

a:Hungary 25 March 97

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL

Country: Hungary

Project Title: National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and First National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity

GEF Focal Area: Biodiversity

Country Eligibility: Ratified the CBD on 25th February 1994

GEF Financing: US\$ 166,320

Government Contribution: In kind and personnel

Estimated Total Budget: US\$ 166,320

GEF Implementing Agency: UNEP

National Executing Agency: Ministry for Environment and Regional Policy (MERP), Office for Nature Conservation

GEF Operational Focal Point: Dr. Tibor Faragó, General Director, Department of Environmental Strategy, MERP

CBD Focal Point: Mr. Gabor Nechay, Senior Counsellor Office for Nature Conservation, MERP

Estimated Starting Date: May 1997

Project Duration: 15 months

I. Background/Context:

Hungary is a Central European country with an area of 93,000 sq.km and a population of 10 million. The country is situated, within the Carpathian basin, in an overlapping zone of various biogeographical regions. This geographical position, at the juncture of migration routes of the Eurasian continent, has provided a setting for a diverse fauna and flora. The biodiversity of Hungary, in comparison to other european countries, has survived in a relatively good state despite the fact that the ecological diversity of the territory is basically influenced by agricultural activities, forestry and water management activities.

Over 3,000 species of higher plants have been recorded here, as well as 43,000 species of fauna including: more than 40,000 species of invertebrates and 563 species of vertebrates (85 mammals, 81 fishes, 16 amphibians, 15 reptiles and 366 bird species). According to the Hungarian Red Data Book (1989), 36 species of vascular plants (including one endemic) and 15 species of vertebrates have become extinct in the last 150 years.

Part of Hungary (over 8%) is covered by a protected area system which offers protection to most of the flora and fauna species present in Hungary which are defined by international Red Lists as endangered, threatened or vulnerable in their area of distribution, but significant wildlife, even some threatened species, survive also outside the protected areas.

The Government of Hungary is committed to the protection and sustainable use of the biological resources of the country. A number of Acts were passed by Parliament to ensure nature conservation, protection of forests, protection of game including game management and hunting. Draft laws on fisheries and sport-fishing as well as on the safe handling and use of genetically modified organisms are in progress and expected to be passed by Parliament soon. All these laws include the principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity which Hungary ratified in February 1994 and was enacted by the Parliament as a law in 1995. Hungary is also party to most of the biodiversity related international conventions such as the RAMSAR Convention (there are 13 RAMSAR sites in the country), CITES, the Bonn Convention and the World Heritage Convention. The UNESCO MAB programme has accepted 5 Hungarian Biosphere Reserves. Hungary has also ratified (1989) the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats and took part in the preparation of, and accepted the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy in 1995.

The implementation of the CBD is steered by the Hungarian Commission on Sustainable Development including the various economic sectors. This Commission initiated in 1995 the preparation of a country study on biological diversity, following the UNEP Guidelines (1993). The Government approved in 1996 the National Environment Programme which also includes several elements of the protection of biological diversity. The National Nature Plan is an annex of this document and currently is in the process of being adopted by Parliament. An interim Government decree was passed in 1995 rendering obligatory Environmental Impact Assessment procedures.

However, despite all these efforts, major challenges to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use remain, most notably the new changes in the political and socio-economic set up of the country which have altered property rights resulting in several sudden changes in the structure of the landscape and ecological diversity. For example, as a result of privatization of land, a number of small mosaics of habitats have been eliminated through felling of woods, tilling of grassy areas, drainage or filling up of small wetlands, etc. resulting in the loss of viable populations of some species. While privatization may in the long run promote greater conservation of resources, the current situation in Hungary is that the proliferation of small enterprises in the field before the administrative and monitoring institutions are fully in place to replace the old structure and capacity of management which have

collapsed, makes it difficult to control biodiversity threatening processes.

II. Project Objectives and Short Description:

The project will assist the Government of Hungary to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity by drawing up a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan that will identify current challenges to the conservation and sustainable use of Hungary's biological resources, including the effectiveness of laws and institutions of the country. The NBSAP will focus on identifying opportunities and proposing concrete measures and steps for the conservation and sustainable use of components of biodiversity in the following nine themes:

- Agriculture
- Biotechnology
- Forestry
- Fisheries
- Fresh-water resources management
- Hunting
- Land use
- Mining
- Regional development and tourism.

Nine working groups will be set up to identify and analyse options for meeting the objectives of the CBD, each working group focusing on one of the nine themes above and each working group bringing together different groups of stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental organizations, local authorities and communities, private sector, academic sector, etc.). The findings and recommendations of all working groups will be submitted to the Task Force as draft reports. These thematic reports will be combined into a consolidated draft report and will be discussed during the national workshop which will be attended by a broad range of participants including representatives from concerned government ministries, academic and research institutions, the private sector, the NGOs and local communities. The Planning Team will finalise the NBSAP based on the recommendations of the national workshop and submit it to the Government of Hungary for approval.

The project will also assist Hungary to prepare the first national report to the Convention which should be submitted to the Secretariat of the CBD by the end of 1997 in an interim form. The final version will be prepared at the end of this project. A small working group will be established to prepare this national report.

A multi disciplinary and multi-sectoral Task Force shall be established, drawing on the existing Hungarian Commission on Sustainable Development, and expanded to include representatives of the private sector and civil society, to provide overall direction and policy guidance to the NBSAP process under the supervision of the Office of Nature Conservation. A core Planning Team drawn from this task force will be set up to coordinate the planning of, and carry out the execution of activities under this project assisted by national and international consultants as appropriate. National consultants will be largely responsible for drafting the different reports based on the recommendations of the various working groups while international experts will provide assistance by sharing the international experience in developing strategies and action plans in other countries.

III Operational Criteria:

i) Coverage without duplication:

The NBSAP will make use of existing technical capacity and information including scientific data and inventories on the elements of biodiversity. The inventory of fauna and flora is advanced carried out by the national academic and other research institutions. There is a rich cartographic documentation of existing habitats and plant communities and also of the distribution of most vertebrates and some groups of invertebrates. A biodiversity country study prepared in accordance with UNEP Guidelines is near completion funded by the Government of Hungary. A National Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (PHARE programme) is underway and is expected to be finalized in early 1997. The outputs, information and capacity generated by all these projects and initiatives will be fully utilized so that there is no duplication.

ii) Appropriate overall sequencing of activities:

The project will be conducted over a period of 15 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	15
1	Formation of teams (Task Force, Planning Team, Working Groups and selection of consultants)	x														
2	Orientation of Planning Team and consultants in biodiversity analysis and planning		x													
3	Survey of existing information, assessment of gaps		x	x												
4	Thematic Seminars/Workshops to analyze and assess options; public awareness campaign				x	x	x	x	x	x						
5	Drafting of NBSAP									x	x	x	x			
6	National workshop to present the draft NBSAP												x			
7	Finalization of NBSAP												x	x	x	
8	Printing and Publication of NBSAP														x	x
9	Preparation of 1st National Report and submission to the Secretariat of CBD*							x	x							x

* An interim report will be submitted by the deadline indicated by COP 3. A final report will be prepared at the end of the project and submitted to the Convention.

iii) Best practice:

The methodology for the implementation of this project will be based on the "National Biodiversity Planning" (WRI/UNEP/IUCN, 1995), "A Guide to the Convention on Biological Diversity" (IUCN, 1994) and the lessons learned from similar projects conducted in other countries will be fully utilized. The First National Report will be based on the data and information contained in the country study and on the progress achieved in the preparation of the NBSAP.

iv) Cost effectiveness and consistency of approach and procedures

The preparation of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan will build upon existing stocktaking materials and will utilize maximum reliance on in-country expertise. National consultants will be used to run the public awareness campaign, to assess the gaps and to prepare the first national report as well as to assist the Office of Nature Conservation in preparing the strategy and action plan. International consultants, preferably from the region, will be called upon only if the need is identified by the Task Force.

IV Institutional Framework:

The Office of Nature Conservation of the MERP will oversee the implementation of the project. The Office is responsible for the coordination of activities for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Hungary as well as for formulating and implementing national policies on maintaining wildlife. MERP will designate a project coordinator who will chair a multi disciplinary and multi-sectoral Task Force that will provide overall direction and policy guidance to the NBSAP process. This process will promote cross sectoral coordination by bringing together different groups of stakeholders to identify collectively the options to meet the current challenges to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and to adopt the national strategy and action plan. The Task Force composition will draw on the existing Hungarian Commission on Sustainable Development and expanded to include representatives of the private sector and civil society. A core Planning Team of this Task Force will be established to coordinate the planning and carry out the execution of the activities under this project assisted by national and international consultants as appropriate. Public participation will be an integral part of the process to increase public awareness about biodiversity issues and ensure national ownership and authorship of the NBSAP.

V Project Financing**Project Budget (US\$) Hungary NBSAP**

Activity	Product	Process	Total
1. Assessment of Existing Information	0	0	0
2. Identification and analysis of options	16,000	75,000	91,000
- Orientation of planning team and consultants on biodiversity analysis and planning		5,000	
- Workshops of the 9 Working Groups @ \$5,000 for each WG		45,000	
- National workshop (travel, per diem, facilities)		10,000	
- International Consultants	5,000	10,000	
- National Consultants	5,000	5,000	
- Reports	4,000		
- Miscellaneous	2,000		
3. Preparation of NBSAP	30,000	20,000	50,000
- National Consultants	10,000		
- International Consultant	3,000	3,000	
- Task Force Consultations (travel, per diem, facilities)		2,000	
- Dissemination , Public awareness	5,000	15,000	
- Printing & Publication	10,000		
- Miscellaneous	2,000		
4. Preparation of First National Report	13,000	0	13,000
- National Consultants (report preparation)	4,000		
- Editing and translation	5,000		
- Printing, Publication	3,000		
- Miscellaneous	1,000		
5. Co-ordination & Management Costs (8%)	8,000	4,320	12,320
Total	67,600	99,320	166,320

VI Deviations from norms and criteria: None.

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

Enabling Activity	Out-put Planning Execution	Capacity Building		Public Participation	Comments (To see footnotes)
		Institutional Strengthening	Training		
1 Stocktaking of existing information	Government, Academia, PHARE				1,2,3,4
2 Identification and analysis of options to meet the objectives of the CBD	x, Government, Academia, PHARE		x	x	1,2,3,4
3 Planning and Preparation of NBSAP					
- national strategy	x	x	x	x	
- national action plan	x	x	x	x	
4 Preparation of the 1st National Report to the CBD	x	x		x	

x Activity to be accomplished under this project.

- Country Study and information system on environment protection and nature conservation funded by the Government of Hungary.
- Information contributed by the National Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (PHARE). This programme aims at monitoring key indicative groups/elements of biodiversity and threatening processes.
- Hungary has a long academic tradition in the field of biology and related sciences, such as ecology, evolution, genetics, taxonomy and applied sciences (e.g. conservation biology, plant protection). There is a rich cartographic documentation of existing habitats, soils, plant communities and the distribution of several species or groups of plants.
- Strategic documents/proposals on biodiversity conservation such as: i) Green Action (1992): The Programme of Biodiversity Conservation; ii) Hungarian Academy of Science (HUS) (1994): Long-term Environmental Plan of Hungary, Phase 1. Natural Environment: Air, Water, Soil, Biota; iii) HUS (1994): Foundations for Developing a National Strategy of Biodiversity Conservation; iv) Haraszthy L. (1995): Possibilities to the Conservation of Biological Diversity in Hungary.



KÖRNYEZETVÉDELMI ÉS TERÜLETFEJLESZTÉSI MINISZTERIUM

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif
United Nations Environment Program
GEF Coordination Office
P.O.Box 30552
Nairobi
Kenya

Your reference: AD/CS/sm

Dear Sir,

January 31, 1997

Subject: Endorsement and Transmittal Letter concerning proposal to UNEP/GEF for enabling biodiversity activities in Hungary

This is to inform you that the Government of the Republic of Hungary is fully supportive of the project proposal entitled "Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and First National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)".

The Ministry of Environment and Regional Policy of Hungary has full confidence that this project will create sufficient capacity within this ministry, other relevant ministries and professional institutions, to initiate a process of biodiversity planning, and to fulfill the reporting requirements under the CBD with respect to the first national report.

Please find enclosed a draft of the proposal. We would be grateful for your advice and assistance in bringing the proposal to its finalized form.

Thank you very much in beforehand.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Tibor Baragó
GEF Operational Focal Point, Hungary
Ministry of Environment and Regional Policy