

**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY****ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL**

**Country:** Pakistan

**Project Title:** First National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity and Establishment of a Clearing House Mechanism

**GEF Focal Area:** Biodiversity

**Country Eligibility:** Ratified the CBD on 26 July 1994

**GEF Financing Requested:** US\$ 38,400

**Government Contribution:** In-kind and personnel

**GEF Implementing Agency:** UNEP

**National Executing Agency:** Ministry of Environment, Local Government and Rural Development

**GEF Operational Focal Point:** Ministry of Environment, Local Government and Rural Development

**CBD Focal Point:** Ministry of Environment, Local Government and Rural Development

**Estimated Starting Date:** February, 1998

**Project Duration:** 6 Months

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**BACKGROUND/CONTEXT**

1. Situated at the junction of two great river basins that traverse the steppe desert of the old world - the Tigris-Euphrates and the Indus -, Pakistan is one of the largest and densely populated countries in South Asia with a land area of 88.2 million ha and a population currently estimated at 140 million (with a growth rate of 2.9% per annum).
2. The country as has great diversity of bio-climates and correspondingly a great diversity of vegetation types and fauna. The major habitats in the country range from flood plains, arid plains, sand and piedmont deserts to a variety of forests (tropical thorn, tropical dry deciduous, sub-tropical arid, sub-tropical dry, subtropical plain, dry and moist temperate, and subalpine), grassy tundra and cold deserts, lakes, rivers, swamps, and coastal marine habitats, alpine pastures, high mountains and glaciers.

3. Physiognomically the country can be divided into three major regions:
- i) The high **northern mountains**, with 50 peaks of over 6,700 metres at the confluence of three of the world's highest mountain ranges - the Himalayas, the Karakoram, and the Hindu Kush;
  - ii) The **Indus plain**, i.e. the drainage basin of the River Indus and its tributaries;
  - iii) The lowest (highest peak 3,374m) and more arid **western highlands**, which lie to the west of the capital city, Islamabad.

In addition to these, a relatively small area in the northwest of the Indus plain comprises the Potwar plateau and salt range, which has elevations ranging between 450 to 600m. The plateau has a badlands topography due to dissection by water and wind erosion.

4. Hydrologically, the first two regions constitute the Indus Basin, while the third region includes the closed basin of Kharan desert and the Makran coastal basin. The Indus and its tributaries are perennial rivers, fed by precipitation as well as the snow and glacial melt in their watersheds in the Himalayas. They constitute the principal source of water for the country.
5. Notwithstanding the diversity of topography and climate, Pakistan is basically a dry country of the warm temperate zone. Except for a small strip of sub-tropical terrain in the Punjab and the wet zone on the southern slope of the Himalayan and Karakoram mountain ranges, where rainfall averages about 2,000 mm per year, most of the country is arid or semi-arid steppe land. In all, more than three fourths of the country has less than 250 mm rainfall, and one-fifth has less than 125 mm; the small portion with more than 500 mm is less than 7 percent of the area.
6. Pakistan has a rich and varied fauna, affinitive to three faunal regions - namely the Palearctic region west of the Indus, the Oriental region east of the Indus, and the Ethiopian region. Ten of the 18 mammalian orders are represented in Pakistan, including not only the world's smallest surviving mammal, the Mediterranean Pigmy Shrew, but also in the coastal waters the largest mammal ever known to exist, the Blue Whale. The total endemism is not high but a number of taxa including the Indus Dolphin, Chiltan Markhor, and Suleman Markhor are endemic to Pakistan. Of the world's approximately 4,100 mammal species, 188 have been reported in Pakistan.
7. Of the more than 8,600 species of birds in the world, 666 species of migratory and resident birds occur in Pakistan. Major groups include waterfowl, waders, raptors, pheasants, partridges, herons, cranes, storks, ibises, pelicans, flamingos, terns, gulls, bustards, sand grouses, parrots, crows, song birds, and fancy birds.

8. The country is also richly endowed in reptiles, amphibians, insects (20,000 species recorded), marine invertebrates (700 species), marine fish (400 species) and freshwater fish (150 native species plus several introduced species). Fish species diversity is highest in the Indus River plains and the Himalayan foothills.
9. The diversity of flora has been adversely affected by major irrigation systems, built to tap the water resources of the Indus and its tributaries to meet the demands of an increasing human population. They have caused the disappearance of extensive tracts of the original tropical thorn scrub, riverine swamps and forest in the plains. Most of Pakistan's remaining wildlife is to be found in the mountainous country west of the Indus, where human pressure has not been as great as in the plains. The two regions of out-standing importance are the Himalayan and Karakoram massifs in the extreme north and the desert in the southwest NWFP.
10. Despite massive deforestation and overgrazing, floral habitats that still exist are of great variety and richness. There are about 5,700 plant species, of which more than 5,000 are wild and 372 are endemic to Pakistan. There are an estimated 2,000 medicinal plant species in the country though few of them are exploited.
11. Pakistan possesses a great variety of wetlands distributed throughout much of the country. Inland waters cover 7.8 million ha, over half of which comprise waterlogged areas, seasonally flooded plains, and saline wastes. Coastal mangrove swamps, which cover at least 260,000 ha, are the fifth largest in the world. Pakistan's wetlands are important for waterfowl, particularly those of the Indus Valley - a major wintering ground for a wide variety of central and northern Asian species, as well as being of socio-economic value.
12. Overall, three ecosystems of unique ecological interest and international importance have been identified in Pakistan: the juniper forests of north central Balochistan; the Chagai desert in southwest Balachistan, and the Indus riverine zone.
13. The unique, varied and rich biodiversity of Pakistan is increasingly threatened by the following anthropogenic causes which are responsible for habitat degradation and species loss: deforestation, overgrazing, hunting, water pollution and over-use of natural resources (e.g. over-fishing; extractive uses of resources by local communities adjacent to protected areas).
14. To date, the Government of Pakistan (GoP) strategy on conservation of biodiversity has been defined by the establishment of an institutional framework, legal and policy guidelines and the establishment of a Protected Areas (PA) system. The principal policy response to biodiversity conservation has been formulated through the National Conservation Strategy (NCS) of 1992. The NCS called for strengthening of the PA system and to update the legal and policy instruments to promote conservation of biodiversity. Within the policy arena, GoP has been active in the preparation of a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) which will be completed shortly. The BAP will provide guidance and a policy framework for initiatives in biodiversity conservation. It will complement the Pakistan Environmental Protection Ordinance of 1997 by targeting biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, an issue which in earlier county's legislation had received little attention as this legislation was largely concerned with urban issues.

15. The GoP has requested GEF assistance to support the preparation of Pakistan's First National Report to the CBD and the establishment of a Clearing House Mechanism for the CBD in fulfilment of Decisions II/17, II/3 and III/4 adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP).

#### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND SHORT DESCRIPTION**

16. The objective of this project is to assist the Ministry of Environment, Local Government and Rural Development (MoE in short) of Pakistan to prepare the country's First National Report to the CBD and establish the Clearing House Mechanism for the CBD through provision of hardware and technical assistance to enable the country to participate in the pilot phase of the CHM of the CBD currently under implementation pursuant to Decisions II/3 and III/4 of the COP.

17. The first national report will be prepared on the basis of information gathered by national consultants working under the direction of the MoE. This report will mainly draw on existing information, programmes and activities related to biodiversity planning, in particular the National Conservation Strategy, the BAP under preparation and the National Environmental Protection Plan. The MoE will convene a workshop with government departments and NGOs representatives who took an active part in the NCS, the NEAP and the BAP, to inform them on the objectives and requirements of the First National Report, and have their agreement on its contents. After this workshop, the First National Report will be finalized, reviewed and approved by the MoE prior to submission to the CBD. It will then be published and disseminated to representatives of all major stakeholders representatives in the country.

**COVERAGE WITHOUT DUPLICATION:**

18. Only pre-existing information will be gathered and compiled into the first National Report.

**TIME PLAN AND SEQUENCING OF ACTIVITIES**

19. The project will be conducted over a period of 6 months as reflected in the schedule shown in the following table:

Activity/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Selection of National consultants	x					
2. Preparation of draft First National Report	x	x	x	x		
3. National Workshop					x	
4. Finalization of the National Report, Approval, Submission* to the CBD, Publication and Dissemination			x (Interim)			x
5. Establishment of Clearing House Mechanism	x	x	x	x	x	x

\* Due to the late starting of the project in relation to the deadline issued by the COP for the submission of first national reports to the Secretariat of the CBD, only an interim report will be submitted by Pakistan before the fourth meeting of the COP to be held in May 1998 and the final report will be submitted upon completion of this project.

**BEST PRACTICE**

20. The report will draw upon in-country expertise and information to prepare the first national report. Technical support and training for the CHM establishment will be carried out through arrangement with the suppliers of the hardware and software equipment as well as backstopping from regional organizations competent in the subject, such as UNEP/GRID nodes in South Asia.

**INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

21. The project will be coordinated by the MoE. A small multidisciplinary working group will be established within the MoE itself to guide national consultants in compiling information for the first national report. The report will be cleared and approved by the MoE before its submission to the CBD, publication and dissemination.

**PROJECT FINANCING (US \$) (Pakistan)**

Activity	Product	Process	Total
<b>First National Report</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>
- National consultants	5,000	5,000	
- Travel on information gathering	3,000		
- National Workshop		5,000	
- Printing/publication/Dissemination	7,000		
<b>Establishment of Clearing House Mechanism*</b>	<b>10,600</b>		<b>10,600</b>
- Hardware (PC of appropriate configuration)	4,000		
- Software (Internet browsers and required software)	800		
- Modem	300		
- Recurrent Access Costs to Internet Service Provider (up to end of CHM Pilot Phase 1998)	3,000		
- Technician Set-Up Fees	500		
- Internet and e-mail Training for CHM Focal Point	2,000		
<b>Coordination &amp; Management Costs (approx. 8%)</b>	<b>2,800</b>		<b>2,800</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28,400</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>38,400</b>

\* Group I Country, Option A:

Pakistan has the required telecommunications infrastructure and Internet connectivity potential. It has designated a Focal Point for the CHM, i.e. the Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Local Government & Rural Development.

**ACTIVITY MATRIX**

Enabling Activity	Output	Capacity Building		Public Participation	Comments (To see footnotes)
		Institutional Strengthening	Training		
<b>Stocktaking of existing information</b>					1
<b>Identification and Analysis of Options to Meet the Objectives of the CBD</b> - strategies for conservation - strategies for sustainable use - strategies for benefit sharing					1
<b>Planning and Preparation of NBSAP</b> - national strategy - national action plan					1, 2
<b>Preparation of the First National Report</b> - First National Report	x	x	x	x	
<b>Establishment of Clearing House Mechanism</b>	x	x	x		

x: Activity to be undertaken under this project.

Footnotes:

1 & 2: Pakistan has a National Conservation Strategy (1992) and Biodiversity Action Plan (under finalization).