

**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL**

Country:	Niue Island
Project Title:	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and Report to the COP.
GEF Focal Area:	Biodiversity
Country Eligibility:	CBD Ratification 27 February 1996
GEF Financing:	US\$ 134,930
GEF Implementing Agency:	UNDP
National Executing Agency:	Environment Unit, Department of Community Affairs
GEF Operational Focal Point:	Office for External Affairs, Premier's Department
CBD Focal Point:	Office of Secretary to the Government
Estimated Start Date:	June 1998
Project Duration:	10 months

Background

1. Niue is known as the largest and highest coral atoll in the world with a land area of 259 sq. km. It is approximately 480 km east of Tonga, 930 km west of the Cook Islands and 660 km south-east of Western Samoa. Its exclusive economic zone covers approximately 390,000 sq. km.
2. Niue is surrounded by a fringing reef, breached at only one small area, near Alofi, the nation's capital. A large proportion of the island is covered with regenerating forests and large areas of shrub and fern lands. Several thousand acres of dense primary forest cover an estimated one-fifth of the Niue's surface area, with the Huvalu Forest being the largest single block. This area includes a *Tapu* area where human presence is forbidden, and this has largely contributed to the protection of the area. There are also large areas of secondary forest. Tropical rainforest, which originally covered much of the island, is now reduced to remnants, mainly in the centre, east and south-east.
3. Niue is situated on a relatively barren seamount with limited access to deep-sea resources. Its inshore fishing grounds are not particularly fertile. There are three distant reef systems within Niue's territory. Little is known about the resources of Antiope and Harran's reefs and only a limited assessment has been made of Beveridge Reef which is located about 200 km to the south west. Niue is part of a vast and complex marine system contains an enormous and largely undocumented array of diversity. This includes the most extensive and biologically diverse reefs in the world, the highest proportion of endemic species per human inhabitant, the deepest ocean trenches, deep sea minerals, the world's largest tuna fishery, as well as globally threatened species such as sea turtles and dugongs.
4. Data on Niue's terrestrial flora and fauna is sparse. Currently, 25 species of birds have been confirmed on Niue, of which at least two are endemic. There are also two indigenous species of mammals that have small remaining populations. The reptile and insect fauna has not been well reported, although at least six species of reptiles are known to exist. Unfortunately, a range of introduced plant species and feral animals is displacing indigenous vegetation and animal species.
5. Niue's biological resources and that of other small island developing States have suffered

from a number of threats. These include over-exploitation of marine and coastal resources, destructive fishing practices (e.g., poison, explosives, habitat damage), unknown ecosystem impacts of oceanic fisheries (e.g., by-catch, sustainability), and pollution from solid waste and sewage. The physical degradation of coastal ecosystems and habitats, including, coral reefs and wetlands, through excavation, erosion, sedimentation or reclamation and extraction of sand and coral for building purposes are other threats.

6. In concert with a regional effort, Niue has developed a National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS) with the assistance of UNDP and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). Other regional institutions which participated in the NEMS process include the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the South Pacific Commission (SPC), the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), the University of the South Pacific (USP), the Tourism Council of the South Pacific (TICS).

7. The NEMS was prepared by the National Task Force on Environment and Development which was originally set up to oversee the preparation of the Niue country report for UNCED. The National Task Force, together with the participants of the NEMS national seminars and workshops, identified opportunities for sustainable development, and these are incorporated in the document either as programme areas or programme profiles. The development of the NEMS involved a number of tasks, which included the preparation of the Sector Environment Reports and the State of the Environment Report for Niue, all in consultation with the national government. Reviews were also made of the educational and legal frameworks in Niue.

Project objectives and short description

8. The objective of this enabling activity project is to formulate, through a participatory and analytical process, the strategies and actions necessary for the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity in Niue and to prepare a formal plan for their implementation. The primary output will be a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP). A national country report will be the second output for presentation to the CBD once the BSAP is prepared.

9. The project will be coordinated by the Environment Unit (EU) of the Department of Community Affairs, which will appoint a national coordinator to direct the implementation of the project in Niue. The EU will also coordinate the establishment of a steering committee to provide guidance to the project, identify national issues and goals of the BSAP. A small technical team will be set up comprised of national experts and members of the original NEMS Task Force. National consultants will be recruited (short- and long-term, as appropriate) and an international consultant will be recruited as the project advisor to provide training and technical guidance.

10. The salient activities of this project will be to:

- Conduct a comprehensive stocktaking and assessment of the existing information related to biodiversity in Niue including legislation, institutional arrangements, socio-economic issues and emerging issues in biodiversity conservation. In particular, an inventory of past and present biological resources will be undertaken. Short-term national consultants will be hired to carry out specific studies and analyses for the stocktaking, as well as to identify gaps in desired and current practices of sustainable resource use and the conservation of biological diversity.
- Enhance individual and institutional capacity to implement this project by providing

familiarization sessions with methodologies, participatory and analytical techniques necessary for biodiversity planning. Familiarization sessions will be provided by the international consultant to the national consultants, technical team and steering committee members.

- Through two national workshops, the information gathered and reports developed during the stocktaking phase will be analyzed by a wide assemblage of national stakeholders including representatives from sectoral government departments, traditional leaders and communities, NGOs and the private sector. Participants will identify priorities and develop strategies and action plans, which will be synthesized into the BSAP by the national coordinator, technical team and national consultants.

12. The completed BSAP will be signed off by the steering committee and submitted to the Minister of Community Affairs for consideration before being sent to Cabinet for formal national adoption. A national report will be prepared and submitted to the CBD once the BSAP is drafted.

Coverage without Duplication

13. Presently there is no duplication at the national level regarding biodiversity planning and management, as biodiversity management has not been addressed in an overall national policy or programme. The BSAP process will draw upon data from related prior studies, in close consultation with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

14. Niue has developed one Forest Conservation area project in Huvalu that is supported by the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme (SPBCP) of GEF. Therefore, the general awareness of biodiversity issues and diversity is confined mainly to the Huvalu area.

15. The BSAP will consolidate and build on existing information in Niue. Niue currently does not have any legislation or mechanisms specifically for protection and sustainable use of biodiversity, and the BSAP will therefore be an important step in this regard. The BSAP will complement the NEMS goals of improving environmental management and integrating environmental considerations in economic development. The broader guidelines provided by the NEMS will assist in developing the goals and objectives of the BSAP.

16. Niue's *National Development Plan*, which stresses increased support for village life and rural development and the *Niue Concerted Action Plan 1987* are two important cross-sectoral plans whose objectives and goals will be reflected in strategies developed through this project. The State of the Environment report will also provide input into the stocktaking of this project.

TIME PLAN AND SEQUENCING

Activities will start in June 1998 and last for ten months.

Activity/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Establishment of steering committee and planning team	x									
Steering committee meetings	x			x		x		x		
Training/familiarization of planning team, consultants and steering committee	x	x								
Stocktaking and assessment of existing information		x	x	x	x					
First national workshop					x					
Identification, analysis of options, including consultations and preparation of draft BSAP						x	x	x		
Second national workshop								x		
Preparation of BSAP, dissemination							x	x	x	
Preparation and submission of national report to the CBD.										x
Monitoring and evaluation by UNDP										x

Best Practice

17. The project's methodology will be based on the UNEP "Guidelines for Country Studies in Biological Diversity", "Guide to the Convention on Biological Diversity" (IUCN 1994) and Miller and Lanlou's "Guidelines for Preparing National Biodiversity Planning" (WRI/IUCN/UNEP, 1995). The BSAP will take into account national priorities and goals for sustainable development. The use of national and regional expertise will be emphasized throughout the project.

PROJECT FINANCING

	Product	Process	Total
<i>Stocktaking and Inventory of Existing Information</i>	15,000		15,000
- national consultants	7,000		
- documentation, misc.	8,000		
<i>Identification and Analysis of Options</i>	12,000	40,000	52,000
- national consultants	5,000	10,000	
- international consultant	5,000	5,000	
- first national workshop		20,000	
- steering committee/planning team meetings	2,000	2,000	
- travel, misc.		3,000	

PROJECT FINANCING (cont.)

<i>Preparation of a Strategy and Action Plan</i>	22,000	28,000	50,000
- national consultants	5,000	2,000	
- international consultant	5,000	2,000	
- second national workshop		20,000	
- steering committee/planning team meetings	2,000		
- travel, misc.		4,000	
- translation and publication, dissemination	10,000		
<i>Preparation of First National Report</i>	14,000		14,000
- national consultant	4,000		
- publication/translation, dissemination	10,000		
<i>Coordination and Management</i>	1,890	2,040	2,040
TOTAL	64,890	70,040	134,930

Deviations from Criteria and Norms

18. The project does not deviate from GEF enabling activity criteria and norms.

Institutional Framework and Project Implementation

19. The EU will be responsible for implementing the project and will coordinate the establishment of a steering committee comprising of representatives of government agencies that have a stake in the biodiversity conservation, NGOs and traditional and community leaders. The steering committee will identify goals of national significance to be addressed by the BSAP, ensure compatibility and integration with national policies and programs. Members of the steering committee will serve as biodiversity focal points in their respective organizations and ensure the adoption and eventual implementation of the BSAP.
20. A national coordinator will be selected and a small broad-based technical team will be established to carry out project activities and provide technical input. It is anticipated that the technical team will be comprised of experts from the Task Force that prepared the NEMS and other national experts in the field of biodiversity and related sectors. Short- and long-term national consultants will be hired as appropriate to carry out specific studies, analyses and field activities. Studies and analyses prepared by consultants will be reviewed by the technical team and will be the basis of the BSAP.
21. An international consultant will be recruited as the project advisor to provide training, structure project activities and review outputs. The international consultant will field short missions to Niue as appropriate and will follow the progress of the project and provide input on a continuous basis via phone, fax, e-mail from his/her home base.
22. Two national workshops will be conducted to review the results of the stocktaking and assessment, set priorities, identify gaps and develop strategies and action plans in a participatory manner. Workshop participants will include stakeholders such as representatives from government ministries, policy-makers, the private sector, NGOs, landowners and indigenous groups. The results of the workshops will be analyzed by the planning team and drawn up into a BSAP and national report.

Activity Matrix

Enabling Activity Commitment	Output	Capacity Building		Public Participation	Comments
	Planning, Execution	Institutional Strength.	Training		
<i>Stocktaking and Assessment, based on Existing Information</i> - biodiversity and biological resources - cross-sectoral issues - policy and regulatory framework - institutional and human capacity - analysis of root causes of BD loss - technologies for conservation and sustainable use - activities with adverse impacts - existing measures and programs - preliminary statement of objectives - identification of gaps - assessment of existing needs	x x x x x x x x x x				1 1
<i>Identification and Analysis of Options to Meet the Objectives of the CBD</i> - strategies for conservation - strategies for sustainable use - strategies for benefit sharing	x x x	x x x	x x x	x x x	2
<i>Planning and Preparation of a Strategy and Plan</i> - national strategy - national action plan	x x	x x	x x	x x	
<i>Preparation of First Country Report</i> - interim report - first country report	x x			x	

1. The NEMS does not present detailed site-specific information on biodiversity or on cross-sectoral issues. However, these documents will be reviewed to identify gaps and avoid duplication. It is anticipated that information will have to be obtained from scientific literature, cross-sectoral ministries, land-use registers, existing databases and other foreign sources.

2. Although the NEMS does not propose strategies for biodiversity conservation, the broad objectives proposed in the NEMS will provide a reference and framework for the BSAP strategies.

GOVERNMENT OF NIUE



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31 October 1996

Resident Representative
UNDP Office
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WESTERN SAMOA

ATTENTION: Mr Fiu Mataese Ellsara-Laulu

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I refer to your fax of 3 October 1996 regarding Niue's intention towards GEF's - Enabling Activities for Biodiversity Conservation.

Please be advised that the Niue Government would like to request assistance for biodiversity enabling activity of up to \$150,000.00. The Niue Government aims to achieve the project goal by attempting to meet its obligations under the CBD and welcomes this opportunity of assistance. At present our activity is limited to the Huvalu Conservation Project, for lack of personnel.

Niue's project proposal shall be forwarded as soon as more information is made available.

Yours sincerely,


Sisilia Talagi
Acting Secretary to Government