

Republic of Lithuania

ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSALS IN BIODIVERSITY

Country	Republic of Lithuania
Project Title	Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan and National Report
GEF Focal Area	Biodiversity
Country Eligibility	Convention ratified February 1996
GEF Financing	US\$70,000
Government contribution	In-kind
GEF Implementing Agency	World Bank
National Executing Agency	Ministry of Environmental Protection
GEF Operational Focal Point	Ministry of Environmental Protection
CBD Focal Point	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Estimated Starting Date	June 1996
Project Duration	6 months

Background

Lithuania is the largest and southern-most of the three Baltic countries, with a territory of 65,200 km² and a population of about 3.7 million people. Spruce and pine forests are the most abundant habitat type, covering 30 percent of the country. However, the richest biota is found in the aquatic habitats of the Baltic Sea, especially within the coastal wetland communities. Like many countries of the former Soviet Union (FSU), the environmental laws, regulations and protected area network were largely inherited from the FSU. The Government of Lithuania (GOL) is working to expand and adapt them to the current conditions.

The first phase of a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was prepared by the Lithuanian Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) in 1995 with limited external assistance provided as part of a World Bank sector study on biodiversity. The action plan was not completed due to the lack of adequate funding. The stocktaking was adequate but there was little consultation or discussion for appropriate review. A public participation program was not undertaken. This proposal covers the additional efforts that are needed to complete the Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (BSAP), the most important of which is the development of broad-based participation (i.e., public and private sector, NGOs, and general public) in development of the objectives, strategies, and actions. Under this proposal, the draft document will be reviewed, revised, and a priority list of actions defined in consultation with the working groups drawn from all stakeholders including government agencies, NGOs, private sector, and scientific institutions at local, regional and national levels. Also, Lithuania's first National Report will be prepared following the 1995 COP guidelines.

Project Objectives

The objective of undertaking these Enabling Activities is to formulate the actions necessary for the protection and sustainable use of the nation's biodiversity in accordance with Articles 6 and 8 of the

CBD, as well as prepare a plan for their implementation. Lithuania's first National Report to the Conference of the Parties will also be prepared (to be published in 1997).

The principal tasks to be completed include (1) ensure that all interested stakeholders participate in the formulation of the BSAP; (2) undertake a public awareness effort that raises the awareness of Lithuanian biodiversity and actions required for its conservation and sustainable use within the country at the local, regional, and national levels as well as the international community, including prospective donors; and (3) prepare the first National Report for submission to the COP.

Operational Criteria

Coverage without duplication

Under the project, the draft BAP will be expanded and finalized, with substantial public participation, and Lithuania's first National Report will be prepared. The BSAP exercise will build on the stocktaking materials and draft actions that were produced by the first phase of the BAP prepared in 1995. The activities to be covered under the project (summarized in the Standard Activities Matrix, Annex A) involve priority-setting to the actions and implementation plan, based on consultations between the steering committee, working groups, and all stakeholders. The steering committee will be composed of representatives of several government ministries, scientific institutions, NGOs, and the private sector. Working groups will be constructed on thematic grounds, covering forestry, environmental protection, agriculture, fisheries, protected areas, etc., comprised of government staff, scientists, representatives of NGOs and the private sector.

No duplicative efforts are known to be underway or proposed in Lithuania. There are a number of environmental initiatives on-going and planned in Lithuania, including pollution studies of the Baltic Sea (both open-sea and coastal waters as well as wetlands) funded by various international donors and the Klaipeda Geothermal Demonstration project funded partly under GEF. None of these efforts duplicates the objectives or results of the BSAP.

Time Plan and Sequencing

Preparation of the BSAP will follow a logical sequence of participatory steps. The steering committee and working groups will review and revise the existing draft, as well as determine options and possible actions that will be presented for discussion to all working groups. Appropriate government departments and ministries will contribute sector-specific objectives and actions. The results will be compiled into the draft BSAP and circulated to appropriate stakeholders in preparation for a national workshop. This sequence of project activities is consistent with the guidelines for National Biodiversity Planning prepared by WRI, UNEP, and IUCN.

Preparation of the BSAP and first National Report will occur over a 6-month period in 1996, with the timetable below.

Activity/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6
Establishment of steering committee and working groups	X					
First national seminar, initiation of public participation process		X				
Working groups revise BSAP objectives and actions		X				
Preparation of draft BSAP			X	X		
National workshop to discuss BSAP					X	
Preparation of final Report, submission to CBD						X
Preparation of National Report to COP						X

Best practice

The Lithuanian BSAP will comply with all best practices and lessons learned from GEF experiences in other countries, and from the Baltic Sea environment program. The BSAP will be authored by Lithuanians, represent national priorities, and be consistent with the country's cultural, historical, and geographic setting.

Cost effectiveness

The proposed budget, summarized below, is cost-effective insofar as it relies to the maximum extent on existing materials. The BSAP will be revised without duplication of existing materials, in a brief time frame (6 months), and with a modest level of expenditure for an external consultant.

	Product	Process	Total
<i>Identification of options</i>	9,000	25,000	34,000
national consultants	4,000	4,000	8,000
internat'l consultant	3,000	4,000	7,000
2 workshops		17,000	17,000
travel, misc.	2,000		2,000
<i>Strategy and Action Plan</i>	7,000	15,000	22,000
national consultants	3,000	3,000	6,000
internat'l consultant	4,000	4,000	8,000
1 workshop		8,000	8,000
<i>First National Report</i>	9,000		9,000
publication and translation	8,000		8,000
promotion, misc.	1,000		1,000
<i>Coordination and Management Costs</i>	5,000		5,000
Total	30,000	40,000	70,000

Consistency of approach and procedures

This is the first biodiversity enabling activity financed by GEF in Lithuania, and is a necessary follow-up to the efforts previously undertaken through the World Bank sector study on biodiversity.

Institutional Framework and Project Implementation

The central environmental protection authority in Lithuania is the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP). The MEP was given ministerial status in August 1994, the successor to the former Department of Environmental Protection. The Department of Land Management and Biodiversity (DLMB) within the MEP will be the coordinating agency for the project. The DLMB will cooperate with, and rely on, other government agencies in preparing the BSAP, including the Regional Environmental Protection Offices, the Ministry of Forestry, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Vilnius University, Institute of Botany, Institute of Ecology, and the Institute of Forests.

ANNEX A: Activity Matrix

Enabling Activity	Output	Capacity Building		Public Participation	Comments
Commitment	Planning, Execution	Institutional Strength	Training		
<i>Stocktaking and Assessment, based on Existing Information</i>					
biodiversity and biological resources	MEP/WWF				1
cross-sectoral issues	MEP/WWF				1
policy and regulatory framework	MEP/WWF				1
institutional and human capacity	MEP/WWF				1
analysis of root causes of BD loss	MEP/WWF				1
technologies for conservation and sustainable use	MEP/WWF				1
activities with adverse impacts	MEP/WWF				1
existing measures and programs	MEP/WWF				1
preliminary statement of objectives	MEP/WWF				1
identification of gaps	MEP/WWF				1
assessment of existing needs	MEP/WWF				1
<i>Identification and Analysis of Options to Meet the Objectives of the CBD</i>					
strategies for conservation	X			X	2,3
strategies for sustainable use	X			X	2,3
strategies for benefit sharing	X			X	2,3
<i>Planning and Preparation of a Strategy and Plan</i>					
national strategy	X				4
national action plan	X				4
<i>Planning of first National Report</i>					
first national report	X				
Legend:					
X activity undertaken by the project					
MEP/WWF Stocktaking activities developed by the MEP with assistance from WWF are largely adequate for use in the final BSAP.					

Footnotes to the Activity Matrix

- 1 The stocktaking materials produced for the draft 1995 draft BSAP will be used, with minor edits to provide a concise and user friendly overview of Lithuanian biodiversity, its significance, and its relation to other Baltic and European countries.
- 2 A public participation program will be undertaken to develop the action plan. This public participation program will target all potential stakeholders rather than selected NGOs. The public involvement effort will be cooperatively managed by the DLMB and one or more NGOs (e.g., Lithuanian Fund for Nature, Lithuanian Society for Nature Conservation, etc.), with assistance from an external consultant.
- 3 The strategies from the existing BAP will be updated, improved as needed through the working group and public participation process, and incorporated into the final document.
- 4 An external consultant and several internal consultants will assist the GOL with the development of the preliminary objectives, makeup of the steering committee and working groups, development of the action plan, and preparation and publication of the BSAP document.