based meta-database of environmental information established.

The implementation of the strategic plan will be the responsibility of all IES members under the leadership of the Director. Arrangements for implementation of the strategic plan are detailed in Section 9.

Monitoring of progress will be undertaken on an on-going basis through internal evaluation while provision will be made for external mid-term and end-of-project evaluations for all IES projects. Annual operational plans and detailed budgets will be presented at the beginning of each year for all IES projects.

2: BACKGROUND AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

2.1. *Environmental Problems:*

Environmental issues are becoming increasingly important features of national and international agendas. This arises from concerns over:

- Widespread and potentially adverse changes in vegetation cover and atmospheric chemistry that threaten to trigger changes in global climate.
- The environmental and human health hazards of stratospheric ozone depletion.
- Acid precipitation and chemical pollution.
- Deforestation, desertification and the degradation of once productive agricultural lands through erosion.
- Salinization, and nutrient loss, and
- The continuing loss of biodiversity.

Many of these problems are due to patterns of consumption of natural resources in which the rates of extraction exceed the regenerative capacity of the resources and where the rates of release of the resulting waste products exceed the assimilative capacity of the environment.

These problems are compounded within developing countries by rapidly rising populations, poverty, malnutrition, unfulfilled basic needs, widespread unemployment, and continued dependency of a large and increasing number of people on agricultural production from marginal lands. These create their own environmental problems, not least of which is that the socio-economic conditions under which most people in developing countries live force them to over-exploit their environments to survive, even though this simultaneously reduces the prospect of developing more productive and sustainable patterns of resource use. Poverty,

hunger and inequity cannot be eradicated if the resources and the environments on which people depend are degraded or destroyed.

2.2. Environmental Activities in the University of Zimbabwe:

The above problems are also encountered in the environmental agenda in Zimbabwe in general and in the University of Zimbabwe in particular. The University of Zimbabwe is comprised of 10 Faculties, 80 Departments, and 9 Research Support Units. About 35 of the Departments and Research Support Units, across almost all Faculties, are involved directly or indirectly in some aspect of environmental research and education. Although there is a limited number of undergraduate environmental studies programmes, environmental issues are covered to varying extents in over 70 undergraduate courses. In addition, there are 10 Masters' programmes, covering different aspects of environmental issues, on offer at the University. Facilities (space, laboratories and equipment) for teaching and research are modest and could be expanded. A substantial number of staff are also involved in environmental consultancies.

2.3 The Institute of Environmental Studies:

The Institute of Environmental Studies was established in 1994 as an independent, non-Faculty unit within the University of Zimbabwe, in response to national concerns about the ecological, social and economic consequences of environmental change.

The chief role of IES is facilitatory in that it is a front door to harnessing the wide range of resources available throughout the University of Zimbabwe. It operates by means of a series of highly decentralised partnerships with other University departments, universities in the developed and developing countries, government institutions and non-governmental organizations. The nature and duration of the partnerships are determined by the specific projects undertaken. Although the focus is on Zimbabwe, the Institute has a regional perspective.

The Institute had its first strategic plan for 1995-2000 and using an extensive consultative and participatory process with its stakeholders has analysed its strength, challenges, opportunities and threats in order to come up with its second strategic plan. Several characteristics have been identified.

Strengths

The Institute raises the profile of environmental research and education, and puts the UZ at the forefront of efforts to increase public awareness of environment and development issues. The main perceived strengths of the University in this regard are

- The breadths of skills and experience on environmental issues already present among staff.
- The existence of the basic infrastructure for environmental research and education, and
- The credibility and independence of the University on environmental matters.

To add to these, the IES has the following strengths:

- Excellent track record.
- Some good local courses.
- Ready access to many experts, and
- An impressive number of publications by members associated with the Institute.

Challenges

- The main perceived challenges facing the Institute stem from the high degree of compartmentalization of the University, which makes the coordination of environmental issues difficult.
- The Institute has expanded its number of projects over the past five years that now exceed 20. This has negatively impacted on the core staff of the Institute who are a few in number and are now clearly overworked.
- In addition, the Institute has previously focussed its research on rural environments at the expense of urban environments and will need to expand its programmes to include issues relating to urban environments.

Opportunities

Opportunities open to the Institute include the following:

- Environmental issues are still given high priority by the international community; hence there are many opportunities for the funding of 'good' projects and programmes.
- The increasing emphasis on the environment, and on the links between environment and development, stimulated by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in July 1992, has resulted in funding for research and training in these areas.
- The role of IES as a front door on environmental issues to the UZ has enabled it to be more effective at accessing funds than individual or single discipline departments.
- The Institute provides an opportunity to promote integrated research among departments and to attract more funds for research.

3: PROCEDURES AND METHODS

The strategic planning process involved a series of meetings. The first of these meetings was an internal 2-day IES retreat to which several external academics were invited. The meeting debated on the future directions of IES given that the Institute was being drawn into numerous projects some of which it did not have expertise, and was becoming over-stretched. The meeting focussed on means of coping with the current workload, how staff could be redeployed to meet the obligations of IES and how strategic partnerships could be forged with other institutions and individuals. The findings from the retreat were presented to both the Advisory Board and the Board of Management of the IES. Both Boards proposed the holding of a strategic planning workshop at which issues such as whether IES should expand its mandate, how it should refocus, its future directions, etc given that the first strategic plan was five years old would be discussed. A Strategic Planning Workshop was held in Kariba which was attended by 18 stakeholders including IES personnel, members of the Board of

Management and of the Advisory Board, and stakeholders from environmental agencies. The proceedings of this meeting were used to compile the first draft of the new strategic plan for the Institute, which was further discussed within the Institute and with the Board of Management, which is made up of representatives from all faculties of the University. Thus the second IES five-year strategic plan is a product of an extensive consultative and participatory process.

4: STRATEGIC THRUSTS AND RELATIONSHIPS TO CLIENTS AND CUSTOMERS.

Without doubt the population at large constitutes the clients and customers of the IES. More specifically, the various stakeholders within the UZ, in government ministries, in the NGO community, in the districts (particularly those involved with natural resource management), in Industry and Commerce and in the International Environmental Community, all require that IES plays a major role in environmental research and education. With this in mind, the IES envisages strategic thrusts defined by three major aspects.

Firstly, with over five years experience in multi-disciplinary environmental research and education, the Institute is well placed to provide a ‘single window’ to and from the many UZ departments involved with environmental work. The IES will continue to strengthen this coordination and facilitatory aspect of its work. Secondly, with increasing urbanization in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in the southern African region, urban environmental problems such as those associated with environmental health, water quality, air pollution and waste management, are on the rise. The IES will therefore, within the duration of its current strategic plan increase its activities in the areas of urban environmental issues. Thirdly, a major milestone in the work of the Institute will be to facilitate the coordination of Masters degree programmes in environment which are currently being run in several departments with a view to establish a Post Graduate School in Environmental Studies. Departments from both the Science and Arts areas have already expressed strong support for such a development.

Stakeholders agreed upon three strategic ‘services’ for the Institute namely: (a) Research and Development, (b) Education and Training, and (c) Information, Consultancy and Networking. The following paragraphs briefly discuss the emphasis in each of the strategic services.

4.1. *The Research and Development Service*

Research needs expressed by the government; NGOs and the private sector are tremendous in their diversity. The scope ranges from highly localised research needs to questions of global importance. During this second five-year period the Institute will maintain excellence in research and step up research in areas where it is currently lacking to address questions being posed by stakeholders. The Institute endeavours to communicate the crucial findings of research to those who need it.

Research priorities will be in the following areas:

- Natural resource management (land, water, catchments, socio-cultural-religious values, indigenous knowledge systems, international conventions, biodiversity).

- Global change.
- Urban environments (e.g. environmental health, water quality, air pollution and waste management).

4.2. *The Education and Training Service*

Education and training on the environment are central to all environmental initiatives. Education is important in ensuring adequacy of skills among decision-makers and environmental managers, and in creating public awareness. A more knowledgeable public can ensure more effective participation in decision making at all levels, including decisions by individuals about their attitudes and lifestyles. Training needs assessments conducted in various sectors of the economy reveal that there is a requirement for in-service training to upgrade the knowledge and skills of those already involved in environmental management. These include policy makers, researchers and extension workers. IES has been running in-services courses and will continue to run these courses during the period covered by this strategic plan. There will be need to continually assess the needs of the stakeholders so that the relevance of such courses is improved. In addition the Institute will inevitably affect graduate education therefore improving the availability of skills in the future.

During this second five-year period of IES, the priorities of the education and training service will focus on:

- Expanding the number of short courses offered. The expansion will not only focus on the training needs of middle or upper level managers, but will take in the wide scope for the development of courses at farmer, technical and extension levels.
- Extending training to the general public on basic issues on the environment.
- Facilitating the development by others of training programmes, rather than attempting to fulfil training needs alone.
- Training of postgraduate students on environmental studies will continue to be a priority.

4.3. *The Information, Consultancy and Networking Service*

Information is crucial in the development and success of any programme including environmental management. Access to accurate, up to date, and relevant information on the state of the environment is a priority for informed decision making on environmental and development issues in Zimbabwe. Information is essential for establishing the current status of, and trends in, key environmental variables; to assess whether adverse changes are occurring, and if so, why; to evaluate the respective environmental costs and economic and social benefits of the changes; and to establish whether an intended or anticipated outcome is occurring.

The Institute's information service is currently running three major regional networks with more than 500 members. Further, the Institute maintains an environmental specialists database of at least 100 practitioners. The Institute has produced a number of publications and produces two newsletters quarterly. In the next five years the Institute will strengthen these activities by entering into collaborative projects with regional and international organizations operating in southern Africa.

The following are the priorities of the Information, Consultancy and Networking Service during the second five-year period of IES, where it will:

- Continue to play its role in improving communication among researchers and others in environmental issues nationally, regionally and globally.
- Manage and facilitate environmental consultancies and access to expertise and information by providing an advisory service and ensuring effective dissemination of information.
- Play an active role in the development of meta-databases, which will be available to as many people as possible.
- Ensure the viability of the information service by maintaining a number of networks on the environment, which are very important as a medium of exchanging ideas and experiences.
- Encourage the use of research results in the development of training programmes.
- Maintain the facility for developing briefing papers, along with the channels necessary for ensuring that these reach the intended audience.

5: IES VISION (OVERALL GOAL)

The vision of the IES was agreed upon as:

To be (and to be recognized by stakeholders² as) a centre for excellence in environmental research and education, for environmental advisory services and as a focal point for environmental networking in Zimbabwe, southern Africa and abroad.

The performance indicator for this vision will be

The IES is the first reference point for problem solving and advice in addressing important issues concerning the environment and has an increasing number of acclamations expressed by stakeholders on an annual basis.

6: IES MISSION (PURPOSE)

The mission of the IES is:

To contribute to stakeholders' sustainable utilization of natural resources, poverty alleviation and prosperity through education, research, advisory services and networking on the environment.

²The stakeholders will include: small holder farmers, the business community, environmental lobby groups, government extension agents, national regional and international research and development organizations, and other University departments

The performance indicator for this mission is:

Increasing numbers of stakeholders clearly improve their handling of environmental issues on an annual basis, for instance, by adopting practices that are environmentally friendly.

This will be shown, for example, by their adoption of practices, which are environmentally friendly, their preferences for products, known to have been produced through cleaner production techniques, and their support for policies, which will ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, poverty alleviation and prosperity.

7: OUTPUTS

Five main outputs are required to ensure that the above mission is realized. These are given below:

Output 1: The IES is efficiently and effectively managed.

Objectively Verifiable Indicator for output 1:

- IES managed with minimum negative deviations from approved plans (e.g. budgets, programmatic deliverables, staffing).

Output 2: Human capacities to tackle environmental problems (i.e. to plan and implement environmentally sustainable interventions) strengthened.

Objectively Verifiable Indicators for output 2:

- At least three University Departments are collaborating on postgraduate environmental training by 2003.
- IES expands the numbers of postgraduate students it supports by 3% per annum; and maintains the 1999 situation where the students are registered in several Faculties.
- IES expands the number of trainees undertaking IES-linked environmental short courses by 3% per annum.

Output 3: Contributions to the scientific basis for the management of urban and rural environments improved.

Objectively Verifiable Indicators for output 3:

- Each researcher publishes at least one paper in an international journal or researchers in IES write at least one book that is published by an international publisher each year.
- At least two technical or institutional options can be traced to the research of IES-linked projects over the five-year period.

Output 4: Up-to-date information for improved awareness of environmental issues provided and effectively disseminated.

Objectively Verifiable Indicators for output 4:

- At least one policy brief produced per year and used to influence environmentally related policies.
- A web-based meta-database of environmental information (produced by the IES) is functional by the end of 2001.

Output 5: Dialogue amongst stakeholders, including scientists, policy makers, and civic society promoted/facilitated.

Objectively Verifiable Indicators for output 5:

- At least 5 projects that link the IES with at least 10 institutions will be running in any one year for the duration of the strategic plan.
- A network or networks incorporating at least 100 persons is/are operated in any one year by the IES.
- At least three faculties of the UZ are actively participating in joint initiatives (research and education) under the recognised facilitating role of the IES by the end of 2002.

The Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) for the strategic plan, with major activities deemed necessary and sufficient for delivering the above outputs, is given in **Annex A**. The LFM also shows deadlines as well as the responsible parties to initiate or take the lead in ensuring that the various activities are implemented.

8: MAJOR ACTIVITIES IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The following paragraphs highlight the major activities envisaged for delivering the outputs.

Output 1: The IES is efficiently and effectively managed.

- 1-1:** Complete annual plans of operation including internal and external monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans to cover such areas as research projects, budgets, human resource development (HRD), infrastructure and facilities, new programmes, public relations and marketing
- 1-2:** Mobilize the necessary financial resources for the smooth running of the Institute making use of initiatives such as: sourcing funds for projects, undertaking consultancies, etc.
- 1-3:** Hold consultation with stakeholders on the scope and performance of the Institute and pro-actively attend to issues raised.
- 1-4:** Improve the system of internal communication in the IES (e.g. hold regular team briefing) and ensure that the vision and mission are kept in focus at all times.
- 1-5:** Manage the day-to-day affairs of the IES, including the provision of the necessary resources, recruitment and motivation of staff, the implementation of policies, representation of the IES and the monitoring and evaluation of progress.

Output 2: Human capacities to tackle environmental problems (i.e. to plan and implement environmentally sustainable interventions) strengthened.

- 2-1:** Update the environmental training needs analysis for short courses/in-service courses.
- 2-2:** Complete study on possible collaboration in teaching Masters programmes in Environment.
- 2-3:** Lead/Coordinate the establishment of a Postgraduate School in Environmental Studies.
- 2-4:** Complete the annual training plans for the Institute, to include short courses, seminars, conferences and think tanks, taking into account the training needs of the various stakeholders.
- 2-5:** Develop/Organize/facilitate the running of the various training courses according to the plans.
- 2-6:** Evaluate the various training courses led, supported or facilitated by the IES.

Output 3: Contributions to the scientific basis for the management of urban and rural environments improved.

- 3-1:** Intensify scientific research on the management of urban and rural environments.
- 3-2:** Promote the use of indigenous knowledge to the solutions of environmental problems.
- 3-3:** Incorporate the principles of Agenda 21 through the promotion of research on sustainable utilization of natural resources and sustainable development.
- 3-4:** Actively work with the Environmental Research Coordinating Committee (ERCC) to ensure that the research undertaken in, or supported by the IES covers the priority environmental issues in Zimbabwe.
- 3-5:** Regularly hold research days and seminars, to ensure that the work being undertaken in, or with the support of the IES is exposed to peer review while at the same time increasing awareness on topical environmental issues.

Output 4: Up-to-date information for improved awareness of environmental issues provided and effectively disseminated.

- 4-1:** Develop and run a web-based meta-database of environmental information.
- 4-2:** Publish at least one environmental policy brief per year.
- 4-3:** Actively participate in debates on environmental issues, for instance in round tables, radio and television programmes.
- 4-4:** Develop three 'standard' information packages/manuals covering fundamental environmental issues at the 'elementary', 'intermediate' and 'advanced' levels to serve as ready references

4-5: Ensure that the IES Library stock up-to-date and relevant material on environmental issues, for instance, copies of environmental conventions, environmental policy papers, etc.

4-6: Ensure that findings from IES-linked research on environmental issues are systematically channelled into the relevant education and training courses.

Output 5: Dialogue amongst stakeholders, including scientists, policy makers, and civic society promoted/facilitated.

5-1: Develop and run a network(s) that incorporate(s) at least 100 persons.

5-2: Develop a forum for the promotion of dialogue among stakeholders including scientists, practitioners, policy makers and civic society.

5-3: Actively promote consultancies to be undertaken by UZ departments under the coordination of the IES, by, for instance, taking the lead in bidding for advertised consultancies, putting the necessary teams together and supervising the said consultancies.

5-4: Ensure that research results/findings are incorporated in the development of training/course materials.

5-5: Ensure that the IES (apart from its own established network(s)) actively participates in other relevant environmental networks, at national, regional and international levels.

9: ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the strategic plan will be the responsibility of all IES members under the leadership of the Director. The Institute is a centre within the Academic Common Services of the UZ, which is governed by a non-faculty governance ordinance. The Director and staff will therefore work within a framework of the key management components of the Institute, namely: the Board of Management (BOM), the Advisory Board, and the Institute Trust.

The Board of Management : The BOM normally meets six times a year. It is composed of representatives from each Faculty of the UZ, the Institute of Development Studies and the University Lake Kariba Research Station. The BOM is primarily responsible for establishing the directions, strategic plan, programmes and staffing of the Institute and for the monitoring of progress and reviewing budgets, workplans and audited accounts of the Institute. Membership to the BOM is effective for three years.

The Advisory Board: The Advisory Board meets at least twice a year; and reports to the BOM through its chairperson (who may opt for the Director to report). The Advisory Board is approved by the BOM and consists of 10-15 persons, appointed in their individual capacities, but chosen to ensure representation of the national and international community, government, non-governmental institutions, industry and commerce, donor organizations and international research organizations. Members of the Advisory Board will each serve for 3 to 4 years. The chairperson of the BOM and the Director of the Institute shall be ex officio

members of the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is responsible for assisting in the formulation of medium and long term strategies, sensitising the Institute on topical national/international environmental issues, marketing the existence of the Institute to external stakeholders, enhancing the image of the Institute at national, regional and international level and assisting in identifying and raising funds.

The Institute Trust: The Institute Trust is a legally constituted trust established by the inaugural donors of the Institute, The Kapnek Charitable Trust. The Trustees must meet at least twice a year. The Trustees report to the Board of Management and the Kapnek Charitable Trust.

In addition to the above, the Director will manage the Institute with the help of the internal IES Academic Board and the IES Management Committee

The Academic Board is responsible for discussing and regulating all issues concerning research and training in the Institute. The Board consists of all the academic members of staff; the Director, Deputy Director, Research Fellows, Research Associates, Senior Administrative Assistant, Financial Manager, Senior Secretary, Librarian, Accounts and Database Assistant and representatives from Technical Staff and from Postgraduate Students. The Board meets four times a year.

The IES Management Committee is a sub-committee of the Academic Board consisting of the Director, the Deputy Director, the Senior Administrative Assistant, the Finance Manager, the Senior Secretary and an Academic member of staff. The committee is responsible for making management decisions concerning the day-to-day running of the Institute and its staff. The Director reserves the right to make executive decisions.

Further, with regards to the implementation of research initiatives, the Institute will work very closely with the Environmental Research Coordinating Committee.

The Environmental Research Coordinating Committee (ERCC) was formed on the basis of Canadian International Development Aid (CIDA) support to a joint venture between four University departments and four divisions within the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. These eight departments together with representatives from Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre, The Research Council of Zimbabwe and the NGO community form a joint committee, which is chaired by the Director of the Institute. Its role is to (i) facilitate multi-institutional, interdisciplinary and policy-directed research by sourcing and distributing funds, and (ii) providing a forum for exchange of information and dissemination of research results.

Academic Staffing Situation: A major staffing decision made during the strategic planning process was that the UZ-supported full time academic members of staff of the Institute should be increased from three to four, namely: The Director (responsible for overall management), The Deputy Director (responsible for assisting the Director and for coordinating the Education and Training Services), one academic (responsible for coordinating the Information, Consultancy and Network Services) and another academic (responsible for coordinating the Research and Development Services).

Overall: On the whole, the Director will function within the above structures guided by a detailed job description. In particular, the Director will lead the implementation of this strategic plan by instituting measures such as: providing leadership for all programmes in the

