

Implementation of funded projects (INFFER step 6)

David Pannell, Geoff Park, April Curatolo, Anna Roberts, Stephanie Spry, Sally Marsh

Introduction

The Investment Framework For Environmental Resources (INFFER) is a tool for planning and prioritising public investments in natural resources and the environment. It focuses on achieving outcomes cost effectively.

This document relates to step 6 of the INFFER process (Table 1), in which the organisation implements those projects that have been funded internally or externally.

Table 1. Steps in the INFFER process

	Description of Step	Relevant Document
1.	Develop a list of significant natural assets in the relevant region(s)	"Significant Asset Identification Guide"
2.	Apply an initial filter to the asset list, using a simplified set of criteria	"Filtering Significant Assets Prior to Detailed Assessment"
3.	Define projects and conduct detailed assessments of them	"Project Assessment Form", and "Project Assessment Form Instruction Manual"
4.	Select priority projects	"Selection of Priority Projects"
5.	Develop investment plans or funding proposals	"Development of investment plans or funding proposals"
6.	Implement funded projects	"Implementation of funded projects" (this document)
7.	Monitor, evaluate and adaptively manage projects	"Monitoring, Evaluation and Adaptive Management following INFFER Assessment"

The thinking behind this step

In principle, the implementation stage is straightforward; the organisation has developed a project which has been assessed positively and funding has been obtained. A well-completed INFFER Project Assessment Form contains a lot of information that should guide project implementation. In particular, questions 4.1 to 4.3 describe the delivery mechanisms that are going to bring about the project's goal(s). In some cases there may be additional information contained in the funding proposal/investment plan that was provided more briefly in the project assessment form. Managers should consult and reflect upon the Project

Assessment Form and the funding proposal/investment plan as the project is being implemented.

The Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP) has developed a set of standards and guidelines for management of conservation projects¹. The elements in these “Standards” are sequenced in a similar but slightly different way to INFFER. We suggest that it is most logical to refer to the Standards once you have identified which assets will be protected in the project (i.e. once you have reached INFFER step 5²). In the appendix we reproduce their advice about project implementation, edited to make sense for a situation where you have already obtained funding for the project.

Step 7 of INFFER involves monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management of the project. This really begins in step 6. Monitoring and evaluation should be conducted as a continuous process as the project is implemented.

Appendix: Edited extract from Conservation Measures Partnership “Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation”

3. Implement actions and monitoring

This is the most important step in the entire adaptive management cycle process. It is the time in which you put all of the planning efforts you conducted in the previous steps into action. The step involves developing and implementing specific work plans while ensuring sufficient resources, capacity, and partners.

3A. Develop a detailed short-term work plan and timeline

In the previous steps of the project cycle, your project team developed your general action, monitoring, and operational plans. In this phase of the cycle, you need to turn these general plans into more specific ones and then implement these plans on an ongoing basis.

The first part of this step is to take your overall plans and work with your project team and partners to develop a much more specific short-term work plan covering the next few months or at most, year. This work plan uses your overall action, monitoring, and operational plans to specify in much greater detail:

- What specific activities and tasks are required to complete each planned strategy, monitoring step, or operational function,
- Who will be responsible for helping to complete each activity and task,
- When will each task be undertaken and what will be the sequence of linked activities and tasks, and
- How much money and other resources will be needed to complete each activity and task (see Step 3B for greater detail).

¹ Conservation Measures Partnership (2007). *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation*, <http://www.conservationmeasures.org/CMP/>.

² If you have used INFFER, steps 1 and 2 of the CMP Standard are already done.

Your work plan can be recorded in a table, Gantt chart, and/or project calendar. Your detailed work plan will also provide you with the basis for developing a project timeline or calendar. In some situations, your work plan will not only specify tasks and responsibilities, it will also record in a calendar format when these tasks will happen. In other situations, your timeline or calendar will be more implicit. It is important to develop your timeline so that all project team members budget their time according to the project needs.

Outputs for this standard practice include:

- ◆ Work plan detailing the tasks, activities, and responsibilities associated with your Action Plan, Monitoring Plan, and Operational Plan;
- ◆ Project timeline or calendar.

3B. Develop and refine your project budget

Once you know exactly what tasks and activities you need to undertake, you will be in a better position to figure out what resources you need. You should work from your initial analysis of funding required that you developed in your operational plan. This, along with your strategic plan and your work plan, will help you develop a more refined estimate of costs for specific activities and tasks and the broader strategies into which those tasks feed. Your work plan will be an important input for this process, but you should keep in mind that the work plan is short-term in nature, so you will need to make some informed estimates projecting potential costs over the life of the project.

You should work closely with the finance or accounting staff in your office to develop your project budget. For many projects, your most expensive resource needs will be staff time. In addition, you should consider what other major expenses such as physical infrastructure, vehicles, boats or machinery are needed. You should also consider the related functions or logistical support that the project might need, ranging from monitoring and management expenses, to administrative or logistical support.

Outputs for this standard practice include:

- ◆ Detailed project budget.

3C. Implement your plans

The next and most important part of the entire process is to implement your strategic plan and your more detailed work plan according to schedule and within budget.

Outputs for this standard practice include:

- ◆ Generally, implementation of strategic plan (action, monitoring, and operational plans);
- ◆ More specifically, implementation of your work plan, keeping in mind your project budget and schedule.