

**Republic of Armenia**  
**Proposal for Additional Funding of Biodiversity Enabling Activity**

<b>Country</b>	Armenia
<b>Project Title</b>	Assessment of Priority Capacity Building Needs for Biodiversity and Establishment of CHM Structures.
<b>Country Eligibility</b>	Armenia ratified the CBD in 1993
<b>GEF Financing</b>	\$ 143,130
<b>Government Contribution</b>	In-kind
<b>Estimated Total Budget</b>	\$ 143,130
<b>GEF Implementing Agency</b>	UNDP
<b>National Executing Agency</b>	Ministry of Nature Protection <sup>1</sup>
<b>GEF Operational Focal Point</b>	Mr. Murad Muradyan, the Minister at the Ministry of Nature Protection
<b>CBD Operational Focal Point</b>	Mr. S. Shashikyan, Ministry of Nature Protection
<b>CHM Focal Point</b>	Mr. S. Shashikyan, Ministry of Nature Protection
<b>Estimated Starting Date</b>	October 2000
<b>Project Duration</b>	12 months

**A brief review of the current status of the EA**

In 1997 Armenia received GEF assistance in the sum of USD \$174,800 to implement the project “First National Report, Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan to CBD”. In 1999, the combined work of 8 groups of specialists resulted in a “First National Report on Biodiversity of Armenia” and a “Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan”, which were prepared in line with CBD guidelines and the priority development goals of Armenia.

Even though the First National Report and the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan have received the full support of local authorities, political groups, academia, and NGOs, the formal endorsement from Parliament is still pending. In the recent past, a series of crisis and re-structuring of Ministries caught the center of the political scene leaving little space for the discussion of other important topics and issues<sup>2</sup>.

Nevertheless, the Government has planned the incorporation into the budget for 2001 of several actions recommended by BSAP. These are:

1. Development of a monitoring/information base on biodiversity (this component will support CHM activities) with a budget of 14,000,000 AMD (approx. 28,000 USD) for the period 2001-2003.
2. Identification of preliminary mitigating measures for invasive species with a budget of 1,000,000 AMD, (approx. 2,000 USD);
3. Publication of the new editions of Armenian Red Books (on Flora and on Fauna) with a budget of 10,000,000 AMD (approx. 20,000 USD) for the period 2001-2003;
3. First phase of the identification of options for the improvement of the Protected Area system with a budget of 2,000,000 AMD (approx. 4,000 USD) for the period 2001-2002;
4. The development of normative regulations as required by the "Law on Flora" and the "Law on Fauna" with a budget of 2,000,000 AMD (approx. 4,000 USD) for the period 2001-2003.

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<sup>1</sup> The Ministry of Nature Protection is the former Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources that executed the first Enabling Activity.

<sup>2</sup> Among these events, the most notorious one was the assassination of the Prime Minister and other parliamentarian inside the Armenian Parliament in early 2000. However, other much less dramatic events such as the attempted merge of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment in the Spring of 2000 (it failed) also contributed heavily to deviate the public and government attention from the formal endorsement of the BSAP document.

In the year that has passed since the EA was completed, the government has undertaken several measures related to the implementation of BSAP. In the field of legislation, Armenia has completed (a) the “Law on Fauna”, which was adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia; (b) the “Regulation on Biological Resource Use”, which has been submitted to the government for endorsement (it will be endorsed before the end of 2000); and (c) the regulatory framework on hunting and fisheries (its endorsement is expected before the end of 2000).

In the field of international cooperation, the Ministry of Nature Protection is now firmly ensuring that the objectives of project proposals submitted to international funding agencies closely follow the priorities set by BSAP. Therefore, objectives such as investment in the system of nature reserves, biodiversity database and monitoring, protection of biodiversity important to agriculture, protection of Lake Sevan, and the restoration of Lake Gilli have taken priority for funding. Several donors are helping Armenia to meet the goals of BSAP, among them UNDP, GEF, the MacArthur Foundation, WWF, UNEP, EU and the World Bank.

The next step in the short term, and as recommended by the BSAP, is to review the “Law on Especially Protected Areas” and the “Forest Statute” taking into consideration the social and economic changes brought about by the adoption of market policies (land privatization, different forms of natural resources ownership, etc.). Finally, the CHM structures have not been yet established in Armenia though a CHM focal point has been appointed.

### **Project objectives**

This add-on request consists of three main components or blocks of activities. The first component comprises an assessment of capacity building needs in the areas of (a) *Implementation of measures for in-situ and ex-situ conservation and sustainable use*, (b) *Initial Assessment and monitoring programs (including taxonomy)*, and (c) *Access to genetic resources, benefit sharing and formulation of relevant mechanisms*. The second component of this add-on request is the establishment of the Clearing House Mechanism. The third component is the undertaking of consultations towards the preparation of the Second National Report, which will be submitted before the deadline of May 2001.

This proposal has been designed taking fully into account the existing operational criteria for expedited biodiversity enabling activities. The United Nations Development Programme, in its role as the GEF implementing agency, and the GEF operational focal point have satisfied themselves in this regard.

The next sections describe the process by which the selection of topics was carried out, the specific priorities for each of the mentioned components, a description of the sequence of activities to determine capacity building needs, and the description of the consultation process for the preparation of the second national report.

### **Priorities for Assessing Capacity Building Needs**

The process of prioritization of capacity building needs was carried out in May 2000 as part of the response to the questionnaire received from UNDP/GEF Executive Coordinator within the framework of the “UNDP/GEF Capacity Developing Initiative”. The questionnaire was answered by a joint effort of the former BSAP Steering Committee, which includes specialists from the Department of Bioresources Conservation, Department of International Relations, the Department of Forestry at the Ministry of Nature Protection, representatives of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and Sciences, scientists of the Institutes of Botany, Zoology and Microbiology of the National Academy of Sciences, as well as representatives of environmental NGOs.

The consultations with BSAP Project Steering Committee members resulted in the selection of eight main areas in which assessment of capacity building needs was considered as priority. Once these areas were identified, the BSAP Steering Committee proceeded to rank them according to their

perceived relevance in view of the current situation in the country. The Steering Committee members agreed that it would not be recommended to work on the eight areas simultaneously. It was decided to select the top three topics for inclusion in this proposal for EA II. The description of these topics, as well as the justification for their inclusion, is presented in the Table 1 below.

### **Sequencing of Activities – Identification of capacity building needs**

The process of identifying the capacity building needs in the chosen areas plus the establishment of the CHM will last for 12 months. The establishment of the project unit and Steering Committee will take approximately two months. It will include the development of TORs, the public announcement of the post of project coordinator and the three posts of national experts, and a transparent selection process.

There will be a first assessment of capacity building needs that will take approximately three months and will draw on extensive consultations. Prior to launching this phase, the project coordinator and the national experts will work together with international experts to define and standardize the assessment method and reporting needs. International experts may also be required to assist the local teams during this first assessment process. At the end of the third month, each expert will produce a report of existing capacities and capacity building needs in academia, NGOs, national, regional and local government units relevant to the respective areas of work (in-situ and ex-situ; initial assessment and monitoring; access to genetic resources).

These findings will be discussed in three separate workshops that will count with the participation of relevant stakeholders from the academia, government, NGO, and other sectors as appropriate. The purpose of the workshop is to ensure that the selection of capacity building needs reflects the interests of relevant stakeholders. The results of the workshops will be used as inputs in the process leading to the final identification of capacity building needs.

After the completion of the three workshops there will be a period of approximately two months in which the national experts will produce the final reports on capacity building needs. In each respective area of work, international experts will assist the national experts in specifying the particular capacity building needs, the particular targets for capacity building (government units, NGOs, other civil associations, other stakeholders), the financial resources required, time frames, identification of foreign universities, think tanks, or organizations in which the required expertise (for capacity building) is available, and links and/or synergies with existing or planned biodiversity protection projects financed either by the government or the international community. The reports will be ready by month 10 and their findings will be formally presented in a public meeting to representatives of the government and international agencies and other donors.

**Table 1: Priority issues for assessment of capacity building needs**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Reasons for Priority</b>	<b>Work to be done</b>	<b>Product expected</b>
<i>Implementation of measures for in-situ and ex-situ conservation and sustainable use</i>	It is an area in which the command and control tools and technical capacities inherited from the Soviet system have been rendered poorly adequate in view of the socio-economic changes of the last decade. This area appears to present one of the most serious deficits in qualified personnel.	To evaluate existing capacity and prepare detailed recommendations for on-going capacity building and improvement of in-situ and ex-situ conservation management methodologies with special emphasis on protected area management and financial mechanisms for conservation.	Action Plan for improving capacity for in-situ and ex-situ conservation; including identification of skills lacking in protected areas management and financial mechanisms for conservation;
<i>Initial Assessment and monitoring programs (including taxonomy)</i>	Two main factors contributed to the selection of this area of work. The first is that Armenia is preparing several projects for biodiversity protection in which local capacity for monitoring and the definition (or establishment) of a baseline constitute critical project components. The second factor is that the government is already starting to invest its own resources on a national monitoring and information database. Taking these two factors into account, a solid initial assessment of capacity needs for a monitoring programme would represent a strategic contribution to current national actions.	To assess capacity building needs in the areas of information management, information sharing, maintenance of databases, sampling, and community involvement as well as training plans in the field of taxonomy.	Assessment report on capacity building needs within governmental units and other relevant stakeholders on monitoring programs, establishment and maintenance of databases, information sharing, and technical capacities needs in the field of taxonomy.
<i>Access to genetic resources, benefit sharing and formulation of relevant mechanisms.</i>	It has been considered as an area of work in which little, if any, local experience exists. The adoption of a market system has changed radically the nature of the available mechanisms to ensure wide access to genetic resources and a fair distribution of their benefits. Lack of previous experience is reflected in the absence of a state policy and mechanisms on the use of genetic resources and benefit sharing, and undefined rights and responsibilities of relevant bodies in local, regional and national levels.	To conduct a participatory evaluation of existing capacity building needs required to establish mechanisms for access to genetic resources and benefit sharing with particular attention on institutional and management needs and incentive measures.	A capacity building programme including a plan for community based training and workshops on genetic resource access and mechanisms for benefit sharing.

### **Establishment of Clearing House Mechanism Structures**

This component of the project will include basic assistance in terms of software, hardware, internet connection and technical staff training. It will form an essential basis for decision making and monitoring of actions undertaken to implement the BSAP. The support to establishing CHM structures in Armenia is a strategic activity that will complement current government efforts to put in place a monitoring and biodiversity database.

The establishment of the CHM will be implemented in accordance with standard GEF support to the National CHM Focal Point utilizing Option A (Direct Assistance). The following activities are envisaged:

- Identification of national CHM stakeholders and mechanisms for maintenance and use
- Identification of the possibilities of partnership between governmental organizations and NGO's for data maintenance and upgrade
- Training of technical staff on Internet web site design and data maintenance,
- Design and launching of Armenian CHM web site
- Awareness raising on existence and use of CHM in Armenia and Caucasus region.

### **Consultations for the preparation of the Second National Report**

This add-on request for enabling activities will undertake several rounds of consultations as part of the work towards the preparation of the Second National Report to the CBD in pursuance of decision V/19 of the Conference of the Parties. The report will be presented before the deadline of May 2001. The process of consultations will begin right after the second month of the project, once the project unit and the Steering Committee have been established. The project coordinator will organize the consultations and will be assisted in this task by an international consultant with proven experience in the execution of consultation and evaluation processes. It is expected that the international consultant will visit Armenia for a total of three weeks in which the bulk of the consultation process (meeting and workshops) will be carried out. The project coordinator and the international consultants will be responsible for producing a report describing the process of consultations, the specific stakeholders consulted and the feedback obtained. This report will form constitutive part of the document submitted as the Second National Report to the CBD.

### **Project Implementation/Institutional Framework**

The same institutional arrangements used in the development of the first EA will apply for this second phase of EA. The Ministry of Nature Protection (MNP) will be entrusted with project execution and implementation. A National Steering Committee (NSC) will oversee the Project. The composition of the Steering Committee is the same as in the first phase EA and includes specialists from the Department of Bioresources Conservation, Department of International Relations, the Department of Forestry at the Ministry of Nature Protection, representatives of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and Sciences, scientists of the Institutes of Botany, Zoology and Microbiology of the National Academy of Sciences, as well as representatives of environmental NGOs.

A project coordinator and the project staff will be selected under open competition. The project coordinator will be responsible for the overall work organization and project implementation in accordance with the workplan/timetable. He will be responsible for ensuring quality of reports identifying capacity building needs and priorities in biodiversity and the timely submission of documents and action plans to the Government for endorsement and implementation.

The project staff will consist of an administrative assistant, a finance assistant, and a translator/interpreter. The administrative assistant will be responsible for assisting in the coordination of activities, organization of local travel for National Experts and international Consultants. She/he

will also be involved in circulating discussion papers and draft reports, ensuring public awareness of project activities, coordinating consultations and workshops. The Finance Assistant will be responsible for budget management, financial reporting and accounting procedures. The translator/interpreter will work during workshops and consultation meetings as well as provide support in the translation of project-related correspondence and final documents/reports.

There will be a national expert hired in each thematic area: (a) *Implementation of measures for in-situ and ex-situ conservation and sustainable use*, (b) *Initial Assessment and monitoring programs (including taxonomy)*, and (c) *Access to genetic resources, benefit sharing and formulation of relevant mechanisms*. Each national expert will report to the Project Coordinator and will be responsible for the implementation of her/his respective project component.

The Project Coordinator will take responsibility for organizing and undertaking all activities required to establish the CHM. No national experts will be hired exclusively for this purpose though subcontracts may be awarded for specific technical components as creation of a website. The Project Coordinator will count with advice from national and international experts for the establishment of the CHM structures. Similarly, the project coordinator will be responsible for organizing and undertaking the consultation process for the preparation of the Second National Report to the CBD. An international consultant will assist the project director and will be co-responsible for ensuring that the consultation process is wide reaching and that it conforms to international standards.

The United Nations Development Programme will be the GEF implementing agency and its local office will provide project support. The project will be implemented following the standard UNDP National Execution Guidelines. Under the supervision of UNDP, the Ministry of Nature Protection through the project coordinator will be responsible inter alia for: recruitment of International and National Consultants, including candidate search/selection, preparation of TORs, supervision; project coordination, including organization of regular meetings with project implementing agency, financial management and accountability, issuance of payments, training staff on financial disbursements and reporting, ensuring completeness and timeliness of financial reporting; technical reporting including preparation of progress reports; monitoring and evaluation; organization of training/workshop activities; awareness raising, including dissemination of relevant information to host and other countries, sharing training materials; procurement of equipment, including preparation of specifications, identifying suppliers for goods and services, evaluating contracts, awarding contracts, and authorizing payment.

Monitoring of the project activities will be done according to standard UNDP monitoring procedures and will include a Midterm Project Performance Report (including financial report), a Terminal Project Performance Report, and a financial audit. In addition, the Project Coordinator will make regular reports to the Chairman of the National Steering Committee.

**Table 2: Workplan/Timetable**

<b>Activity/Month</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Establishment National Steering Committee												
Contract National Project Coordinator												
Finalization of TORs for National Experts and Consultants												
Finalize add-on working plan and convene meeting of National Steering Committee												
Establishment of Office												
Steering Committee Meetings												
Establish working groups and contracts for national experts and international consultants												
Consultations for the Second National Report												
Establishment of Clearing House Mechanism Structures												
Consultations with national and local stakeholders												
First assessment of Capacity Building Needs												
A National Consultation Workshop on implementation of measures for in-situ and ex-situ conservation and sustainable use												
A National Consultation Workshop on access to genetic resources, benefit sharing and formulation of relevant mechanisms.												
A National Consultation Workshop on initial assessment and monitoring programs (including taxonomy)												
Preparation of final assessment reports on capacity building needs												
A Public Presentation of project results to national stakeholders and representatives of the international community.												
Final editing, translation and publication of Final Report on capacity building needs/priorities in biodiversity in Armenia												
Submission of Final Report to national implementing agency and Government of Armenia												

**Table 3: Cost Estimates For Additional Enabling Activities**

ACTIVITY	PRODUCT	PROCESS	TOTAL
<b>APPROVED EARLIER</b>			
• Original EA, less costs of CHM activities	(no entry required)		174,800
• CHM support (provided through add-on module or project itself)			0,0
Total approved support			<b>174,800</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL REQUEST</b>			
Assessment of Capacity-building needs for			
• Implementation of measures for in-situ and ex-situ conservation and sustainable use	8,150	30,600	38,750
• Initial assessment and monitoring programs, including taxonomy	8,150	31,100	39,250
• Access to genetic resources, benefit-sharing and formulation of mechanisms for these purposes	8,150	31,100	39,250
<b>Sub total</b>	24,450	92,800	<b>117,250</b>
Country-driven project for participation in the clearing house mechanism			12,000
Consultations for the preparation of the Second National Report			13,880
<b>Total new request</b>			<b>143,130</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>317,930</b>

**Table 4: Budget Breakdown**

Category of Expenditure	Total	%
National Expert Group	29,400	20.54
International Consultants <sup>3</sup>	53,880	37.64
Consultations and Workshops	14,500	10.13
Local travel	4,800	3.35
Printing	9,000	6.29
Equipment <sup>4</sup>	11,400	7.96
Operational Costs and Miscellaneous	11,300	7.89
Translation	5,100	3.56
Auditing	3,750	2.62
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>143,130</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<sup>3</sup> It includes fees, travel costs and DSAs for experts in both the assessment of capacity building needs and the consultations for the preparation of the Second National Report

<sup>4</sup> It includes equipment for the CHM component.

**CHM Add-on Module Table Option A.**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Estimated Cost Norm. (US \$)</b>	<b>Actual Proposed (US \$)</b>
Hardware: Computer Pentium III, 21" screen, 128 RAM, 100.2 Gb HD, DVD, Multimedia UPS Printer (HP Color Inkjet)	<b>0 - 4000</b>	<b>2,500 350 750</b>
Software (Internet browsers and required software)	<b>0 - 1000</b>	<b>800</b>
Modem	<b>0 - 500</b>	<b>400</b>
Recurrent Access Costs to Internet Service Provider including storing of national CHM web site on server and 4 hours internet use per working day for 12 months	<b>0 - 3800</b>	<b>3,500</b>
Technician Set-Up Fees	<b>500 - 700</b>	<b>600</b>
Internet and Email training for senior members of the Department of Bioresources Conservation of the Ministry of Nature Protection, members of the Biodiversity Action Plan Coordination Unit, Institutes of Zoology, Botany, Water Ecology and Fisheries of the National Academy of Sciences	<b>1000 - 4000</b>	<b>3,100</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,500 - 14,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>