

Mr John Kellenberg**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITY
ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL***As requested**AV**11/12/97*

Country: Morocco

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

GEF Focal Area: Biodiversity

Country Eligibility: Ratified CBD on 21 August 1995

GEF Financing: USD 191,200

Government Contribution: In kind and personnel

Estimated Total Budget: USD 191,200

GEF Implementing Agency: UNEP

National Executing Agency: Ministry of the Environment

GEF Operational Focal Point: Ministry of the Environment

CBD Focal Point: Ministry of the Environment

Estimated Starting Date: May 1997

Project Duration: 12 months

I. Background/Context

Morocco is among the mediterranean countries endowed with a diverse and rich biological diversity. This richness is to a great extent due to the variability in the topography, biogeography and climate which characterise the country as a whole and spans all levels of biodiversity, i.e. within species, between species, habitats, landscapes and ecosystems. There is a gradient in this variability from South to North and from the Sea level to the top of the Rif and the Atlas mountain ranges. The country has a land area of 715,000 sq.km., and a coast-line of 3446 km. The estimated population of Morocco is 25.5 million (1992 figures) with population growth rate of around 2% per annum.

A Biodiversity Country Study (UNEP/GEF) is currently under finalization and has confirmed the existence of a rich variety of biological resources. Around 6930 species of plants were inventoried of which 718 are endemic to Morocco. The fauna of Morocco is also very diverse with more than 450 species of birds, 110 species of amphibians and reptiles, 92 species of terrestrial mammals and over 6,500 species of marine animals (excluding microorganisms) recorded. In some parts of the country, as much as 20% of plant species are endemic.

The ecosystems and natural habitats of Morocco have also great variability. Forty (40) distinct ecosystems have been identified in continental Morocco. A large portion of these consists of forests, woodlands and grasslands. Bioclimatically, the following natural regions are found in Morocco: saharan and arid (hot & dry) regions in the south of the country, hyper-humid and humid (cold & moist) regions in the mountainous areas and sub-humid and semi-arid regions in the plateau and plains.

The coastal zone benefits from currents rich in marine plankton and provides a diverse resource consisting of crustaceans, molluscs and fish. Some marine mammals of very high significance to global biodiversity conservation are found on the Moroccan coast, notably the monk seal *monachus monachus* which is among the 10 most threatened species worldwide. The population of 140 individuals of this species found between Lagouira and Dakhla is the most important one recorded anywhere in the world.

The major problems and threats to biodiversity conservation in Morocco are: 1) degradation of the coastal ecosystems by pollution, urbanisation and other socio-economic activities; 2) a depletion of fish stocks and other marine resources due to over-exploitation; 3) deforestation and degradation of vegetation cover; 4) degradation of soils due to desertification - especially in the south of the country - which poses a great threat to biodiversity conservation; 5) loss of species due to loss of their habitats caused by human activities; 6) genetic erosion due to loss of landraces and other indigenous species of cultivated crops and domestic animals; 7) insufficient legislation and weakness of regulatory oversight regarding biodiversity conservation ; 8) insufficient manpower and institutions; 9) lack of effective public awareness programmes; 10) insufficient and inadequate protected areas system.

There is a growing concern by the Government of Morocco to address environmental issues and to develop a better understanding for environmental protection and natural resources conservation. In 1993, a Ministry of Environment was established with a mandate for defining strategies and policies and for coordinating and managing the environment sector including nature conservation. In 1994, the Ministry of Environment formulated a National Strategy for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development (NSEPSD) as the first strategic document outlining the overall goals and fundamental principles for the protection of the environment in Morocco. This document contains some general recommendations concerning conservation of biodiversity but cannot be considered as a specific strategy for biodiversity that took into account the three objectives and all other provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Moreover the increasing intensity of human activities is continuously creating new threats to conservation of biological diversity. Therefore immediate and well-planned action is necessary for maintaining the current high level of biological diversity and for using biological resources for sustainable development.

II. Project Objectives and Short Description:

The objective of this project is to enable the Government of Morocco to implement Decision II/7 of the COP regarding preparation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAP). Morocco is finalising a biodiversity country study with assistance from UNEP/GEF. The data, information, capacity and lessons gathered from this country study and from the National Strategy for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development finalized in 1995 will be very useful in the preparation of the NBSAP. The NBSAP will provide an important opportunity for Morocco to establish a comprehensive cross-sectoral framework which can in the future be used *inter alia* for project identification and acquisition of funding for activities aimed at the preservation and sustainable management of biodiversity. The document will also provide the basis for determination of priorities for future investments to be considered both by the Government, NGO's, and the donor community.

The preparation of the first national report to the CBD will enable Morocco to meet the obligations under Article 26 of the Convention as stipulated in Decision II/17 adopted by the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 2).

The Ministry of Environment (MoE) will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the project. A National Biodiversity and Desertification Committee (NBDC) was established under the auspices of the MoE to be specifically responsible for the follow-up of the CBD and related conventions (CITES, RAMSAR, etc.), the preparation of national biodiversity studies, strategies and plans, conservation of nature and combating desertification. It is a multisectoral and multidisciplinary committee consisting of representatives of all major concerned sectors particularly all relevant Ministries, academic and research institutions, NGOs, local communities and the private sector. This NBDC reports to the National Environment Council (CNE) which is a inter-ministerial body chaired by the Ministry of Environment that advises on national policies for environmental protection and sustainable development. The Regional Environment Councils (RECs) in the 7 administrative regions of Morocco and the Provincial Environment Councils (PECs) in the various provinces and prefectures are also represented in the CNE. RECs and PECs are fora where environmental questions concerning regions or municipalities are discussed. Local government authorities, elected leaders, NGOs, farmers representatives, scientists and the private sector are represented in these councils.

The NBDC will be the structure that will provide overall planning, guidance and policy direction for the implementation of this project. National consultants will be largely responsible for the execution of activities under the project. An international consultant will be hired to assist in the execution of the project by bringing experience from similar exercises in other countries. The international consultant will visit the country at specific critical points in the schedule of implementation of the project which would be decided by the NBDC.

Among other things, the NBDC will organize workshops in the seven (7) administrative regions on selected sectoral themes with the highest impact on biodiversity conservation. These workshops will be attended by representatives of a broad range of stakeholders including key regional and local government authorities, local NGOs and other representatives of the civil society. Two national workshops also with broad participation will be convened. The first workshop will be aimed at putting together the views expressed by the regional workshops on identification and analysis of options to achieve the objectives of the CBD in one consolidated document. The objective of the second workshop will be to adopt the content of the NBSAP.

III. Operational Criteria:

i) Coverage without duplication

The NBSAP will rely to the maximum possible on the existing capacity and information. In particular, full use will be made of the data, information, lessons and capacity generated by the following activities: i) the UNEP/GEF supported Biodiversity Country Study; ii) the National Strategy for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development; iii) the study on Protected Areas System of Morocco conducted by the Department of Forests and Water Resources of the Ministry of Agriculture which determined the "Sites d'Interet Biologique ou Ecologique" (SIBE).

ii) Appropriate overall sequencing of activities:

The project will be conducted over a period of 12 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 |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| 1 | Planning of activities by NBDC, elaboration of terms of reference for consultants, selection of consultants | x | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Orientation of Consultants in BD Analysis & Planning | | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Review of existing data to synthesize relevant information for preparation of NBSAP | | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Regional/Thematic Workshops | | | x | x | x | x | | | | | | |
| 5 | 1st National Workshop to consolidate the regional inputs in one national document | | | | | | | x | | | | | |
| 6 | Drafting of NBSAP based on the recommendations of the first national workshop | | | | | | | x | x | | | | |
| 7 | Circulation of draft NBSAP report for comments | | | | | | | | | x | | | |
| 8 | 2nd National Workshop to consider draft NBSAP report | | | | | | | | | | x | | |
| 9 | Finalization of NBSAP | | | | | | | | | | x | x | |
| 10 | Printing & Publication of NBSAP | | | | | | | | | | | | x |
| 11 | Preparation of First National Report and submission to COP* | | | | | | | x | x | | | x | x |

* Because of the deadline of 1st January 1998 stipulated by COP3, an interim report will be prepared by that date. A final report will be prepared upon completion of the NBSAP and submitted to the Secretariat of the CBD.

iii) Best practice:

The methodology for the implementation of this project will be based on "Guidelines for Biodiversity Planning" (WRI/UNEP/IUCN 1995). The lessons learned from the completed and ongoing projects like the Biodiversity Country Study, the national strategy for environmental protection and sustainable development, and the study on the Protected Areas System of Morocco which determined the "Sites d'Interet Biologique ou Ecologique" (SIBE) will be made full use of. The interim First National Report to the CBD will draw upon the information contained in the country study and the progress achieved in the development of the NBSAP, and will be prepared within the time frame stipulated by COP3. A final report will be prepared upon completion of the NBSAP.

IV Institutional Framework

The leading institution for overseeing the implementation of this project will be the Ministry of the Environment of Morocco. The NBDC established under the auspices of this Ministry to follow up and implement biodiversity-related conventions will carry out the planning and execution of all activities under this project. It will be assisted by a team of national consultants and an international expert. The NBDC consists of representatives of all major concerned sectors, including representatives from regional and provincial environmental councils (CREs and CPEs). In particular, the following ministries, institutions and departments will be closely involved in the implementation of this project given their important role in the management, research and training in several fields related to conservation of genetic and other natural resources: i) the Ministry of Agriculture, which is responsible for the management of forests, agricultural land, grazing land, wetlands and water sources; ii) the following institutions and departments which fall under this Ministry: - the Water, Forest and Land Conservation Administration; - The Institute of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine; - National Agricultural Research Institute; - National Forest Research Centre; and - the National School For Forestry and Engineering; iii) the Ministry of Fisheries which is responsible for the management of Natural Resources in coastal and marine areas; iv) the Ministry of higher education, training and scientific research; v) the National Museum of Natural History; vi) the Institut National de Recherches Halieutiques (INRH).

The NBDC will ensure that broad public participation is integrated in this process. This committee will hold regular consultations to assess the progress in the execution of the project and provide the consultants with the necessary advice and guidance. At the onset of the project, a project coordinator will be designated by the Ministry of Environment to be the liaison person between the Government of Morocco and UNEP as the GEF Implementing Agency for this project.

V Project Financing

Project Budget (USD) Morocco NBSAP

| Activity | Product | Process | Total |
|---|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Assessment of existing information | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Identification and analysis of options | 30,000 | 62,000 | 92,000 |
| - Orientation workshop for the Planning Team and consultants | | 3,000 | |
| - 7 regional/thematic workshops (travel, per diem, facilities) @ \$4000 each | | 28,000 | |
| - 1st National workshop (travel, per diem, facilities) | | 20,000 | |
| - National consultants | 14,000 | 7,000 | |
| - International consultant | 8,000 | 4,000 | |
| - Reports | 5,000 | | |
| - Communication, miscellaneous, etc. | 3,000 | | |
| 3. Preparation of NBSAP | 27,000 | 46,000 | 73,000 |
| - National consultants | 6,000 | 6,000 | |
| - International consultant | 6,000 | 3,000 | |
| - NBDC consultations (travel, per diem, facilities) | | 5,000 | |
| - 2nd National Workshop | | 20,000 | |
| - Dissemination, Public awareness | | 12,000 | |
| - Printing and Publication | 12,000 | | |
| - Communication, miscellaneous, etc. | 3,000 | | |
| 4. Preparation of the First National Report | 12,000 | | 12,000 |
| - National Consultants (preparation of the report, editing) | 5,000 | | |
| - Printing and Publication | 5,000 | | |
| - Promotion, Miscellaneous | 2,000 | | |
| 5. Co-ordination and Management Costs (approx. 8%) | 7,000 | 7,200 | 14,200 |
| Total: | 76,000 | 115,200 | 191,200 |

VI Deviations from Criteria and Norms: None

TABLE A. Dimensions of Enabling Activities (Standard Activity Matrix), Morocco NBSAP

| Enabling Activity | Output | Capacity Building | | Public Participation | Comments (To see footnotes) |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Institutional Strengthening | Training | | |
| 1. Stocktaking of Existing Information | UNEP, SIBE, NSEPSD | | | | 1,2,3 |
| 2. Identification and Analysis of Options to Meet the Objectives of the CBD | | | | | |
| - strategies for conservation | UNEP, SIBE, NSEPSDx | x | x | x | 1,2,3,4 |
| - strategies for sustainable use | UNEP, SIBE,x | x | x | x | |
| - strategies for benefit sharing | x | x | x | x | |
| 3. Planning and Preparation of NBSAP | | | | | |
| -national strategy | UNEP, SIBE,x | x | x | x | 1,2,3,4 |
| -national action plan | UNEP, SIBE,x | x | x | x | |
| 4. Preparation of the First National Report | | | | | |
| -First National Report | x | | x | x | |

x - Activity to be undertaken or completed under this project

- 1 A Biodiversity Country Study is under finalization in Morocco with assistance from UNEP/GEF
- 2 The Ministry of Agriculture/Department of Forests and Water Resources conducted a comprehensive study on the Protected Areas System of Morocco which determined the "Sites d'Interet Biologique ou Ecologique" (SIBE), i.e. areas of biological and ecological significance in Morocco for priority protection in the short and medium term.

3. A National Strategy for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development (NSEPSD) was formulated in 1994.
4. Since 1995, the Ministry of Environment has established Regional (CREs) and Provincial (CPEs) Environment Councils. These councils bring together regional and local policy makers and other stakeholders (NGOs, farmers, private sector, scientists) and constitute forums for consultation and decision on environmental questions of interests to the region or the local community. These CRE and CPE will be fully involved in the project particularly during the regional and national workshops.

12 DEC. 1996

ROYAUME DU MAROC

MINISTÈRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

DIRECTION DE L'OBSERVATION, DES
ETUDES ET DE LA COORDINATION

DIVISION DE L'OBSERVATION ET
DES ETUDES/O.N.E.M

00826

LE MINISTRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT
A
MADAME ELIZABETH DOWDESWELL
DIRECTEUR EXECUTIF DU PNUE

P.O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya.
N° FAX : (254 2) 226 886 / 276 900

Objet : Lettre d'endossement .

Madame,

J'ai l'honneur de vous informer que le Gouvernement du Royaume du Maroc endosse complètement le projet : "Stratégie Nationale, Plan d'Action sur la Biodiversité, et Rapport National à la Conférence des Parties de la Convention sur la Diversité Biologique".

Le Ministère de l'Environnement a la certitude que ce projet renforcera et créera les capacités suffisantes au Ministère de l'Environnement et aux autres Ministères concernés, pour initier le processus de planification de la biodiversité, et répondre ainsi aux obligations et dispositions de la Convention sur la Diversité Biologique, notamment celles relatives au premier rapport national.

Cordiales Salutations.

Signé : Dr. Nourdine Benomar Alanii
Ministre de l'Environnement
Point Focal Opérationnel du FEM

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