

**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL IN BIODIVERSITY**

Country	:	Republic of Honduras
Project Title	:	Development of a National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan and Report to the CBD.
GEF Focal Area	:	Biodiversity
Country Eligibility	:	CBD Ratification: August 1995
GEF Financing	:	US \$250,000
Government Contribution	:	US\$8,000 (in-kind staff and overhead)
GEF Implementing Agency	:	UNDP
National Executing Agency	:	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment
GEF Operational Focal Point	:	Vice- Minister of Environment
CHM Focal Point	:	Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment
CBD Focal Point	:	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment
Estimated Start Date	:	May 1998
Project Duration	:	12 months

I. BACKGROUND

The Republic of Honduras is located in the middle of the Central America. Its territory of 112,492 km² stretches across the isthmus of Central America from the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean Sea. Honduras borders Nicaragua on the east, and El Salvador and Guatemala on the west.

Though less studied, the biological diversity of Honduras is considered to be comparable to that of Costa Rica. Honduras contains five terrestrial ecoregions, as defined in a recent study by the World Bank/World Wildlife Fund on the terrestrial ecoregions of Latin America and the Caribbean: 1) dry forests of the Pacific and Central America (CA); 2) the pine-oak forests of CA; 3) mountain (cloud) forests of CA in high altitudes; 4) humid forests of the Atlantic region of CA; and 5) savanna pine forests in Mosquitia in the east. The pine-oak forests and the mountain forests have a complex, discontinuous distribution, which suggest a high rate of endemism. Honduras's coastal areas also harbor diverse mangrove and coral reef ecosystems. These diverse ecoregions support a high level of plant and animal diversity

Although the biodiversity of Honduras is some of the least studied, the known numbers prove its significance. The number of species of vascular plants has been estimated to be 5,000 of which 244 are endemic or restricted to northern CA. Seven hundred and twenty species of birds are known to occur in Honduras, 59 of which are nationally threatened. One hundred eighty-seven reptiles are known to occur here, as are 89 species of amphibians. Two hundred species of mammals are known to occur here, of which 27 are either threatened or endangered. Among the more high-profile species occurring in Honduras are the Harpy eagle, the macaw, and the jaguar and the manatee. More than 60 vegetation/habitat types have been identified in Honduras and this richness suggests that it supports a high level of plant and animal diversity.

Legal/Institutional

The Government of Honduras (GoH) places a high priority on the conservation and sustainable use of its biodiversity resources. Honduras is a signatory to the Convention on Biodiversity, the Montreal Protocol, CITES, and ILO Convention on Indigenous Peoples' Rights. Honduras is part of the Central American Commission of the Environment and Development (CCAD). In 1992, CCAD elaborated the Central American Agenda on Environment and Development, defining a series of priority actions for the sustainable

management of natural resources. Honduras is also an active player in the Central American "Alliance for Sustainable Development" (ALIDES).

Also Honduras is creating the National Commission of Biodiversity (CONABIOH), as consultant commission of high technical level. The letter of constitution will be signed in the followings weeks, after that will become a presidential decree.

Honduras's legal foundation for sustainable management of its natural resources is comprised of essentially three laws: The General Law for Environment, and the Law for the Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector, and the Forestry Law. The General Environment Law (GEL) of 1993 serves as Honduras's organic law for the environment. As such, it provides for other specific laws to be developed to control air and water pollution and wildlife conservation (several laws are currently under development). In addition, the GEL established the National Protected Area System (SINAPH) to enable participatory management of the nation's protected areas.

The Forestry Law of 1972 defined the policy guidelines of managing forests under the concept of sustained output and multiple-use, while respecting property rights. The law also nationalized the administration and management of the country's forests. The Law for the Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector of 1992 introduced substantial changes in forest policy. The Law devolves responsibility for management and administration of the forest areas to their legitimate owners. This law also reversed the previous trend of official policy inadvertently supporting deforestation and poor management of soils and water. In 1991, a Presidential Decree established the Department of Protected Areas and Wildlife (DAPVS) within the Forestry Administration (AFE-COHDEFOR) to manage the protected areas and wildlife of Honduras.

Despite the ongoing development of conservation and sustainable development programmes in Honduras, serious threats remain to its national biodiversity resources. Some of the most pressing threats to Honduran biodiversity are the annual population growth rate of 2.8%, the steadily expanding agricultural frontiers pushing into the few remaining natural areas, and lack of sustainable management of natural resource exploitation.

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND PROCESS DESCRIPTION

The objective of this Enabling Activity is to formulate a strategy for the protection and sustainable use of Honduras's biodiversity in accordance with Article 6 of the CBD, as well as prepare a plan of action for their implementation. The primary output will be the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). Honduras's first National Report to the Conference of the Parties of the CBD will also be prepared for submission.

The principal tasks of this project will be to: 1) conduct a comprehensive assessment of the existing information on biodiversity in Honduras; 2) implement a participatory, strategic planning process and develop priorities for action in protecting Honduras's biodiversity culminating in a NBSAP; 3) conduct a public information campaign to encourage participation in the strategic planning exercises; 4) prepare the first National Report for submission to the CoP.

Preparation of the NBSAP will follow a logical sequence of participatory steps in line with the sequence recommended in the WRI/IUCN/UNEP Guidelines. A team of national consultants, led by a project Team Leader, will conduct the initial stocktaking and assessment of existing information. Using the results of this

assessment, they will work collaboratively with the national Steering Committee (SC) to prepare a detailed "first draft" outline of the strategy. This draft will outline the present status in the country of key biodiversity resources and related sectors and define specific goals and objectives for the next five years covering a range of sectors including, economic development, forestry, fisheries, tourism, and protected areas. A planning methodology workshop will be undertaken with the assistance of an international consultant, at which time the draft strategy will be considered and approved by the Steering Committee in their first meeting of the exercise.

This draft strategy paper will form the basis for eight (10) local consultations. The local consultations will be held in ten field offices of COHDEFOR located in different regions of the country. These consultations will be held to review the draft strategy paper, discuss possible goals and objectives, and develop strategies to achieve them. NGOs, the private business sector, farmers, and local government officials will participate in these local consultations, the inputs from which will form the basis for developing a corresponding Action Plan and bringing the full NBSAP to fruition. Each local consultation will involve up to forty interested stakeholders. During the course of each local consultation, these participants will nominate five people as representatives to attend the future, follow-on national consultation on the final draft of the NBSAP.

A campaign will be held throughout the planning exercise to inform the general public of Honduras' commitments to the CBD, and the participatory nature of the formulation of the NBSAP. The campaign will be carried out by an NGO in a series of newspaper, TV and radio advertisements.

A second draft version of the full NBSAP will be prepared by the project team based upon the input from the initial consultations. This version will be reviewed by the SC and discussed at one national workshop (comprised of nominees from the first round of consultations). Input from these final consultations will be applied to the revision of the second draft into final draft form. The assistance of an international consultant is also requested at this stage of the project.

The Steering Committee will meet in Tegucigalpa on four occasions. The first meeting will be held: 1) to provide necessary policy guidance; 2) to ensure that all the stakeholders are included in the planning process; 3) to approve the work plan and corresponding benchmarks for the succeeding eight months. The second meeting will be held to review the draft strategy paper and to discuss the WRI/TUCN/UNEP guidelines. The third meeting will be held to consider the revision of the first draft and inclusion of a draft action plan following the local consultations. A final SC meeting will be held to consider and approve the final version of the strategy and action plan.

II. OPERATIONAL CRITERIA

Coverage without duplication

The NBSAP will build on the materials produced by other, sectoral and multi-sectoral initiatives. Some biodiversity-related information has been generated on Honduras under the regional, Central American umbrella. These initiatives have produced varying degrees of information useful to this exercise and will be utilized. The GEF-supported Mesoamerican Biological Corridor project began implementation in 1996.

This project went through a detailed planning period and the resulting information will be utilized. Another regional project, La Fraternidad Biosphere Reserve, financed by the European Union, will be implemented in the Forest region of Trifinio as a cooperative effort among Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. DANIDA is financing a tri-national project (Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua) to develop a management regime for the Gulf of Fonseca.

On the national level, information generated by a range of initiatives related to biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization will be utilized. Honduras has a number of national-level action plans for various biodiversity-related sectors. The National Environmental Agenda (1992) encourages Honduran society to take a decisive role in protecting the Honduran environment. The agenda describes the natural characteristics of Honduras, analyzes the last three decades of environmental policies. This agenda was a key support document for the production of the NEAP.

The National Environmental Action Plan of 1993 (NEAP) provides the policy and programmatic approach to protect the environment and support management and sustainable development of the country's natural resources. The NEAP calls for the strengthening of environmental legislation and its corresponding enforcement and implementation. The analysis of environmental issues as well as the goals and objectives set by the NEAP process will facilitate this EA's work in identifying gaps and developing opportunities for specific biodiversity conservation interventions. COHDEFOR, with the assistance of GTZ, developed a National Forestry Action Plan (PLANFOR) in 1996. PLANFOR established guidelines for the next 20 years of Honduran Forestry sector development. It provides for sustainable forest management programmes, management and conservation of forest protected areas, and a forestry-related sustainable development activities.

The UNDP/World Bank-GEF Biodiversity in Priority Areas Project has generated a good deal of useful information from extensive preparatory activities. The project document is due to be approved in Fall of 1997. All resulting documentation, including stakeholder analysis and tourism income generation estimates will be utilized. USAID is supporting two COHDEFOR protected area strengthening projects until 1998. GTZ is working with AFE-COHDEFOR strengthen management of the Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve.

The World Bank is supporting an extensive Rural Land Management (RLM) project to assist with the sustainable agricultural development and management of upland agricultural resources. This project should provide valuable input related to conserving biodiversity through sustainable agriculture. The Country Environmental Profile, developed with the support of USAID was completed in 1989... The profile will be a valuable source of information from which the strategy and action plan will be developed. Marine research in Honduras has been mostly carried out by the Department of Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock with the support of JICA. The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute has recently developed a research program around the Cochinos Islands on the Caribbean coast of Honduras.

The Atlantic coast region and the Mosquitia region have seven NGO-run technical assistance projects working with community groups, upland agriculture, ecotourism, and appropriate technology. In summary, a number of initiatives, (past and present) have or will yield valuable information to be utilized by this biodiversity planning initiative. However, none have taken a comprehensive, strategic approach to biodiversity conservation in Honduras. This Enabling Activity proposes to do this.

IV. TIME PLAN AND SEQUENCING

The project will follow the sequence recommended in the WRI/IUCN/UNEP Guidelines. Activities will start in May 1998 and will last for twelve (12) months. The project will be implemented according to the following timetable with specific outputs in bold letters.

Activity	Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Stocktaking and Assessment/development of draft strategy paper		X	X	X								
Planning workshop held/Steering Committee (SC) meets to consider WRI guidelines				X	X							
First draft of national biodiversity strategy completed.					X							
Initiation of public awareness initiative					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dissemination of draft Strategy for discussion					X							
Local consultations held to discuss goals and objectives.				X	X	X	X					
National Report to the CoP submitted							X					
Draft strategy revised and action plan developed per input from consultations								X				
Draft NBSAP completed/SC meets to consider draft NBSAP									X			
Draft of the NBSAP disseminated to stakeholder nominees from first round of local consultations in preparation for national consultation on final version.										X		
National consultation held with nominated representatives from previous local consultations.										X		
Final SC meeting held – NBSAP Finalized											X	X
Cabinet approval received and document submitted to the CBD												

V. BEST PRACTICES

The methodology for the implementation of the project is based on the "Guidelines for Country Study on Biological Diversity" (UNEP, 1993), the "Guide to the Convention on Biological Diversity" (IUCN, 1994), and the Guidelines for Preparing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans" (WRI-IUCN-UNEP). The GoH will follow the best practice criteria as contained in the "Enabling Activity Operational Criteria" document.

VI. PROJECT FINANCING

Activities	Product	+	Process	=	Total (US \$)
Stocktaking and Inventory of Existing Information	\$24,000				\$24,000
- 7 nat'l consultants (11 p/m)	23,000				
- documentation	1,000				
Identification and Analysis of Options	\$ 25,000		\$119,000		\$144,000
- 3 nat'l consultants @ 5 mo = 15 p/m	15,000		15,000		
- 1 int'l consultant (1 p/m)	6,000		6,000		
- planning workshop (4)			6,000		
- Consultations (10)			70,000		
- Public Information Campaign			18,000		
- Travel/misc	4,000		4,000		
Preparation of a Strategy and Action Plan	\$16,000		\$44,000		\$60,000
- 2 national consultants @ 5 mo = 10 p/m	10,000		10,000		
- 1 int'l consultant (1 p/m)	6,000		6,000		
- National Consultation			16,000		
- Publication/Dissemination/Translation			12,000		
Preparation of First National Report	\$5,000				\$5,000
- national consultant (1 p/m)	2,000				
- Preparation, publication, Translation	3,000				
Sub-Total					\$233,000
Coordination/Management (3% of subtotal)			\$7,000		\$7,000
Clearing-house Mechanism (see Annex B)	10,000				\$10,000
TOTALS	\$80,000		\$170,000		\$250,000

VII. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Appropriate government departments and ministries will contribute sector-specific information, objectives, and actions. The five governmental entities responsible for on-the-ground biodiversity conservation and management are: SAG (the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock, Fisheries Department), SERNA (the Secretariat of Natural Resources and the Environment), and AFE-COHDEFOR (the Forestry Administration/Corporation for Forestry Development) through its Protected Areas and Wildlife Department (DAPVS), and the Honduran Institute of Tourism (IHT) and the National Protected Area Network (SINAPH).

SINAPH is a semi-governmental programme with a national board, regional committees and local committees, plays an important role in encouraging grass-roots coordination with regional and national initiatives and vice-versa. SAG is responsible for conserving marine biodiversity through its Fisheries Directorate. SERNA is responsible for developing multi-sectoral, collaborative biodiversity conservation programmes and activities that will ensure the conservation of biodiversity within and outside of protected areas through its recently created Biodiversity Directorate. The Forestry Administration (AFE-COHDEFOR) is responsible for the vast forested lands of Honduras. In addition, the Forestry Administration is responsible for managing the national system of protected areas through the Department of Wildlife and Protected Areas (DPVAS). The Honduran Tourism Institute plays an important support role for biodiversity conservation in that it is responsible for promoting ecotourism in several priority protected areas.

The Steering Committee (SC) for this enabling activity will be comprised of representatives from these four government institutions in addition to representatives from the non-governmental and private sector. The Council will be comprised of representatives of the following institutions and organizations: SERNA, AFE-COHDEFOR/DAPVS, IHT, SAG, SINAPH, the Chamber of Commerce, the Honduran Council of Private Enterprises, two non-governmental organizations, a small farmer representative, and the Honduran Coffee Institute. Other interests and institutions, both public and private, will be represented on the Council as well as on an as-needed basis. It is envisioned that this SC will be the precursor to Honduras setting up its own full-scale national commission on biodiversity.

As a member of the Steering Committee, Honduras's GEF Focal Point will be the Project Coordinator. The Project Coordinator will be responsible for the oversight of the implementation of the project and serve as the liaison between the SC and a team of up to (6) six national consultants to be led by a national consultant Project Team Leader. Day-to-day project management authority will be delegated to the Project Team Leader, who will be responsible for planning, management, and completion of all project activities with the assistance of other national consultants. National consultants and NGOs, working in close coordination with government staff, will undertake most of the project's activities. An international consultant will be required for the biodiversity planning methodology familiarization and for advising on the preparation of the first and final drafts of the strategy and action plan.

VIII. PREPARATION OF THE FIRST NATIONAL REPORT

An interim report will be finalized, following the guidelines provided by the CoP, in time for the next Conference of Parties in 1998. A full national report will be completed by the end of the project period.

Biologico Mesoamericano" (CCAD/AFE-COHDEFOR/PNUD/ GEF), and journal articles will be effectively utilized with regard to the different sub-points under stocktaking and assessment.

- 2) Identification and Analysis of Options: Familiarization and local participation. Work will be conducted in such a way as to build capacity while implementing the activities and producing the outputs. Strategies for conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing will be developed drawing upon existing insights from existing material and most importantly through stakeholder commentary and participation. Since the EA will be a process driven activity, the local consultations will provide a forum for the participation of broad a cross section of society as possible, thereby strengthening the link between national policy and local implementation. The SC and consultants will be familiarized with the WRI/IUCN guidelines and methodologies by way of a 2-day planning workshop as well as on-the-job familiarization in participatory methodologies as provided by an international consultant.

ANNEX B: Clearing House Mechanism Equipment Request

Items	Requested Funding
Hardware (Desktop PC)	US\$5,500
Hardware (Printer)	2,000
Software (Internet Browsers)	\$1,000
Modem	\$500
Recurrent Access Costs to Internet Service Provider (for one year)	\$700
Technician set-up fees	\$300
Total	US\$ 10,000

**SECRETARIA DE ESTADO EN LOS DESPACHOS
DE RECURSOS NATURALES Y AMBIENTE
REPUBLICA DE HONDURAS**

Del Despacho del Señor
Secretario

Tegucigalpa, M.D.C., 3 de Febrero de 1998
OFICIO/SUBSEC/071

Srita. Hilda Paparoni
Coordinador Regional
Global Environmental Facility
Oficina Regional para América Latina y el Caribe

Estimada Señora Paparoni:

Sírvase adjuntar la presente al documento de Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad de Honduras que le fuera enviado a través de su correo electrónico el día de hoy, con lo cual estoy oficializando nuestra presentación de la propuesta a consideración del Comité.

Como podrá constatar, estamos considerando la realización de 10 talleres de consulta y una consulta nacional para obtener los insumos que permitan elaborar nuestra estrategia, y hemos considerado oportuno que será al momento de iniciar el proceso que haremos las diligencias necesarias para modificar la metodología de consulta tomando en cuenta la experiencia de países como Argentina, Brasil, Costa Rica y México conocida durante el reciente Taller celebrado en República Dominicana, y que ya han avanzado en el proceso de elaboración de su estrategia.

Estamos con el mejor interés de poder concretar este Proyecto y de realizarlo de la mejor manera posible, siempre contando con el apoyo de su oficina y de los países que, como se mencionó anteriormente, cuentan ya con la experiencia del caso.

Agradeciendo de antemano su colaboración e interés, me es grato suscribirme de usted con las muestras de mi respeto y consideración.

Atentamente,

Sergio A. Zelaya
Sergio A. Zelaya
Sub-Secretario de Estado en los Despachos de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente
Punto Focal-Honduras

