

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL

COUNTRY:	COLOMBIA
PROJECT TITLE:	NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY, ACTION PLAN AND THE FIRST NATIONAL REPORT TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD)
GEF Focal Area:	BIODIVERSITY
Country Eligibility:	Ratified the CBD on 28 / 11 / 1994
GEF Financing:	<u>US\$ 289,000</u>
Institution's Contribution:	US\$ 61,000 (In kind and in Personnel)
Estimated Total Budget:	US\$ 350,000
GEF Implementing Agency:	UNEP
National Executing Agency:	Ministry of the Environment with support from the Research Institute in Biological Resources "Alexander von Humboldt"
GEF Operational Focal Point:	ND
CBD Focal Point:	Ministry of the Environment
Estimated Starting Date:	June 1997
Project Duration:	14 months

I. BACKGROUND/ CONTEXT

GLOBAL IMPORTANCE AND BIODIVERSITY IN COLOMBIA

Located in the North West corner of South America and with an area of 2.1 million sq. kms, including the insular and continental land mass as well as the sea area, Colombia is the fourth largest country in South America and the only country in the region with coasts in both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

Colombia's population (36 million in 1993 with an annual growth rate of 1.7%) rates third in Latin America, after Brazil and Mexico. Immigration flows from rural to urban areas have been heavy: the urban population increased from 57% of the total population in 1951 to 74% by 1994.

Colombia has a large number of cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants. Most of the population is settled in the Andean and Caribbean regions, while the Orinoco Region and Amazon Regions, which represent about 54% of Colombia's area, have less than 3% of the population, a density of fewer than one person per sq. km. The population along the Pacific coast is also very scanty.

Of Colombia's total land extension of 114 174.800 hectares, 53.2 million are covered by natural forests, 21.6 million are covered by other types of natural vegetation such as savannas, arid zones and wet-lands; 1.10 million correspond to continental waters, snow peaks and urban settlements, and 38.4 million are used for agricultural activities and colonization.

Overall, only 26% of the available land is used for agro-pastoral purposes (principally pasture, coffee, bananas, cut flowers, cotton, sugar cane, livestock, rice and tobacco). Among the major contributors to the country's GDP are manufacturing (19%) and agriculture (13%).

Colombia has five natural regions (the Amazon, the Pacific, the Orinoco, the Andean and the Caribbean) with highly diverse ecosystems.

Among the highest biodiverse areas in the country are the Amazon Region and the Pacific Region. The Amazon Region has 90 % of its area under forests (32 million hectares) and other vegetation (5 million hectares), and it is one of the most biodiverse areas in the country. Of the overall Amazon region, approximately 74% of the area is under collective Indian property with an approximate population of 49,000 people.

Colombia is one of the countries with the greatest biodiversity in the world. With only 0.7% of the world's land mass, it has up to 10% of the earth's biological diversity, ranking 6th among all countries in absolute diversity.

One third of the 55,000 plant species of Colombia are endemic. Colombia has 15% of the orchids identified in the world, over 2000 identified medicinal plants and a considerable amount of species of commercial fruits which grow practically wild.

Also, 367 species of mammals have been recorded in Colombia, which represent 8% of the total known in the Planet. Colombia has also over 15% of the living species of primates, 18% of the bird species and almost 3000 terrestrial invertebrates.

The Global Centers of plant diversity located in Colombia are Western Amazonia (upper Caqueta river), the Choco Rainforest in the Pacific Region and the tropical Andes, including the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

MAIN CAUSES OF BIODIVERSITY LOSS

The main causes of biodiversity loss in Colombia have been classified as direct and indirect.

The main direct causes of biodiversity loss are the following:

- Habitat transformation and fragmentation as a result of the expansion of the agricultural frontier, colonization, the establishment and eradication of illicit crops, the construction of infrastructure projects, mining, fuel wood consumption, fires on natural ecosystems and occasionally, timber extraction for industry.
- Introduction of alien species and transplant of species across ecosystems.
- Over exploitation of species for domestic or commercial purposes, which can cause genetic erosion and reduce population sizes.
- Contamination due to industrial and domestic activities.
- Intensive use of fertilizers and pest control substances, which can affect the viability of native populations and decrease the response capacity of natural ecosystems.

The underlying causes of biodiversity loss in Colombia are of economic, technological, socio-political and institutional order. These are:

- Under-estimation of the strategic potential of biodiversity, which has resulted in insufficient actions for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, favoring other productive activities that convey habitat transformation.
- Technological development deficiencies and lack of adequate transfer of technologies, to promote the sustainable use of biological resources, and the development of high productivity sectors such as pharmaceutical and food resources.
- Deficiencies in the scientific and applied knowledge about the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Weak institutional capacity to reduce the impact of activities that have a negative impact on biodiversity.
- Land tenure structure in the higher biodiversity areas which has not contributed to local appropriation of natural resources.
- Political violence and migratory fluxes.
- Economic valuation and market failures, that do not adequately reflect the real value of biodiversity.
- Inadequate distribution of the benefits derived from biodiversity and lack of social consciousness of the consequences of its loss.

The biodiversity in Colombia is on decline. The affected areas include coastal vegetation, forests of all types, the Amazon and the Pacific regions.

INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND

The Colombian National Constitution of 1991 and the Law 99 of 1993 which created the Ministry of the Environment (MoE) and structured the National Environmental System (SINA), gave particular importance to biodiversity issues. The SINA is integrated by the following components: (i) The principles and policies set up in the National Constitution and the Law 99 of 1993; (ii) The governmental institutions responsible for environmental management; (iii) The local community organizations and non governmental organizations related to environmental issues; (iv) The financial resources for environmental management; (v) The public, private and mix institutions that carry out basic and applied scientific research and manage data and information on biodiversity.

The Law 99 of 1993 included the following items, among others:

- The MoE main function is to provide the national environmental policies as well as to enact the required national legislation
- That natural resources management should be undertaken at the regional level. Therefore, thirty four Autonomous Regional Corporations (CARs) were established with the aim of implementing the MoE's policies at the regional level. These institutions are the highest environmental authority in their area of jurisdiction and their mandate includes, among others, promoting community participation in environmental programs and providing advice to regional and local authorities.
- The creation of five research institutes in order to provide technical and scientific support to the decision making process of the MoE. Two of these institutes have a national scope, and three have a regional coverage. The Research Institute in Biological Resources "Alexander von Humboldt" (IAvH) was established in 1995 to undertake, at a national level, research in conservation biology, biological inventories, use and valuations of biological resources and policy and legislation in biodiversity related issues.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND ACTIONS IN BIODIVERSITY

Colombia ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity by enacting the Law 165 of 1994, and therefore constituting the national legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and its components.

The MoE with the support of the IAvH, developed a "National Biodiversity Policy" (NBP), with the aim of establishing a general framework which orientates, in the long term, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use activities in Colombia. The NBP was distributed for comments among 200 key stakeholders such as governmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations, indigenous and local community leaders. After several consultation meetings, a final text was obtained with consensus on its long-term targets and mechanisms for action.

The NBP was approved by the National Environmental Council in November 1995. The main objectives of the NBP are defined in three main areas:

1. Conservation of biological diversity which includes the consolidation of the Natural Protected Areas System, the reduction of processes and activities that cause biodiversity depletion and the recovery of degraded ecosystems and endangered species.
2. Increasing Knowledge on Biodiversity, which includes the characterization of the biodiversity components at the ecosystem, specie, community and genetic levels and the recovery of traditional knowledge and practices.
3. Sustainable Use and Sharing of Benefits arising out of the utilization of biodiversity, which is aimed at promoting sustainable use of natural resources management systems; supporting and promoting the establishment of gene banks and biotechnology programs; designing and implementing social and economic valuation systems of biodiversity for the equitable sharing of benefits arising out of its use; and developing the economic potential of biodiversity in a sustainable manner.

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

It is important to ensure that conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity are integrated into national relevant sector and cross sector plans, programs and policies, and therefore significantly contributing to halt the loss of biodiversity.

The National Biodiversity Policy (NBP) represents a step forward regarding the planning of use and conservation of biological diversity while leaving an open-ended space for further development of its three strategic areas at a more specific level. At this point it is of the outmost importance that, through consultation and dialogue, punctual actions are identified, analyzed and prioritized for each area of the NBP. This will contribute to the development of the National Biodiversity Strategy.

Once actions are identified and prioritized, it will be necessary to elaborate a plan of action to identify the public and private organizations, institutions and groups as well as the location or region, the means, facilities and funds that will be needed to implement the activities denoted in the National Biodiversity Strategy. This will constitute *the National Biodiversity Plan of Action*.

Colombia will also need to prepare its *first National Report* to be submitted to the IV meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in accordance with article 26 of the CBD and Decision II/7 of the II Conference of the Parties.

This GEF Enabling Activity proposal will therefore assist the Government of Colombia (i) to consolidate a National Biodiversity Strategy, (ii) to elaborate a Biodiversity Action Plan and (iii) and to prepare the first National Report to the IV meeting of the COP of the CBD.

THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN (NBSAP) DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) will require expertise in specific areas as well as consultation of relevant participants involved in biodiversity related issues. This consultation will be integrated into the planning process at the earliest stage with the aim of 1) improving a constructive dialogue between environmental authorities and the civil society ; 2) ensuring common understanding on the different issues of the National Biodiversity Strategy and 3) developing, among participants, a sense of shared responsibility for the implementation of the Plan of Action.

In order to accomplish the above, key stakeholders such as decision-makers, representatives from the public and private sector, decentralized agencies, local and indigenous communities, will be invited to participate in the NBSAP development process and to comment prior to its finalization. To fulfill this, the MoE will establish a limited number of working groups for each area of the NBP with the already mentioned broad base representation.

Taking into account the need to have at the end of the process a NBSAP with concrete recommendations and specific actions in the three areas of the NBP and keeping in mind the level of heterogeneity of the participants in the consultation process, it will be necessary to ensure that each one of them joins his/her working groups according to expertise and knowledge in such a way that each participation can be optimized.

The recommendations of each working group will be put together in a document by the IAvH. This document, after its elaboration will be submitted for approval, during a workshop, to the group of participants.

In order to coordinate the above the following approach will be taken into consideration when developing the NBSAP:

- The MoE will establish working groups according to each area of the NBP
- The MoE will designate the participants which will include key private and public actors such as representatives of governmental institutions, relevant scientific organizations, NGO's, the private sector and local communities.
- Each working group, according to a designated specific area of the NBP will discuss and develop specific strategic actions (National Biodiversity Strategy) and recommendations on instruments for its implementation (Action Plan)
- The IAvH will consolidate a draft document of the NBSAP based on the recommendations submitted by the working groups.
- The drafted NBSAP will be disseminated and discussed in a workshop with all the representatives of the working groups
- A first national workshop will be organized by the MoE to present the NBSAP to the CARs and civil society.
- The MoE with the assistance of the IAvH will take into consideration the results of the national workshop in the finalization of the NBSAP document and will

- prepare the National Report to the CBD
- The MoE will submit the NBSAP and the National Report to the National Environmental Council for its approval

THE FIRST NATIONAL REPORT TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD)

The preparation of the first national report to the CBD will enable Colombia to meet the obligations under Article 26 of the Convention as stipulated in Decision II/7 adopted by the II meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 2). An interim report will be submitted to the CBD in the same time frame stipulated by COP 3 and the final report will be submitted upon completion of the NBSAP.

III. OPERATIONAL CRITERIA

COVERAGE WITHOUT DUPLICATION

Assessment on the status of biodiversity will provide a good basis for the Plan of Action's elaboration. The development of the NBSAP will take into consideration the NBP as well as the results of the UNEP/GEF assisted National Country Study

The NBSAP will make maximum use of the existing capacity and information so as there is no duplication. This will include the following:

- UNEP/GEF assisted Biodiversity Country Study
- UNDP/GEF "Choco Biogeographic Region Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use" Project
- Activities and information of national NGO's
- All the information from both national and international efforts in biodiversity conservation such as the Forest and Water Policy Documents as well as the recently approved Plan of Action for the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta

APPROPRIATE OVERALL SEQUENCING OF ACTIVITIES

The project will be conducted over a period of 14 months as reflected in the schedule shown in the following table.

Activity/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1 Elaboration of the terms of reference for the working groups	x	x												
2 Establishment of Working Groups		x												
3 Working Groups Meetings: Identification , Analysis, and Proposals of options to meet the objectives of the NBP			x	x	x	x								
4 Elaboration of a document based on the recommendations of the Working Groups (WG)						x	x	x						
5 Workshop with representatives from the WG: circulation of the drafted NBSAP for comments								x	x					
6 New NBSAP version and dissemination									x	x				
7 National Workshop										x	x			
8 Finalization of NBSAP												x	x	
9 Printing & Publication of NBSAP														x
10 Preparation of First National Report and submission to the COP*						x	x							x

* Because of the deadline of 1 January 1998 agreed upon at COP3, an interim report will be submitted by that date. A final report will be prepared after completion of NBSAP

BEST PRACTICE

The methodology for the implementation of this project will be based on the following guiding documents:

- "Guidelines for Biodiversity Planning" (WRI/UNEP/IUCN 1995);

- Operational Criteria for Enabling Activities: Biodiversity (GEF Secretariat);
- A Guide to the Convention on Biological Diversity (IUCN, 1994).

The lessons learned from the GEF funded biodiversity projects and other relevant initiatives will be fully utilized.

The First National Report to the CBD will be based on the information contained in the country study and the progress achieved in preparing the NBSAP. This report will be done in the time frame stipulated by COP 3.

IV. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

- The project will be coordinated and implemented by the Ministry of the Environment with the support of the IAvH
- The IAvH will function as the technical secretariat to the MoE

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WORKING GROUPS

The NBP is divided in three main areas (Conservation of biological diversity; Increasing knowledge on biodiversity and Sustainable use and sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of biodiversity). Each one of this three areas has a set of defined objectives.

The working groups will be established according to the objectives defined for each area of the NBP. Taking this into consideration, the following nine (9) working groups were identified:

Conservation of biological diversity

- 1- Natural Protected Areas
- 2-Processes and activities that cause biodiversity loss or depletion (habitat transformation, contamination, introduction of alien species, over exploitation of natural resources)
- 3- Recovery of degraded ecosystems and endangered species

Increasing Knowledge on Biodiversity

- 4-Characterization of the biodiversity components at the ecosystem, specific, community and genetic levels
- 5-Recovery of traditional knowledge and practices.

Sustainable Use and Sharing of Benefits arising out of the utilization of biodiversity

- 6-Promotion of sustainable use of natural resources management systems;
- 7-Supporting and promoting the establishment of gene banks and biotechnology programs;
- 8-Designing and implementing social and economic valuation systems of biodiversity
- 9-Designing of mechanisms for the equitable sharing of benefits arising out of its use

Each working group will discuss and develop specific strategic actions (the National Biodiversity Strategy) and recommendations on instruments for its implementation (the Action Plan). Having taken this into consideration, each working group will be supplied with the following elements:

- *A group coordinator to guide the debates and consolidate the results of the discussions in a report
- *A Background Document, which will include a short diagnosis on the area in question and the expected results of the group discussions.

WORKING GROUPS CONFORMATION

To ensure adequate participation and consultation from key actors in the development process of the NBSAP, the working groups will have representatives from the public and private sector institutions as well as from the national academic sector, NGOs and the local and indigenous communities

The following institutions and entities will take part in the working groups:

- National Planning Department
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and its Research Institutes (CORPOICA and ICA)
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Foreign Trade
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of the Interior
- Colombian Institute for the Development of Science and Technology Francisco Jose de Caldas (COI.CIENCIAS)
- Academic Sector representatives such as Universidad Nacional and Universidad de los Andes
- Nongovernmental organizations such as ILSA, Instituto de Gestión Ambiental and Fundación ProSierra Nevada de Santa Marta
- Indigenous, black and local communities representatives
- Members of the Agricultural sector
- Members of the Industrial sector
- Members of the Forestry sector

V. PROJECT FINANCING Object Budget (US\$) Colombia NBSAP

Activity	Product	Process	Total
1. Assessment of Existing Information	0	0	0
2. Preparation of the NBSAP	76, 000	173, 000	249, 000
-National Consultants for preparation of the background documents for the working groups (1)	30, 000		
- Working Groups Meetings (2)		110,000	
-Elaboration of a document based on the recommendations of the Working Groups	7, 000		
- Workshop with Working Groups representatives to review recommendations		20,000	
-Elaboration of the NBSAP Draft Document	3, 000		
- Dissemination of draft	5,000		
- National Workshops to review and approve the draft NBSAP		33, 000	
- Editing, printing and distribution of NBSAP report	15, 000		
- Miscellaneous (3)	6, 000		
3. Preparation of First National Report	18,000		18, 000
- Drafting of National Report (Spanish and English)	6,000		
- Layout and Printing	10,000		
- Miscellancous	2,000		
4. Coordination & Management Costs (8%)		22,000	22,000
Total	94,000	195,000	289,000

(1)The National Consultants will have to prepare 9 background documents for the working groups and provide support to the coordinators of the working groups

(2) Each working group will meet twice a month, in Villa de Leyva, Boyaca, center of the IAvH.

46
85.1

94.

(3) This includes costs such as communications, software, paper material, etc.

The project budget is within the cost norms of the GEF. However, the Budget lines reflecting the consultation process (working groups meetings and national workshop) are relatively high because of the complexity of the Colombian institutional framework and the unavoidable need to allow for thorough participation of regional governmental and non-governmental organizations. Consensus building is extremely important if the strategy and action plan are to be implemented.

V. DEVIATIONS FROM NORMS AND CRITERIA

None

TABLE A: Dimensions of Enabling Activities (Standard Activity Matrix), Colombia NBSAP

Enabling Activity	Output	Capacity Building		Public Participation	Comments (To see footnotes)
		Institutional Strengthening	Training		
Stocktaking of existing information					12345
Identification and Analysis of Options to meet the Objectives of the CBD and the National Biodiversity Policy					
- strategies for conservation	x	x	x	x	
- strategies for sustainable use	x	x	x	x	
- strategies for benefit sharing	x	x	x	x	
Planning and Preparation of NBSAP					
- national strategy	x	x	x	x	
- national action plan	x	x	x	x	
Preparation of the First National Report					
- First National Report	x		x	x	

x - Activities to be accomplished under this project

- Colombia is currently implementing a UNEP/GEF funded Biodiversity Country Study

2. **National Biodiversity Policy**
3. **UNDP/GEF has funded the "Choco Biogeographic Region Conservation and Sustainable Use" project. Under this project, many data for the region has been collected and indigenous and black communities have participated designing and implementing a number of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use activities.**
4. **Forest and Water Policy Documents**
5. **Plan of Action of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta**

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Santafé de Bogotá, D.C. 17 Abr. 1997

Mr. AHMED DJOGHLAF
EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR
UNEP/GEF Coordination
Nairobi, KENYA
P.O. Box 30552

UNEP
GEF UNIT
RECEIVED

ACTION REQUIRED
NO YES

21 APR 1997

WHAT
WHO
WHEN COMPLETED

CIRCULATE NO YES

FILE IN

Dear Mr. Djoghlaif:

As the GEF Political Focal Point for the Government of Colombia, I fully endorse the proposal for the GEF assistance to the Colombian National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Project (NBSAP), submitted by the Vice-Minister of the Environment to the UNEP/GEF Coordination in Nairobi, Kenya, on the 14th of April, 1997.

Sincerely,


ALVARO JOSE RODRIGUEZ
GEF POLITICAL FOCAL POINT IN COLOMBIA