

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

Country:	El Salvador
Project Title:	Formulation of the National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and Report to the CEB C B D
GEF Focal Area:	Biodiversity
Country Eligibility:	Convention Ratified 10/94
GEF Financing:	\$ 197,900
Cost Sharing:	\$ 20,000 UNDP-El Salvador
GEF Implementing Agency:	UNDP
National Executing Agency:	Environment Executive Secretariat (SEMA) (In co-ordination with the Directorate for Renewable Natural Resources and the support of the Vice Presidency of the Republic)
GEF Operational Focal Point:	SEMA
CBD Focal Point:	SEMA
Estimated Starting Date:	February 1997
Project Duration:	10 months

1. Background

El Salvador is the smallest (21,040 km²) yet most densely populated country of Central America. Although small, it has a very high biological and landscape diversity. A central plateau, cut by river valleys lies between two volcanic mountain ranges that run east to west of the country and reach 2,100m in altitude. There is also a narrow Pacific coastal plain and high mountains in the extreme north-west cut by the valleys of the Lempa and Torola Rivers.

The climatic zones closely follow these topographic features and range from tropical on the coastal plain and central valleys, through semi-temperate to temperate on the slopes between 1,200-1,800m and 1,800-2,100m respectively. These differences, and its biogeographic location, have given rise to an extraordinary biodiversity despite the relatively small size of the country. 33,871 species have been recorded to date including 750 tree, 356 orchid, 200 fern, 75 bromeliad, 110 mammal, 80 reptile, 500 bird, 91 fresh water and fish, 144 estuarine fish, 40 cartilaginous marine fish, 30 amphibian, 400 marine mollusc, 145 aquatic decapod crustacean, 30,400 insect and 600 other aquatic invertebrate species. Endemism is high and with 82 endemic species and subspecies, including 25 species of plant, 7 crustacean, 2 mammals, 3 reptiles, 1 amphibian, 2 fish and 42 subspecies of birds.

El Salvador has a per capita income of approximately US\$ 1,360 yet suffers from high inflation and unemployment. About one-third of the land is arable and the economy depends largely on agriculture and livestock rearing (coffee, cotton, sugarcane, maize, rice, beans and tropical fruits). The high population density (240 inhabitants per sq. km) and pressures of an agricultural-based economy have exerted great pressures on the natural resources. This is aggravated by the fact that the environmental policy and regulatory framework in El Salvador is sparse, often inconsistent and poorly enforced.

2. El Salvador

2.1. Stocktaking

The estimated period of time required for the stocktaking has been reduced to four months with a corresponding reduction in the budget. In view of the dispersed information it is considered that a thorough evaluation cannot be undertaken in less time than this.

2.2. Consultations

El Salvador is placing strong emphasis on participation in the definition of the National Strategy. As a result of the past conflicts in the country there has been little public and sectoral participation in environmentally related issues and still less on biodiversity. In view of this there is a need to undertake consultations at different levels including communities and sectoral discussions each of which will focus on very different aspects of the issue. Whilst it is considered necessary to maintain this breadth of consultation the size and participation in each has been reduced with a corresponding reduction in the amount of funds requested for this item.

2.3. Training

Footnote 9 of the Activity Matrix has already included information on the training referred to in the text. Corresponding "x" have been included in the Matrix.

2.4. Institutional Framework

These arrangements have been clarified in the text. The Technical Commission already exists in El Salvador. This small Commission acts essentially at the policy level and in order to attain a broad representation from all the sectors, a National Biodiversity Commission will be established to act as a Steering Committee at a more operational level. *The project text and budget have been revised to reflect these aspects. Requested funds now stand at US\$ 197,900.*

Forest cover, once almost 90% of the county is now only 12% and widespread deforestation has led to extensive soil erosion with loss of fertile top soils and sedimentation of river courses. Average soil loss is 10t/ha/yr. in areas with a 15% or less gradient and reaches 300t/ha/yr. on slopes with a 35-50% gradient and as high as 500t/ha/yr. in zones with a 45% gradient. Aquatic biodiversity, already effected by high sedimentation rates, is further threatened by discharge of untreated domestic and solid waste and industrial effluents, principally metals such as chrome, nickel and lead, petroleum derivatives and waste from the food processing. Exploitation of commercial valuable species such as oak, cedar, mahogany, balsam, rubber, jaguars, monkeys, shrimp, swordfish, tuna, and others for food and energy, has exerted still further pressure on the countries terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity assets. The IUCN Red Book lists 42 plant and 11 animal species in danger of extinction and 280 plant and 289 animal species under threat.

In view of this degradation, the government has recently made important steps to halt the negative effect of development processes on national biodiversity. Between 1993 and mid-1994 the Salvadorian Protected Areas (SISAP) was established, and proposes to increase protected areas from the present 3% to 10% of the national territory. In 1994, the country signed the Central American Alliance for Sustainable Development which includes the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as one of its objectives and in September of the same year it ratified the Biological Diversity Convention.

The fragmented and inconsistent environmental regulatory framework is also being revised. In 1995 the Environment Law was formulated and is presently under evaluation by the Legislative Assembly. This law calls for the elaboration of a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan that will support sustainable development in the country through the protection, recovery and rational use of biological resources, maintaining species diversity and ecosystem integrity and promoting the study, knowledge, valorisation and sustainable use of BD.

USAID and IDB funded-projects have recently started that will strengthen policies and regulations in the forestry, fishing, and marine resources sectors, and build up environmental education and EIA procedures. Although important, these initiatives address separate resources and there is still no comprehensive approach to biodiversity and its protection as a natural resource base. A biodiversity strategy would provide an important framework within which these other activities could be developed and ensure that complementary approaches are followed.

Whilst some information is available on biodiversity, it is widely dispersed between different state and non-state organisations and is seldom incorporated into decision-making or sectoral development programmes. Furthermore, it is rarely made available to the different levels of civil society, and, when it is, there is still a low level of participation and discussion. This is mainly due to the recent history of conflict in the country and the heavy emphasis that public participatory processes have placed on peace negotiations as opposed to debate on development and environmentally related issues. Information on the CBD, and its implementation in the country must be disseminated to promote a broader participation in the strategy formulation process. Information on biodiversity-related issues must be systematically

collected and evaluated then reviewed by a range of stakeholders to fully appraise the countries biodiversity assets, identify gaps and options and define a strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of this within the context of development plans at all levels.

2. Project Objectives and Brief Summary.

The main objectives of the project proposed herein are: (i) to formulate a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) designed to support the process of sustainable development in the country through the incorporation of biodiversity issues in sectoral and national development plans and policies; (ii) to prepare the First Report to the CoP.

The NBSAP will be developed under the guidance of a multi-sectoral National Biodiversity Commission (NBC), chaired by SEMA (see section 4). A Project Co-ordinator, appointed by the NBC, will co-ordinate a team of national consultants. As a first step a stocktaking exercise of existing biodiversity information will be undertaken and incorporated into a GIS to be set up under the IDB-PAES project. This will provide a dynamic planning tool that can be used in the future to review and up-date the strategy and action plan as data gaps are filled and actions implemented.

The second step will be the initial identification of gaps and needs by the project team and the preparation of documents to serve as the basis for broad-based consultations to be held at the regional, local and sectoral level for the identification of options. At the regional level, consultations will be held in the Central, Eastern and Western regions with NGOs, local institutions related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, academia and representatives of the private sector. Consultations will be held with approximately six communities selected from different ecoregions to identify options and incentives for biodiversity conservation at the local level. A series of smaller, more technical, consultations will be held within different sectors at the national level to verify that all sources of information have been consulted and options identified.

The findings of these consultations will be incorporated into a *first draft* of the National Strategy which will be evaluated by the NBC and then by a broad range of stakeholders in three regional seminars. Participants in these seminars will include community representatives, agricultural co-operatives, NGOs, professional associations, local governments, academia, private sector as well as governmental sectors related to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and international organisations present in the country. Following these seminars, the *final draft* will be formulated by members of the project team, under the guidance of NBC, and with assistance from international consultants and the Inter-institutional Technical Group (ITG), constituted by the VPR to develop the national proposal for the Mesoamerica Biological Corridor. This version will be reviewed and approved in a workshop with the NBC and ITG members.

A biodiversity planning instruction session will be held for the NBC, the national team responsible for the project and key staff in line-ministries. This will establish a more uniform level of knowledge of biodiversity-planning amongst the different members and a more

comprehensive understanding of the procedures outlined in the guidelines prepared by WRI, IUCN and UNEP, 1995.

Finally, as participation-processes in El Salvador have previously focused mainly on peace negotiations, participation in the consultations and seminars will be facilitated through a two-step public awareness campaign. The first step will heighten the awareness of government, non-government and private sectors on the importance of the CBD and its implementation in the country and will enhance participation in the identification of options. The second stage will disseminate the Strategy and Action Plan and will enhance the support for its implementation throughout the civil society.

The First National Report to the CoP will be formulated by national consultants under the coordination of the NBC.

3. Operational Criteria

Coverage without duplication: The formulation of a National Biodiversity Strategy will play a key role in the development of a global environment strategy for the country. It will build on the recommendations in the technical paper prepared for the Mesoamerica Biological Corridor. It will provide a framework for the revisions of the fisheries, marine resources and forestry policies being undertaken by the Environmental Protection Project-PROMESA (USAID) and will be complementary to the Environmental Programme-PAES (IDB). Furthermore, it will benefit from and build on the consultation processes being set up under the Capacity 21 project for agreements on water policies and to strengthen NGO participation in promoting sustainable development. It will also provide an important input to the design of the Sustainable Development Network being established to promote and facilitate information exchange between public and private sectors. In view of this no duplication of coverage is expected.

Scheduling of Activities

Activity	Month									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Set up NBC, and establish methodologies for project	x									
Stocktaking exercises		x	x	x	x					
First stage of awareness campaign		x	x	x						
Regional, local and sectoral consultations for identifying options				x	x	x	x			
Biodiversity-planning instruction session			x							
Preparation of First draft of NBSAP						x	x			
Regional Consultations on first draft NBSAP (3)							x	x		
Preparation of Final draft NBSAP								x	x	
NBC/ITG Review of Final Draft NBSAP Workshop									x	x
Second stage of awareness campaign -Promotion of NBSAP									x	
First National Report to CCB									x	x

Best Practice. The development of the Strategy will follow the recommendations in the Guidelines prepared by WRI, IUCN and UNEP, 1995. It will also be consistent with the

objectives of the new environmental law and will be undertaken with actors from a variety of sectors and within the context of national development plans. It falls within the recommendations of the Commission for Central American Alliance for Sustainable Development which calls for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), which is currently developing the Mesoamerica Biological Corridor initiative.

Deviations From Cost Norms: Although El Salvador is a small country it has a very high biological and landscape diversity. Environmental management in the country is still in its early stages and little has been undertaken in the area of biodiversity. The main thrust of government and civil society has been the agenda for peace following the many years of conflict in the area. Only recently has there been more participation of stakeholders in the debate over development processes and the importance of the environment in these. Consequently, the Government of El Salvador has placed great importance on stimulating a broad participation in the formulation of the NBSAP through a two-step public awareness campaign. In view of this, and the high biodiversity in the country, the project falls in the middle to upper end of the cost norms for a country of this size.

4. Institutional Framework

Environmental issues, at the normative level, fall under the responsibility of the Environmental Executive Secretariat (SEMA) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and at the operational level, under the General Directorate for Renewable Natural Resources (DGRN) of the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock. SEMA is the CBD focal point and has the responsibility for the implementation of the Convention at the national level. A Technical Commission (TC), has been constituted by the Vice-Presidency of the Republic (VPR) and to ensure that the formulation and execution of the NBSAP falls within the context of national policies and sectoral plans. This Commission is integrated by the VPR, the Director of SEMA, the Director of Natural Resources and a technical adviser UNDP representative. Whilst the TC will oversee and co-ordinate the project at the general level, closer guidance will be provided by a multi-sectoral steering committee to be set up by the TC at the start of the project. This committee - *the National Commission for Biodiversity (NBC)* - will be chaired by SEMA, and will include the Directorate for Natural Resources, the National Centre for Agricultural and Livestock Technologies, the Science and Technology Council, the Directorate for Agriculture and Livestock Defence, the Biology School and Agrarian Sciences Faculty of the University of El Salvador, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Natural History Museum, as well as representatives from the NGOs and private sectors. It will meet twice monthly to oversee, revise and validate the results of the work undertaken by the team of national consultants and the findings of consultations.

5. Budget

	Product	Process	Total
Stocktaking and Inventory Existing Information	27,000		27,000
1. National Consultants (14 MM)	24,000		
2. Miscellaneous (documents, etc)	3,000		
Identification and Analysis of Options	22,000	78,500	100,500
1. First stage of CBD awareness campaign for promoting CBD		5,500	
2. International consultants for Biodiversity-planning instruction session for National Team and NBC, and supervision (2 mm)		10,000	
3. Biodiversity planning instruction session (facilities etc.)		3,000	
4. National Consultants for preparing documents for the basis of regional consultations and reports from them (16 mm)	20,000	12,000	
5. Consultations (3 regional workshops each with 30 people), 6 sectoral and 6 local/community consultations		48,000	
6. Miscellaneous (Materials and communications)	2,000		
Preparation of a Strategy and Action Plan	20,000	40,400	60,400
1. First draft of Strategy and Action Plan (preparation- national consultants 4 mm, editing and printing)	11,000		
2. National Consultations on first draft (3 regional seminars)		24,000	
3. Final version of Strategy and AP National Consultants 4 mm, international consultant 0.5 mm, editing , printing	8,000	5,000	
4. Dissemination and Promotion of NBSAP through the second stage of the awareness campaign		8,000	
5. NBC and TC workshop to review and approve final draft		1,400	
6. Miscellaneous (materials and Communications etc.)	1,000		
First National Report	9,000	5,000	14,000
1. National consultants 3 mm	6,000		
2. Publication and distribution of report and misc.	3,000	5,000	
Co-ordination and Administrative Costs	16,000		16,000
TOTAL	94,000	123,900	217,900¹

¹ The total cost of the project is estimated at US\$ 217,900. Funding in the amount of US\$ 197,900 is being requested from GEF and US\$ 20,000 is being contributed from UNDP EL Salvador.

Activity Matrix

ENABLING ACTIVITY	OUTPUT	CAPACITY BUILDING		PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	Comment
		Institutional Strengthening	Training		
Commitment	Execution				
1. Stocktaking and Assessment, based on Existing Information					
1.1. Biodiversity and biological resources	SISAP/GEF / X				1
1.2. Cross-sectoral Issues	X				2
1.3. Policy and Regulatory Framework	IDB/ USAID/ X				3
1.4. Institutional and Human Capacity	X				
1.5. Analysis of root causes of BD	X				4
1.6. Technologies for Conservation and SU	X				
1.7. Activities with Adverse Impact	X				
1.8. Existing Measures and Programmes	X				
1.9. Preliminary Statement of Objectives	EL / X				5
1.10. Identification of gaps and needs	X				6
2. Identification and Analysis of Options to Meet the Objectives of the CBD					
2.1. Strategies for Conservation	X	X		X	7, 8
2.2. Strategies for Sustainable Use	X	X		X	7, 8
2.3. Strategies for Benefit Sharing	X	X		X	7, 8
3. Planning and Preparation of a Strategy and Plan					
3.1. National Strategy	X	USAID/IDB/X	X	X	8, 9,10
3.2. National Action Plan	X	X	X	X	8, 9,10
4. Preparation of First National Report to CBD					
4.1. First National Report	X			X	

X = Activity Undertaken Within Enabling Activities Proposal; GEF = Regional GEF Mesoamerica Biological Corridor Project; SISAP = National System of Protected Areas; USAID funded PROMESA = Environmental Protection Project ; IDB funded PAES = Environmental Programme; EL = Environment Law

Footnotes

1. *General information* on areas of species richness exists in the work undertaken to establish the SISAP. A technical report for the formulation of the GEF Mesoamerica Biological Corridor Project provides some baseline information. Building on this more detailed information on biological resources will be collected by a reviewing wildlife inventories in SEMA and dispersed articles and studies in governmental institutions, NGO, academia and individual experts. This information will be incorporated into the GIS to be established under the PAES project to permit the up-dating of the BS in the future as more information becomes available.

2. *Cross-sectoral biodiversity-related issues* will be analysed and co-ordinated by the National Biodiversity Commission to be set up under the project

3. *The policy and regulatory framework* for the fisheries, forestry and marine sectors are being revised under the USAID funded PROMESA project; the IDB funded resources PAES will review some environmental policies. The present project will complement these revisions by incorporating

biodiversity concerns in the context of the National Biodiversity Strategy and by including those sectors not included in the other project. Special emphasis will be placed on the legal framework for biodiversity within the context of national development plans.

4. *Information of the immediate causes of wildlife loss* can be found in SEMA technical documents, however this project will evaluate the root causes of biodiversity loss including the effect of social and economic policies.
5. *The Environment Law* presently under revision by the Legislative Assembly outline some preliminary objectives. However it is still to be enacted and has not counted on the results of a biodiversity stocktaking. Preliminary objectives will thus be reviewed in this project.
6. *Identification of Gaps for the consultations* to identify options will be undertaken by the team of consultants that will draw up a preliminary gaps and needs document for each of the three main regions. This will serve as the basis for the first round of consultations (see 7). When the GIS from the PAES project is more complete in early 1997, it will be used in conjunction with the findings of the consultations to prepare the final strategy.
7. *Broad participation in the identification of options* will be ensured through a series of consultations. Three regional consultations will be held in the major regions of the country (Central, Eastern and Western) with NGOs, local institutions related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, academia and representatives of the private sector. In addition, six consultations with communities will be held to identify options and incentives for biodiversity conservation at the local level. A series of smaller more technical consultations will be held within different sectors at the national level to verify that all sources of information have been consulted and options identified.
8. *Participation process* in recent years have focused on peace negotiations. A public awareness campaign will be undertaken in the project in two stages. The first will promote the CBD and the importance of its role in the country. This will enhance participation in the identification of options. The second stage will disseminate the Strategy and Action Plan. This will promote wide support and facilitate implementation.
9. *The USAID-PROMESA and IDB-PAES* will strengthen institutional capacity of government and NGOs in environmental concerns but will need to be complemented to incorporate biodiversity issues. A biodiversity planning instruction session will be held for the NBC, the national team responsible for the project and key staff in line-ministries. This will establish a more uniform level of knowledge of biodiversity-planning and a more comprehensive understanding of the procedures outlined in the guidelines by WRI, IUCN and UNEP, 1995.
10. *The first draft of the strategy* will be reviewed by a broad range of stakeholders in three regional seminars. Participants will include community representatives, agricultural co-operatives, NGOs, professional associations, local governments, academia, private sector as well as governmental sectors related to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and international organisations present in the country. The NBC will review the findings of these seminars and the final draft will be drawn up under their guidance by the national team of consultants and with the support of Inter Institutional Technical Group composed of technical staff from the National Parks and Wildlife Division, the Forestry Service of DGRN and SEMA.



SECRETARIA EJECUTIVA DEL
MEDIO AMBIENTE

DE-400/96

San Salvador, 01 de octubre de 1996.

Asunto: Proyecto de Biodiversidad.

Señora
Joana Marilyn Scholtes
Representante del PNUD
en El Salvador
Presente.

Estimada Señora Scholtes:

En relación a la versión final del Proyecto "Formulation of the National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and Report to the Convention of Biodiversity", presentado al PNUD/GEF por SEMA, y formulada de acuerdo a las observaciones realizadas por expertos del P.N.U.D/GEF; deseo manifestarle que su contenido responde a los intereses del Gobierno de El Salvador en pro de la conservación y uso sostenible de nuestra Biodiversidad, por lo cual esta Secretaría está de acuerdo en cumplir las funciones de Punto Focal para ejecutar el Proyecto.

Agradeciendo la atención a la presente, quedo de usted muy agradecido.

DIOS UNION LIBERTAD



Ing. Luis Antonio González
Director Ejecutivo