

The Add-on brief has been revised in light of the comments received from the GEF Secretariat on April

26. Here is a brief explanation of the changes made;

1. Needs assessment for Biosafety has been removed from the project activities.
2. An endorsement letter is attached from the CHM Focal Point. Please note this is now the Director of Biodiversity in the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment.
3. The budget now reads 'consultation process for the second national report'.
4. Likewise, consultations towards the second national report have been included in the workplan.
5. IUCN involvement has been explained in the project implementation section. Essentially, IUCN involvement is foreseen in view of the technical support and coordinating role played by IUCN in the region during preparation of the BSAPs. IUCN expertise will be on tap, and it will be reimbursed for costs incurred.

## SULTANATE OF OMAN

### Additional Funding Request for Biodiversity Enabling Activities Proposal for submission to the GEF, December 2000

<b>Country Name:</b>	Sultanate of Oman
<b>Project Title:</b>	Assessing capacity building needs and country specific priorities in biodiversity
<b>Country Eligibility:</b>	Oman ratified the CBD in 1994
<b>GEF Financing:</b>	US\$ 150,000
<b>Government Contribution:</b>	US\$ 75,000
<b>Estimated Total Budget:</b>	US\$ 225,000
<b>GEF Implementing Agency:</b>	UNDP
<b>National Executing Agency:</b>	Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment
<b>Co-operating Agency:</b>	IUCN
<b>GEF Operational Focal Point:</b>	Mr. Mohammad Al-Hikmani
<b>CBD Operational Focal Point:</b>	Mr. Mohammad Al-Hikmani
<b>CHM Focal Point:</b>	Mr. Salim Al Saady
<b>Estimated Starting Date:</b>	July 2001
<b>Duration:</b>	12 months

#### Status of Oman Enabling Activity Project

In 1999, the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment (MRME) received an initial GEF enabling activity assistance of US\$252,000 to complete the First National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the 1<sup>st</sup> National Report to the CoP/CBD. This assistance included a CHM funding of US\$14,000 that was utilized to complement the MRME capacity to use electronic emails and Internet and to have access to biodiversity information not otherwise available in Oman.

The initial GEF enabling activity assistance has facilitated the completion of the following activities by the MRME with the technical assistance of IUCN:

- ⇒ Establishment of a multi-sectoral national biodiversity steering committee charged with the development of the NBSAP; and establishment of an operational project implementation unit (National Biodiversity Office) within the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment. The NBO was established in 1999 to coordinate the production and future implementation of a national biodiversity strategy and action plan. To this end, several informative and consultative meetings with the sectoral expert groups, steering committee and drafting committee members were held, and national and international experts were consulted.
- ⇒ First national report completed and presented to the CoP/CBD in 1999.
- ⇒ Production in February 2000 of national biodiversity stocktaking and assessment reports on:
  - Agro/fisheries biodiversity
  - Indigenous agricultural knowledge of local communities
  - Marine conservation
  - Biodiversity legislation
  - Terrestrial conservation
  - Ex situ/in situ conservation
  - Energy resources and biodiversity
- ⇒ Production of the first draft of the NBSAP (March 2000) followed by a round of ministerial consultation.
- ⇒ Production of a national report on the economic valuation of biodiversity (Sept. 2000).
- ⇒ National case study presented in the UNDP/UNEP/IEPF "Guide to developing a biodiversity strategy from a sustainable development perspective" (Sept. 2000).

- ⇒ Formal endorsement of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan by the Government (Nov. 2000).
- ⇒ National workshop (Dec. 2000) to present NBSAP to various stakeholders, identify priority issues and capacity-building assessment needs and to agree on an implementation structure and workplan.

### **Justification**

Oman adopted an NBSAP planning procedure involving most sectors of the government. This approach, that has been documented in UNDP/UNEP/IEPF "Guide to developing a biodiversity strategy from a sustainable development perspective", led to the constitution of a large scale Steering Committee including to this date representatives of more than 19 ministries and institutions. This involved intensive interdepartmental consultation and participation in identifying priority needs, meanwhile highlighting the need for more effective communication and data management. Since the start of the process, the CoP/CBD has also put more emphasis on issues such as Traditional Knowledge and the Biosafety Protocol was adopted. This financially significant add-on request is justified by the fact that further analysis, sectoral consultations and assessments need to be completed on these key issues and that communication and report production need to be supported.

### **Objectives**

1. Assist the Sultanate of Oman in further evaluating its capacity building needs, defining country specific priorities, analyzing functional capabilities and determining mechanisms necessary to conserve and sustainably use its national biodiversity in accordance with the NBSAP recommendations, and the GEF and CoP/CBD guidelines.
2. Develop further the CHM capacities of the national biodiversity office and participating ministries.
3. Enable the MRME to undertake the consultative process required for the Second National Report as per decision V/19 of the CoP/CBD.

### **1. Priorities for Assessing Capacity Building Needs related to the CBD**

The priorities mentioned here were selected from the NBSAP top priorities by MRME (NBO) in consultation with representatives of the different ministries and institution members of the steering committee. A consultative workshop was held in December 2000 to examine the adopted strategy and action plan and determine these priorities. UNDP-GEF and IUCN has assisted the National Biodiversity Office in the final selection of these priority elements.

#### **1.1 Implementation of general measures for *in situ* and *ex-situ* conservation and sustainable use, including national plans, strategies and legislation**

##### **Justification:**

In Oman, a total of 14 areas covering 29844 km<sup>2</sup> have been legally designated for protection (as Sanctuaries, Nature Reserves or Natural Parks). These areas (each of a size range from 0.6 km<sup>2</sup> to 24,785 km<sup>2</sup>) include fragile ecosystems of conservation value (e.g. Juniper woodlands, lagoons) in southern region, mangroves in northern and southern Oman, thermal springs, specific islands and offshore areas. Management plans have been drawn up for 12 of the areas, but not one has yet been promulgated, funded or implemented. Furthermore, proposals have been prepared or are in the final stage of preparation for 8 other sites.

Legal designation and expansion of ranger units have improved wildlife protection in conservation areas only to a limited extent and biodiversity is still severely threatened by economic development in various forms. Several protected areas are subjected to unrestricted grazing by livestock, unmanaged fishing pressure, habitat degradation and disturbance from human activities and feral animals. It is likely that the western approach to nature protection is failing here because of factors related to limited national expertise and institutional capacity to manage protected areas effectively.

**Work to be achieved:**

The NBSAP clearly identified inadequate involvement of the local communities in the design and implementation of management plans as a key issue for *in situ* biodiversity conservation. The current additional funding request would complement the NBSAP evaluation by giving a working group of national and international experts an opportunity to realise a consultative and participatory assessment of national capacities regarding terrestrial, coastal and marine protected areas. The role of existing agencies involved in protected area management and planning will be determined, organisational structures will be clarified and the overall professional capacities of individuals involved in this sector will be assessed. National reports and other existing documentation will be used by the working group to identify the key areas, species and ecosystems included in the existing protected area network. Critical capacity constraints will be identified as part of the institutional analysis. The type of capacity development strategies, human resources, financial resources and training needed to effectively manage and monitor protected areas will be suggested.

**Deliverable products:**

The main deliverable of this activity will be an assessment report describing the actual and expected role and responsibilities of the various institutions and stakeholders concerned with or involved in the management and planning of protected areas. The report will also document the capacity building, human and financial resources needed to effectively manage these areas. It will also include a list of key biodiversity areas for which capacity building needs are specified.

**1.2. Initial assessment and monitoring programs, including taxonomy****Justification:**

Effective assessment and monitoring of biodiversity is known to be crucial for a successful development and implementation of conservation and sustainable use of biological resources.

Despite the existence of several private or institutional data collections on species and ecosystems in Oman, there is no compendium of these information sources not to mention the notable absence of a National biodiversity database covering the needs of scientists, conservationists, resource managers and development planners.

The NBSAP has clearly identified the need for an integrated database and database network on species, ecosystems and protected areas.

**Work to be achieved:**

The work will consist of an assessment of capacity building needs in order to establish a National Biodiversity Database and database network integrating information on species, ecosystems and protected areas and giving special consideration to biodiversity hot spots, key ecosystems, endemic species and species at risk; species of actual or potential economic value; plant and animal genetic resources, including medicinal plants. Land races and wild ancestors of domestic breeds and cultivars; species that could serve as indicators of ecosystem health, particularly predators at the top of the food-chain or invasive colonising species that may indicate ecosystem disturbance; "flagship" species, the conservation of which will also protect the diversity of other species and habitats; alien invasive species, should also be considered.

This assessment will be largely based on interviews and meetings with scientists, experts and managers within institutions and ministries or from the private sector; examination of existing documents and Internet searches.

**Deliverable product:**

Comprehensive assessment report including: compendium of existing in-country data collections on national biodiversity; identification of external information sources; identification of biodiversity related information collection, analysis, and management needs; identification of existing database frameworks (software) and analysis of their relevance to meet identified needs; detailed proposal for bilateral, and multilateral

agreements with regional and international taxonomic institutions; costing and budgeting proposals on infrastructure needed to develop national biodiversity database network in Oman

### **1.3. Preservation and maintenance of biodiversity related knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyle.**

#### **Justification:**

Indigenous knowledge is a valuable resource for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources. In Oman, traditional farmers, fishermen and livestock breeders have knowledge about their natural environment, including local biodiversity and its different uses. This traditional knowledge could play an important role in the conservation of biodiversity. In fact, traditional agriculture mode of production is generally characterized by high degree of diversity. The different aspects of indigenous knowledge were largely evolved through experience facing changes in various social, environmental and harsh climatic conditions of an arid environment. Water management in the Interior region by Aflaj systems and water harvest in the Batinah coast are typical examples of traditional irrigation management systems. The indigenous knowledge encompasses wide range of activities including tree cultivation, crop improvement, seed selection and preservation, post-harvest knowledge, traditional pest control (plant protection), irrigation practices, indigenous soil and water conservation techniques, pastoral activities and traditions, livestock caring (veterinary practices), fishing and traditional medical plant knowledge. Unfortunately, such traditional knowledge is getting lost due to a lack of adequate documentation, socio-economic changes leading to the use of different modern practices, and lack of interest by younger generations. There is a clear need to identify available sources of traditional knowledge and assess national expertise and capacity building needs in this field.

#### **Work to be achieved:**

The work will consist of an assessment of the capacity building needs within the pertinent ministries and institutions for an effective documentation and analysis of the different Omani traditional knowledge and lifestyles that could be contributing to sustainable agriculture, fisheries, water, wildlife and rangeland management.

#### **Deliverable product:**

Synthesised assessment report demonstrating current situation of traditional biodiversity related knowledge, sources of excellence of this knowledge, themes and areas for further documentation and preservation, and certain guidelines, regulatory framework and priority needs to be submitted to the Government for approval.

## **2. Country-driven project for participation in the CHM**

#### **Justification:**

The NBSAP clearly identified the need for a better dissemination of information on national biodiversity, the need to promote and facilitate the implementation of the NBSAP within institutions, ministries and the public as well as the need to liaise with other countries and international institutions and keep them informed of the on-going actions of the government in this field.

Internet technology has been recognised as an effective tool for the dissemination of information and awareness building. However, to this date, the country has yet to develop a National biodiversity website to fully take advantage of this modern technology. Currently most government agencies (including MRME, partly thanks to the initial GEF enabling activity fund for CHM) and local institutions as well as a large portion of the population have access to Internet technologies. It is thus considered a priority to develop a national biodiversity website as part as the current government initiatives to build its presence on the Internet.

#### **Work to be achieved:**

- Development of a National biodiversity website within MRME's website

- Preparation, in collaboration with participating ministries, institutions and experts, of specific Webpages presenting biodiversity related information including: complete text of NBSAP, status of national biodiversity, national reports to the CBD, information on steering committee members, participating agencies and institutions, on-going activities, information sheets on national biodiversity issues covered by the NBSAP, youth corner (educational material on biodiversity for children and students), bibliography on national biodiversity, links with pertinent biodiversity sites (including UNDP-GEF/BPSP, CBD, WCMC, IUCN, etc.).

**Deliverable product:**

An interactive, accessible and regularly updated National Biodiversity Website and available webpages on different biodiversity related information.

**3. Consultative process for the second national report to the Convention Secretariat**

**Justification:**

The National Biodiversity Office of Oman (NBO) submitted its 1<sup>st</sup> national communication to the Convention on biological diversity in 1999. The government has also adopted in November 2000 a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and most of the efforts of the NBO is being devoted to the implementation of this strategy and action plan. Oman being considered as a regional leader for biodiversity in the Middle East wishes to pursue this leadership role by presenting its 2<sup>nd</sup> national communication to the Convention. Although, the May 15, 2001 deadline has not been met, the second national report will be submitted at the earliest possible following the format recommended in COP decision V/19.

**Work to be achieved:**

- Contacts and interviews with National Biodiversity Steering Committee Members comprised of representatives from 19 ministries and institutions.
- Circulation of draft for comments.
- Convening a one-day special meeting of the Steering Committee to adopt the report.

**Project Implementation Institutional Framework**

The add-on project will be executed and implemented by MRME. The project will also be overseen by the National Biodiversity Steering Committee that has been appointed to facilitate the implementation of the NBSAP. The National Biodiversity Office, which is still operational within the MRME, will continue to serve project implementation and manage daily operations. IUCN will, in close contact/coordination with MRME and GEF-UNDP provide overall technical support to the project. IUCN involvement is foreseen in this add-on, due to the active coordinating and technical support role it played during the BSAP development process in the region. IUCN will provide technical expertise to this add-on project and facilitate cross linkages with other add-on projects currently operational in the region. IUCN assistance will be provided as and when requested by the project coordinator through the Project Steering Committee.

GEF-UNDP will be responsible for the overall monitoring of project implementation as per GEF-UNDP rules and procedures including convening a tripartite co-ordination meeting. The Project Coordinator and the working groups under the supervision of the National Steering Committee, in coordination with MRME, IUCN and GEF-UNDP, will be responsible for the organization of project meetings and workshops including the National Steering Committee workshops aiming at reviewing and endorsing working groups final reports, website presentation and 2<sup>nd</sup> National Communication to the CBD. The Project Coordinator will also seek the necessary endorsement of this documents by the government and prepare an overview report summarizing capacity building needs in the identified priority sectors and the Biodiversity website. Finally, the Project Coordinator shall ensure the incorporation of add-on results and recommendations into Oman NBSAP implementation workplan.

**The Implementing Agency and the GEF focal point in Oman have satisfied themselves that the proposal for additional funding complies with the Operational Criteria for the expedited financing of biodiversity enabling activities.**



**Table 1. Priorities for capacity building needs**

Priority	Reasons for Priority	Work to be done	Product expected	Notes
1.1. Assess capacity building needs, to improve implementation of measures for <i>in situ</i> conservation through development and promotion of protected areas	Identified national need to better understand the limitations of the current protected area system.	A team of experts will undertake participatory evaluation to reach a national consensus with respect to responsibility sharing, awareness raising, community involvement, financing mechanisms and fund management for sustainable implementation of protected area network.	Assessment report and work plan outlining options, strategies and actions responding to capacity building gaps in sustainable protected area management including training needs assessment, human resources, awareness raising, costing and budgeting, and responsibility sharing	In kind Government contribution expected in the amount of \$15,000
1.2. Assessment of capacity building needs to improve monitoring through development and coordination of biodiversity database management and network development.	NBSAP has clearly identified a priority need for an integrated database and network on species, ecosystems and protected areas.	Working group will assess capacity building needs in order to establish a National Biodiversity Database and database network integrating information on species, ecosystems and protected	Assessment report outlining capacity building needs in collecting, storing and exchange of national taxonomic information, detailed proposal for bilateral, and multilateral agreements with regional and international taxonomic institutions, costing and budgeting proposals on infrastructure needed to develop national biodiversity database network in Oman.	In kind Government contribution \$15,000
1.3. Assessment of capacity building needs in the field of traditional knowledge and lifestyle contributing to the goals of the CBD.	Biodiversity relevant traditional knowledge and lifestyle are getting lost without being adequately documented	Working group will assess capacity building needs within ministries and institutions for an effective documentation and analysis of Omani traditional knowledge and lifestyles that could be contributing to sustainable agriculture, fisheries, water, wildlife and rangeland management.	Synthesised assessment report of demonstrating current situation of traditional biodiversity related knowledge, sources of excellence of this knowledge, themes and areas for further documentation and preservation, and certain guidelines, regulatory framework and priority needs to be submitted to Government for approval.	In kind Government contribution expected in the amount of \$15,000
2 Country-driven project for participation in the CHM: biodiversity website development	The December 2000 National workshop identified priority need for better dissemination of national biodiversity	Working group will develop a national biodiversity website within MRME's website and prepare, in collaboration with participating ministries, institutions and experts, specific	Interactive, accessible and regularly updated National Biodiversity Website and available webpages on different biodiversity related information	In kind Government contribution expected in the amount of \$15,000

<p>3. Consultative process for the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Report to CoP/CBD</p>	<p>information, to facilitate NBSAP implementation, public education and improved liaison with international institutions.</p>	<p>Webpages presenting biodiversity related information</p>		
<p>2nd National report to CoP/CBD is due May 15th 2001 while NBO is taken by NBSAP implementation and further assessment work.</p>		<p>Interministerial consultation process using adapted CBD questionnaire and special consultative meeting of the National Steering Committee .</p>		<p>In kind Government contribution \$15,000</p>

**Table 2. Time plan and schedule of activities**

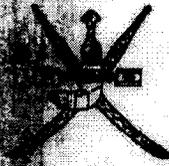
Activity\Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Contract National Project Coordinator	■											
Finalization of TORs for Consultants	■											
Finalize add-on working plan and convene meeting of National Steering Committee	■											
Establish working groups and contracts for National and International Consultants	■	■										
Consultation process for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> National Report to CoP/CBD	■	■	■	■								
Informal consultations of working groups with national and local stakeholders		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Production of website and webpages on biodiversity		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Ad hoc consultations of Steering Committee members on webpages content and format			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
4 National workshops on - Assessment of capacity building needs for <i>in situ and ex situ</i> conservation measures - Assessment of capacity building needs in biodiversity monitoring including taxonomy - Assessment of capacity building needs in traditional knowledge			■	■	■							
Working groups prepare and finalize assessment reports on capacity building needs					■	■	■	■	■	■		
National workshop to review/endorse recommendation reports											■	
Preparation of overview report summarizing capacity building needs/priorities in biodiversity in Oman											■	■
Submission of report and group reports and products to national implementing agency and other ministries for action											■	■
Incorporation of capacity building needs and recommendations into Oman NBSAP implementation workplan												■
Preparation of regular progress reports			■			■			■			■
Prepare APR and convene tripartite evaluation meeting												■

**Table 3. Cost Estimates for Additional Enabling Activities (USD)<sup>1</sup>**

ACTIVITY	PRODUCT		PROCESS	TOTAL
<b>Approved Earlier</b>				
* Original EA, less costs of CHM activities				252,000
* CHM support (provided through add-on module or project itself)	( no entry required)			14,000
Total approved support				<b>266,000<sup>a</sup></b>
<b>Additional Request</b>				
<b>Assessment of Capacity-building needs for:</b>				
- Implementation of measures for <i>in situ</i> and <i>ex situ</i> conservation and sustainable use	15,000		35,000	50,000
- Initial assessment and monitoring programs, including taxonomy	15,000		35,000	50,000
- Preservation and maintenance of biodiversity related knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles	6,000		14,000	20,000
<b>Add-on module for CHM support</b>				
- National biodiversity Website development	10,000		15,000	25,000
<b>Consultation process for the Second National Report</b>				
- Preparation and submission to CoP/CBD			5,000	5,000
<b>Total new request</b>	<b>46,000</b>		<b>104,000</b>	<b>150,000<sup>b</sup></b>
<b>Grand Total<sup>a+b</sup></b>				<b>416,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Government contribution will be in kind in the amount of approximately US\$75,000 and will include project counterpart administration and management costs, staff time and expertise, hosting National Steering Committee and Working Groups meetings, office space, long-term management of website, telecommunications, equipment and costs for the preparation of the second national report.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



سلطنة عُمان  
وزارة البيئة والموارد الطبيعية  
دائرة التنسيق والمتابعة

MEMO/OC/BF-01/2001

2001

رقم :  
التاريخ :  
الوظيفة :

Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources  
Sultanate of Oman - U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

**Subject: Additional Funding Request For Biodiversity Enabling Activities.**

Kindly be informed that the Sultanate of Oman would like to request GEF Additional Funding for the Enabling Activity Project Related to Biodiversity, thereby enabling the government of the Sultanate of Oman to respond to its obligations under the CBD convention.

You are requested to please find attached the project proposal.

Your cooperation and appreciated if necessary action could be taken on this matter is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,  
Abdulhadi Al-Balushi  
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

