

## GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

### ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL

<b>Country:</b>	Bahamas
<b>Project Title:</b>	National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and First National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>GEF Focal Area:</b>	Biodiversity
<b>Country Eligibility:</b>	Ratified the CBD on 2 September 1993
<b>GEF Financing:</b>	US\$ 150,000
<b>Government Contribution:</b>	In kind and personnel
<b>Estimated Total Budget:</b>	US\$ 150,000
<b>GEF Implementing Agency:</b>	UNEP
<b>National Executing Agency:</b>	The Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission (The BEST Commission)
<b>GEF Operational Focal Point:</b>	Department of Environmental Health Services, Ministry of Health and Environment
<b>CBD Focal Point:</b>	The BEST Commission
<b>Estimated Starting Date:</b>	September 1996
<b>Project Duration:</b>	9 months

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#### **I. Background/Context:**

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas is a unique, sub-tropical, archipelagic nation spanning 325,000 square kilometres in the Caribbean Sea. It is situated just fifty miles east of The United States of America and a like distance northwest of the island of Cuba.

Available data (Bahamas Country Study Report) indicate that there are 6,206 described species including some 1300 species of higher plants, 270 species of birds, 505 species of fishes, 455 species of crustaceans and 1544 species of insects in the Bahamas. Literature review shows that this number is far from firm and that significant work will be required to refine this figure. Being an archipelagic nation, marine ecosystems represent the biggest portion of the Bahamas total area and are habitat to some of the most spectacular

coral reefs in the Caribbean. Mangroves are also common in the coastal areas.

The Bahamas, by virtue of its geographic location, has historically provided significant contributions to the growth and development of its more developed neighbouring nations. Ocean vessels traverse its seas continuously; its marine resources are deemed outstanding for commercial and recreational fishing; its sun, sea and sand resources have nurtured millions since the original landfall of Christopher Columbus on the Island of San Salvador in The Bahamas in 1492.

The Bahamas economy is largely based upon the tourism industry and the availability in abundance of sun, sea and sand. The Biodiversity of The Bahamas is therefore an essential ingredient in the economic and social well being of our nation.

Unfortunately, these resources of The Bahamas are facing severe threats in the form of over exploitation of some species and pollution from large marine vessels, given that by its island nature and small population (254,685; 1990 census), the country is unable to effectively police its 325,000 square miles of sea and land resources. This issue is of great importance within the bahamian biodiversity context.

## **II Project Objectives:**

Given that The Bahamas economy is largely based upon the tourism industry ("tourism is our life line", said the Bahamas Minister of Foreign Affairs at the opening of COP 1) revolving around the breath-taking natural beauty of the country, the biodiversity of The Bahamas is "a treasure to nurture".

The principal objective of the project is therefore to assist the government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to develop a comprehensive programme for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use activities in the form of a NBSAP. This activity will allow the government to fulfil also the obligations contained in Decision II/7 of the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 2) to the Biodiversity Convention regarding implementation of Article 6 of the Convention. The country is also seeking assistance to prepare the first national report to the CBD pursuant to Decision II/17 of COP 2.

## **III Operational Criteria:**

### **i) Coverage without duplication:**

The NBSAP will make use of existing capacity and information such as those derived from the UNEP/GEF biodiversity country study and biodiversity data management and networking projects, without duplication (refer to the footnotes on Activity Matrix for details).

ii) Appropriate overall sequencing of activities:

The project will be implemented over a period of 9 months using the following schedule:

	Activity/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Formation of Task Force & Planning Team	x								
2	Training of Planning Team		x							
3	Survey of existing information		x	x	x					
4	Discussions, Consultations, Seminars and workshops with representatives of all stakeholders			x	x	x				
5	Drafting of NBSAP					x	x			
6	Circulation of NBSAP for Comments							x		
7	Finalisation of NBSAP								x	
8	Printing and Publication of NBSAP									x
9	Preparation of first national report to COP								x	x

iii) Best practice:

The methodology for the implementation of this project will be based on the "Guidelines Biodiversity Planning" (WRI/UNEP/IUCN 1995) as well as on the recommendations emerging from the various efforts that have taken place in The Bahamas, particularly the biodiversity country study and the biodiversity data management projects, and several local initiatives sponsored by the Bahamas National Trust and other sponsors.

iv) Cost effectiveness and consistency of approach and procedures:

The cost effectiveness of this proposal is based on maximum reliance on existing information and capacity developed through the UNEP/GEF projects and other relevant work in the country.

**IV Institutional Framework:**

The BEST Commission of the Office of the Prime Minister of The Bahamas will coordinate the execution of the proposal. The BEST Commission will ensure that a broad spectrum of stakeholders representatives participate in the elaboration of the NBSAP to validate its authorship

and reinforce its ownership by the people of The Bahamas. The Commission will build on and expand the membership of National Biodiversity Unit which had been established for the implementation of the biodiversity country study and the biodiversity data management projects and consists of representatives of the following institutions, departments and sectors: Ministry of Tourism; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Agriculture, Trade and Industry; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; The Bahamas National Trust; Shell Bahamas Ltd; The Central Bank of the Bahamas; The Family Island Expedition; The Pan American Health Organization; The Department of Statistics.

**The Bahamas NBSAP Project Budget (US\$)**

Activity	Product	Process	Total
1. Updating and completion of stocktaking of existing information*	0	0	0
2. Identification and analysis of options	20,000	50,000	70,000
3. Preparation of NBSAP	20,000	40,000	60,000
4. Preparation of First National Report	15,000	5,000	20,000
Total	55,000	95,000	150,000

\* The Government of the Bahamas wish to complete the biodiversity country study with literature information that was not available when the initial country study was done in 1992. The cost of this exercise will not be charged to the GEF.

**VI Deviations from Criteria & Norms: None**

**TABLE A: Dimensions of Enabling Activities (Standard Activity Matrix), The Bahamas NBSAP**

Enabling Activity	Out-put	Capacity Building		Public Partici-pation	Comments (To see footnotes)
		Institutional Strengthening	Training		
<b>Stocktaking of existing information</b>	UNEP				1
<b>Identification and Analysis of Options to meet the objectives of the CBD</b>					2
- strategies for conservation	x	x	x	x	
- strategies for sustainable use	x	x	x	x	
- strategies for benefit sharing	x	x	x	x	
<b>Planning and Preparation of NBSAP</b>					
- national strategy	x	x	x	x	
- national action plan	x	x	x	x	
<b>Preparation of the First National Report</b>					
- First National Report	x	x	x	x	

x - Activity undertaken under this project

<sup>1</sup> The UNEP supported Biodiversity Country Study and the Biodiversity Data Management projects as well and the work conducted by the Bahamas National Trust and other local NGOs have generated substantial information and have strengthened the BEST Commission capacities to act as a biodiversity data and information centre in the Bahamas.

<sup>2</sup> A preliminary identification and analysis of measures to meet the objectives of the CBD was outlined in the Bahamas Biodiversity Country Study report produced in 1992.



# THE BAHAMAS ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

OPM/BEST/CBD/1

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif  
Executive Coordinator  
UNEP/GEF Coordination Unit  
United Nations Environment  
Programme  
P.O. Box 30552  
Nairobi, Kenya

28 February 1996

Dear Mr. Djoghlaif,

GEF/UNEP ASSISTANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES

<b>UNEP</b>	
GEF COORD. OFFICE	
<b>RECEIVED</b>	
ACTION	REQUIRED
NO <input type="checkbox"/>	YES
09 APR 1996	
WHAT	
WHO	<i>Murad / Gona / Wany / Shukhik</i>
WHEN COMPLETED	
CIRCULATE	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
FILE IN	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reference is made to your letter of 7 February 1996, Ref. GEF, concerning the above subject.

The Bahamas is indeed aware that the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity, at its second meeting in Jakarta in November 1995, adopted decision II/7, stressing the importance of Article 6 in fulfilling the objectives of the Convention.

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas has been fortunate to be among the countries selected to receive assistance for the development of (a) a National Biodiversity Country Study/Report and (b) a Biodiversity Data Management Project. It was also proposed some time ago that The Bahamas would be included in a GEF-funded Project designed to assist participating countries in developing National Biodiversity Strategies.

The Commission for over two years has been making enquiries regarding the status of UNEP's negotiations with the Global Environmental Fund regarding this Project. It is therefore with considerable pleasure that we learned a decision has finally been taken in this regard and that Project activities, hopefully, may soon commence.

The Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission (BEST) in the Office of the Prime Minister is the agency of The Bahamas Government vested with the responsibility for coordinating all matters relating to the environment.

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11 APR 1996

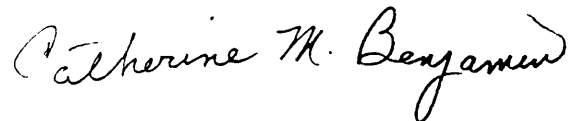
This of course includes the implementation/monitoring of all environmentally related International Agreements with particular reference to the Convention on Biological Diversity. As a result The BEST Commission is the GEF operational focal point for the Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

In that capacity, therefore, I am directed to reconfirm the request of The Bahamas Government for UNEP assistance in developing a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. I am further to advise that The Bahamas has undertaken preliminary work in this connection, which, hopefully, will facilitate to some degree the development of The National Strategy and related Action Plans.

In closing may I state that the Government and people of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas are sincerely grateful to the United Nations Environment Programme for its invaluable contribution to the nation's efforts to move progressively forward on a path of sustainable development ensuring the protection of the beautiful environment with which God has blessed us.

The Commission looks forward to hearing further from you regarding the progress being made in processing this Project.

Yours sincerely,



Catherine M. Benjamin  
(for) Permanent Secretary

CMB/ts



**THE BAHAMAS ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION**  
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

OPM/BEST/CBD/1

23 September 1996

Global Environmental Facility  
Washington, D.C.,  
c/o UNEP/GEF Coordination Office  
Nairobi, Kenya

**ENDORSEMENT LETTER**

Dear Sirs,

This is to inform you that the Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas fully endorses the Project proposal "Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and Country Report to the COP".

The Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission (BEST) has full confidence that this Project will create sufficient capacity within BEST and other relevant ministries to initiate a process of biodiversity planning and to fulfill the reporting requirements under the CBD with respect to the first national report.

Sincerely yours,

for Lynn P. Holowesko  
Ambassador for the Environment  
GEF Operational Focal Point  
Office of the Prime Minister

LPH/swf