



United Nations Development Programme
Global Environment Facility



FAX MESSAGE

Date: 6 October 1999 **Pages:** 5

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Mr. Madhav Gadgil, STAP. Fax. 91-80-331-5453

cc. Carlos Tito Santos

From: Dr. John L Hough. Principal Technical Advisor: Medium Size, Biodiversity, and NGO Partnerships

Subject: Submission of Biodiversity Enabling Activity for Nicaragua (1744)

Dear Colleagues,

Please find enclosed for your comments the enabling activity for Nicaragua entitled "National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and Country Report to the CoP."

We look forward to receiving your comments within 8 working days, ie. by 19 October 1999.

With best regards

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GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

Country:	Republic of Nicaragua
Project Title:	National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and Report to the CoP
GEF Focal Area	Biodiversity
Country Eligibility:	Nicaragua ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity on 20 November, 1995
GEF Inputs:	US\$ 252,247
Government Inputs:	US\$25,224.70
GEF Implementing Agency:	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
National Executing Agency:	MARENA (Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources)
GEF Counterpart:	Dirección General de Biodiversidad y Recursos Naturales (MARENA) Comisión Nacional de Biodiversidad Foro Nacional de Biodiversidad
CBD Counterpart:	MARENA - Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
Estimated Starting Date:	September 1999
Project Duration:	18 months

I. BACKGROUND

The Republic of Nicaragua is located at the heart of Central America. It has a land area of approximately 130,000 square kilometers and a population of 4,9 million inhabitants.

Within the national territory there are, at least, nine main ecological systems that have been identified and characterized. Four of the ecological systems belong to a Tropical climate (from Very Dry to Very Humid), four to Subtropical climate (from Very Dry to Pluvial) and one belongs to climate of Low Mountain. Besides, there are identified transitional areas of interest.

The biological diversity in Nicaragua is one of the less known in Central America. This is probably due to the isolation and difficult access to the sites with the largest biodiversity in the country and to the poor development of the infrastructure and local experience in taxonomic and ecological research. However, there exist some estimates on the number of flora and fauna species in the country.



In Nicaragua, the main causes of extinction of species and ecosystems are: the technological systems used in the process of transformation of natural ecosystems for the agrarian production and human settlements; the increase of local activities regarding the commercial capture of species to supply the increasing local and international market with wildlife species and products. The ecosystems transformed by human activities suffer deep alterations in their structures, composition and dynamic so they lose many elements of their biotic diversity as well as their self-regeneration capacity. Therefore, the need to carry out public awareness campaigns on the importance of conservation, protection and sustainable use of the national biodiversity as well as on the generation of local capacities to address this issue.

Two percent (2%) of the land vertebrate fauna is endangered of extinction and ten percent (10%) is threatened.

Notwithstanding, there are two existing systems of conservation of the biodiversity and genetic resources: for the in-situ conservation the National System of Protected Areas (SINAP in Spanish) distributed in three subsystems corresponding to three biogeographic areas of the country and has 75 Areas legally established by Decree. The total area is 2,161,400 hectares, 18,2% of the national territory.

The extension of the areas range from very small areas like Laguna Cratérica Tiscapa (40 hectares) to Big Reserves located at the north, being one of the most important BOSAWAS (730,000 hectares) considered as a Biosphere Reserve. The Areas are classified into 9 management categories established by the General Law of the Environment (217- Ley General del Ambiente). The categories establish general guidelines of administration and management that should be regarded according to the main conservation objectives.

It is important to mention that only 15 of the Areas have defined management categories; the other 60 Protected Areas are considered as Natural Reserves in which it is required to study the ecosystems and to elaborate superficial inventories of the biological diversity and other natural resources to be able to perform a better definition of the corresponding management category.

For the ex-situ conservation Nicaragua has a system of conservation and protection of genetic resources—live and in vitro. Although there is no National Botanical Garden or a net of arboretums, there are 7 centers of agrarian experiments with budget limitations where they conserve plant genetic resources—local and introduced-, including some live collection of criollo cultivars. There are also 5 cool rooms to conserve plant germplasm and 2 small laboratories to harvest tissues and micropropagation.

Legal and Institutional Aspects

Nicaragua has a group of isolated and incomplete laws on development of natural resources; however, upon the approval of the General Law of the Environment and

Natural Resources in March 1996 through Act 217 they consolidated a general legal framework.

The National System of Protected Areas (SINAP in Spanish) was created by Act 217, Section 17. The Act also serves as the framework of the development and administration of the SINAP as in the Section 22 establishes that the regulation and control of the Protected Areas will be the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. At present they also have a Regulation of Protected Areas, recently approved (March 1999) that sets forth the guidelines to manage and operate the SINAP.

In relation to the Biodiversity there is no law that protects the biological patrimony. However, there is a Draft of the Biodiversity Law that will be discussed and analyzed by all the sectors involved.

At the international level, in connection with the protection of the environment, Nicaragua ratified international commitments like the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Central American Convention on Conservation of the Biodiversity, within the framework of the Central American Alliance for the Sustainable Development, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES, 1973), which is the main instrument of control of the international trade of wildlife applied in the country, and others.

At the national level, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA) as the entity that regulates and controls is in charge of the compliance with said commitments. However, there are other departments involved like the National Commission on Sustainable Development (CONADES) in charge of the environmental policies of the country; the National Commission on Biodiversity (CONABIO) a technical department with expertise in consultation and support in policy-making, development of strategies and other instruments for the protection and conservation of the Biodiversity and the National Forum of Biodiversity (FOROBIO) a link between the civil society and the Governmental organizations to consult on issues related to the protection, conservation and sustainable use of the Biodiversity.

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS

The Project is aimed at developing the National Biodiversity Strategy and the Action Plan. This objective will be attained through a participatory process that will count with the information and human resources available in Nicaragua.

At the end of the Project: i) there will be a set of documents (the National Biodiversity Strategy and the Action Plan and ii) the local and institutional capacities will be strengthened through a process of participatory planning and consultation with all the actors involved.

Initially, the Dirección General de Biodiversidad y Recursos Naturales, CONABIO and FOROBIO will form a planning team with members from all the sectors involved in the Strategy: governmental organizations, the academic sector, conservation organizations and associations, the civil society (including farmers and indigenous communities), the private sector and non-governmental organizations. The planning team will receive the support from a national consultant who will coordinate and facilitate the activities of the Project, and from experts in several fields like: economy, social sciences, ecology, forestry, management and legislation of the environment, among others. The national consultants will give support for the implementation of workshops on consultation and will assist the planning team in the review of the WRI/TUCN/UNEP guidelines to prepare the national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

The initial activity of the planning team, together with national consultants, will be the implementation of the First National Consultation that will identify key issues and the options that will permit the compliance with the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CDB). It will take place through three workshops: one in Managua, another in the Autonomous Region of the North Atlantic and another one in the Autonomous Region of the South Atlantic.

These workshops will gather a wide number of actors from the most important involved sectors like: i) the governmental sector related to biodiversity and will participate at the national, regional and local levels; ii) the academic sector, represented by the most important universities and scientific associations; iii) Nicaraguan conservation organizations and civil associations that promote the conservation of the natural resources and that represent a link between the Government and the Society; iv) the social sector, represented by farmers, indigenous, community and small-scale producers associations; v) the private sector through associations registered at the Consejo Consultivo Empresarial (CCE) and vi) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). It is important to mention that there is already a structure that gathers all these sectors: FOROBIO.

The national consultant Coordinator, at the same time that these workshops take place, will direct sessions to become familiar with the team and national consultants in relation to the analysis, strategic techniques and dissemination methods. These sessions will permit the team and consultants to perform a detailed analysis of the identified problems and options during the first national consultation. After that, the team and the consultants will develop a method to conduct five workshops on consultation for the following issues:

- 1) in-situ and ex-situ conservation and sustainable use of the resources at different geographic scales, including genetic, water and forest resources.
- 2) institutional and human resources
- 3) environmental legislation and management
- 4) economic value of the biological diversity and biological resources
- 5) inspection and monitoring of biological resources

16
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The workshops will be addressed to representatives from local groups, indigenous, private sector and Governmental organizations, NGOs and academic institutions to identify the options and problems related to said issues.

The results from the five workshops will be collected by the planning team and will be included in the recommendation to be included in the first draft. This document will be presented at the sixth and final workshop before all the involved sectors for their approval.

The planning team and the national consultants will prepare and interim report and final version of the First National Report to the Cop of the CND to be presented at the end of the Project.

III. OPERATIONAL CRITERIA

Coverage without duplication: The National strategy will be the result of the logical consequence of the Nicaraguan Country Study within the planning process of the national biodiversity. In this sense it is important to mention that there is a draft of the Country Study as a result of the First National Consultation.

There are several efforts at the regional level in favor of the conservation and the sustainable use of the biodiversity, structures like the Central American Commission of Environment and Development (CCAD in Spanish) and the technical branches are a clear example of this. Moreover, at present, there are some multinational project in process like the Management and Conservation of the Coastal Gulf of Fonseca Ecosystem Project (CCAD/UICN/DANIDA) and the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor (GEF/World Bank), among others.

There are also some projects at the national level directed to the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity like the Support to the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Project (Environmental Program Nicaragua-Finland) and the Integral Management of the Coastal Areas in Nicaragua Program (DANIDA), BOSAWAS Project (GTZ), S.I.A.PAZ Project (DANIDA, GTZ) among others. These Projects will be complemented with the National Biodiversity Strategy and the Action Plan and they will be the foundation for the formulation of new Projects.

7/15

Nicaragua

National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and Report to the CoP

Appropriate sequence of activities:

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Formation of the Planning Team	X																	
Synthesis and Dissemination of the Country Study	X	X																
First National Consultation (3 workshops)*			X															
Cross-sectoral workshops (5 workshops)**					X	X	X	X	X									
Preparation of the Draft Final Workshop for approval											X	X						
Publication and distribution of the final Document													X	X	X			
Preparation of the Final Document																X	X	
Publication and distribution of the final Document																	X	X

* During these three Workshops the planning team will discuss the content of the cross-sectoral workshops and the mechanisms of the consultation process (See Annex III for more information).

** During these five cross-sectoral Workshops the most important issues will be discussed and the goals and objectives of the Strategy will be determined from the point of view of each sector

Best Practice: The Project will be based on the following documents: "Guidelines for the Convention on Biological Diversity " (IUCN, 1994) and the "Guidelines for the Preparation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans" (WRI/IUCN/UNEP). The country has similar experience in strategic planning exercises, mainly related to the elaboration of the Environmental Action Plan and the Action Plan for the Management of Coastal Areas as well as the Forest Action Program.

Deviations from cost norms: none

IV. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The Project will use coordination mechanisms among the legal, administrative and political parties in order to achieve an effective development that will integrate into the National Strategy the benefits arising from the protection, conservation and sustainable use of the Biodiversity. Thus, the planning team and the consultants will be able to analyze simultaneously all the available information that will be extremely valuable for the preparation of the suggestions related to the conservation, use and monitoring of the Nicaraguan natural resources.

MARENA will be the entity in charge of executing the Project. It will receive the support from CONADES and CONABIO and they will use wide consultation processes through FOROBIO. For the execution of the Project they will count with the assistance of consultants with wide experience and knowledge of the protection, conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity in Nicaragua and with experts from NGOs and National Universities.

V. BUDGET

	Product	Process	Total
Stocktaking and Inventory of the Existing Information			20,000
1. National Team	17,000		
2. Documentation and Miscellaneous	3,000		20,000
Identification and Analysis of the Options			139,400
1. National Consultants	59,400		59,400
2. First National Consultations (3 workshops) (incl. travel expenses)		30,000	30,000
3. Thematic workshops (5 workshops) (incl. Travel expenses)		50,000	50,000
Preparation of a Strategy and Action Plan			57,000
1. Preparation of the Draft of the National Biodiversity Strategy	10,000		10,000
2. Final Workshop (convene the National Forum of Biodiversity) for the approval of the NBSAP document		20,000	20,000
3. Publication of the Final Document	20,000		20,000
4. Dissemination		7,000	7,000
First National Report			20,000
1. Publication (interim and final)	15,000		15,000
2. Dissemination		5,000	5,000
Clearing House Mechanism *	8,500		8,500
subtotal	122,900	122,000	244,900
Co-ordination and Management			7,347
	3,687	3,660	7,347
TOTAL	126,587	125,660	252,247

* See Annex I

STANDARD ACTIVITY MATRIX

ENABLING ACTIVITY	OUTCOMES	CAPACITY BUILDING		PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	COMMENTS
		Institutional strengthening	Training		
Commitment	Product				
1. Stocktaking and Assessment based on existing information					
1.1 Biodiversity and Biological Resources	OP / X				1
1.2 Cross-sectoral issues	X				2
1.3 Policy and Regulatory Framework	X				3
1.4 Human and institutional capacity	X				4
1.5 Analysis of root causes of BD loss	X				5
1.6 Technologies for the conservation and sustainable use	X				
1.7 Activities with adverse impacts	X				
1.8 Existing measures and programs	X				6
1.9 Preliminary statement of objectives	X				7
1.10 Identification of Gaps	X				8,9
1.11 Assessment of Existing Needs	X				
2. Identification and analysis of options to meet the objectives of the CBD					
2.1 Strategies for conservation in situ, ex situ	X	X	X	X	9,10
2.2 Strategies for Sustainable Use	X	X	X	X	9,10
2.3 Strategies for Benefit Sharing	X	X	X	X	9,10
3. Planning and preparation of a Strategy and Action Plan					
3.1 National Strategy	X	X		X	9,10
3.2 National Action Plan	X	X		X	9,10
4. Preparation of the First National Report to the CBD					
4.1 First National Report	X			X	

X = Activities that fall within the Enabling Activities purpose

OP = Other Projects in process (see comments)

Comments:

1. The country already counts with information on Biodiversity and Biological Resources though it is spread over different institutions. At present, MARENA's Dirección General de Biodiversidad y Recursos Naturales has a Final Draft of the Nicaraguan Country Study (financed by the Sub-Project Support to the Biodiversity of the Environmental Program Nicaragua-Finland (PANIF) that will give a first approach to the integral knowledge of the national Biodiversity. With the support of the same Project they are improving the collections of herbarium and arboretum of the main national Universities (Universidad Nacional Agraria, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua-León and Universidad Centroamericana).

2. CONADES (The Nacional Commission of Sustainable Development) has updated the Nicaraguan Environmental Action Plan (PAANIC in Spanish) which identifies some required cross-sectoral measures.
Besides, the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor (CBM-GEF/PNUD) that will start soon will also participate in this field.
3. There are already several diagnoses that show the urgent need of a legal framework of the Biodiversity and although there is a Draft of the Biodiversity Law, at present, there are several efforts to improve it. An example of this is the existence of a Consultation Group of the Biodiversity Law working in FOROBIO which is composed by different sectors involved in this field.
It is also important to mention that MARENA through the Dirección General de Biodiversidad is the entity responsible for the preparation of regulations and the developing of strategies and policies with other State sectors, NGOs and the civil society in order to coordinate the efforts directed to the conservation and sustainable use of the national Biodiversity.
4. Some Projects assigned to the Dirección General de Biodiversidad y Recursos Natural take into account the institutional strengthening and the improvement of the local capacities to control issues related to the management of the Biodiversity and Biological Resources like the Sub-Project Support to the Biodiversity of the Environmental Program Nicaragua-Finland (PANIF) that has a component on Capacity related to the issue.
5. The Biological Corridor of the Atlantic Project (GEF/WB) and the BOSAWAS Project (GTZ) undertook several diagnoses on the issues and they will also be addressed by the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor Project (CBM-GEF-UNDP).
6. As it was mentioned before, there are some Projects and Programs that address, directly or indirectly, issues related to the conservation, sustainable use and development of the Biodiversity and the Biological Resources.
7. There is an Environmental Action Plan (PAANIC) that establishes objectives for the protection, sustainable use and development of the Biodiversity and the Biological Resources.
8. The Country Study of the Nicaraguan Biodiversity will permit the identification of some information gaps.
9. The Project National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan takes into account a National Consultation that will take place in three Workshops in different geographic areas that will give a first approach between the planning team and the different sectors involved in the process.
10. The Project National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan takes into account a Consultation Process that will take place in five cross-sectoral Workshops that will permit the identification of the Strategy objectives and goals. They will also serve to identify the individuals responsible of their fulfillment.

ANNEX I**Budget for Clearing-House Mechanism**

Component	Budget Cost (US\$)
Hardware	4,000
Software	500
Modem	500
Cost of Internet access	2,000
Technical installation	500
Internet/email training	1,000
TOTAL	8,500

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Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo
Desarrollo humano sostenible



A:	Señor Carlos Manuel Tito Santos UNDP - GEF New York, New York.	Fax No. (212) 906-6998
Atención de:		Mensaje: 1543-99
De:	Silvia Ayón <i>Silvia Ayón</i> Oficial de Programa PNUD - Nicaragua.	Prioridad: URGENTE
No. De paginas (incluidas esta):	Tres (3)	Fecha: 7 septiembre 99
Ref.:	ENDOSO DE LA INICIATIVA Y EL PROYECTO "ESTRATEGIA NACIONAL DE BIODIVERSIDAD, PLAN DE ACCION E INFORME A LA COP"	Cuenta a Cargar: 3-EA-0050-NIC-98-G31- 5301-000

De acuerdo a su solicitud, tengo a bien remitirle el endoso del Gobierno de Nicaragua a la iniciativa de Biodiversidad.

No omito manifestarle que el viernes 3 del corriente, la Señora Léonie Argüello, Oficial de Programa del PNUD, a cargo del tema, envió vía Valija Diplomática el Documento mencionado en el asunto en epígrafe, dirigido al Señor Rafael Asenjo, Director UNDP-GEF. Aprovecho para enviarle copia de la carta de remisión que acompaña dicha correspondencia.

Muy atentamente.

Maria

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UNDEVPO
BIODIVERSIDAD

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Managua, 02 de Agosto de 1999

Señor
Carmelo Angulo
Coordinador Residente
Sistema de Naciones Unidas
Su Despacho.-

P. N. U. *Kael*
Recibido en: *ma*
Fecha: 03 AGO 1999

Estimado Señor Angulo:

Por medio de la presente hago de su conocimiento que estoy endosando la iniciativa y el proyecto "Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad, Plan de Acción e Informe a la CoP", del cual le adjunto el documento en su versión en español, y al mismo tiempo le solicito a usted envíe carta de apoyo a la UNDP.

Agradeciendo de antemano su atención a la presente, le saludo.

Atentamente,

G. A. Cantarero

García A. Cantarero
Punto Focal GEF
Nicaragua

12 AGO. 1999

cc: Archivo

UNDP - NICARAG	
RECEIVED:	
FILE: 06/99/631	
ACTION	IN
FR	✓
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RTS	✓
REMARKS	

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Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo
Desarrollo humano sostenible



REF: RLA/97/G31 - 1467-99

26 agosto 1999

Estimado Señor Asenjo:

Asunto: "Remisión de documento "Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad"

Tengo a bien dirigirme a Usted para manifestarle, que el Programa de las Naciones Unidas en Nicaragua, PNUD, considera de vital importancia y apoya la iniciativa sobre la Formulación de una Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad, en los últimos meses hemos acompañado al Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (MARENA), en el proceso de formulación del documento de proyecto. Dicho Proyecto permitirá a Nicaragua como país, disponer de una Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad.

Por lo tanto, me permito de la manera más atenta adjuntar el Documento de Proyecto "Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad" y el endoso firmado por el Punto focal GEF en Nicaragua, Señor García A. Cantarero.

No omito manifestar nuestro sincero agradecimiento al Señor Carlos Manuel Tito Santos por sus aportes sustanciales al Documento de Proyecto de la referencia.

Al agradecer su atención a la presente, aprovecho para enviarle un cordial saludo.

Atentamente,

Carmelo Angulo Barturen
Representante Residente

da/malia

Señor
Rafael Asenjo
Director
UNDP/GEF
New York, New York.

Nota: se adjuntó copia de este escrito al Sr. Tito Santos. M/L/M/L 26/08/99