



UNDP GEF
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Subject: BD/EA FOR PALAU (Revised)

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Please find attached a revised brief entitled "National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan and First Report to the COP" including our response to GEFSEC's comments and the government support letter.

Regards.



- UNDP response brief and govlet.pdf

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The revised proposal received from the Government of Palau is attached. The following changes have been made to address GEFSEC 's comments;

1. Resources for international mission travel have been excluded. However, please note that travel costs in Palau are high to inter-island distances. In addition to the need for a participatory BSAP process, Palau is a federal State and thus requires participation from representatives of all sixteen states.
2. The two languages commonly used in Palau are Palauan and English. Documents will be translated in these.
3. Background information on the population has been included.
4. The error regarding the UNCED date has been fixed.

**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
ENABLING ACTIVITY PROJECT PROPOSAL
IN BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

Country:	The Republic of Palau
Project Title:	National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan and First Report to the COP
Country Eligibility:	Acceded 6 January 1999
GEF Financing:	USD 330,000
Government Contribution:	In-Kind
GEF Implementing Agency:	UNDP
National Executing Agency:	NEX (Ministry of Resources and Development)
GEF Operational Focal Point:	Not Designated
Estimated Starting Date:	June 2001
Project Duration:	18 Months

A. BACKGROUND

The Republic of Palau (6° 54'08" 12'N, 134° 08'134° 44'E) is the westernmost archipelago in the Caroline Islands of Micronesia. This curved archipelago is comprised of approximately 350 islands. The republic has jurisdiction over territorial sea (0-3 nautical miles offshore), an Exclusive Fishery zone (3-12 nautical miles offshore), and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) (12-200 nautical miles offshore). Its EEZ encompasses 237, 830 square miles. The island chain extends from the major northern island of Babeldaob to the southern island of Angaur. To the north of Babeldaob lie the atolls of Ngaruangel and Kayangel. Further in the south lie the sparsely populated southwest islands of Sonsorol, Hatohobei, Pulo Anna, Meriir and Helen Reef (Otobed & Maiava, 1986). A fringing barrier reef system runs approximately 70 miles in length and up to 20 miles wide, along the majority of the islands. This forms a lagoon of up to 560 square miles in area (Otto, 1998). Babeldaob accounts for 80% of Palau's landmass. The most populated island is Koror with nearly 70% of the 17,225 residents of Palau. Year 2000 estimates indicate that the population growth is at 1.75%. Palauans are Micronesian with Malayan and Melanesian admixtures. The official language used in most states is English and Palauan.

On a national level, administrative responsibilities for environmental issues fall to several different entities. The Environmental Quality Protection Board (EQPB) plays a joint role in coordination with the different national ministries, bureaus, divisions and departments (NEMS, 1994). This central responsibility includes: establishment of environmental policy and coordination of environmental programs, law enactment and enforcement, provision of technical skills and standards, resource allocation between different functions, and provision of public education and information. Furthermore, another government department responsible for environmental and resource management is the Bureau of Natural Resources and Development under the Ministry of Resources and Development. The Bureau of Natural Resources and Development is the main body charged with the development and management of resources. It is active in developing programs to manage and/or develop the natural resources of Palau.

Palau also operates on a state level and has sixteen states, each with its own Constitution, an elected Governor (Executive Officer) and an elected legislative body. Each state has exclusive control of its land and marine resources out to twelve nautical miles (NEMS, 1994) and each state is also responsible

for the resources that fall within its boundaries. Traditional leadership also plays an important role in the administrative process. Councils of Chiefs exist at both the national and state levels and work with the governmental agencies as a decision making body.

The Palau islands are some of the most zoogeographically and physiographically varied islands in all of the Pacific. All of the islands, together with the atolls in the north and far south, represent nearly the entire range of tropical Pacific island types. The Rock Islands and the complex coastal topography of Palau, including the drowned river mouths and other non-fluvial crenulations that are now mangrove swamps were created by a succession of ice ages and climate and sea-level fluctuations that eroded the uplifted limestone platforms (Faulkner, 1974). This has created a great diversity of flora and the majority of these islands of volcanic and coralline origin are uninhabited and are covered by dense vegetation over steep, rocky terrain.

Palau boasts the most diverse flora of all the islands in Micronesia. The flora contains close to 1,258 taxa of plants; approximately 839 of these taxa are native. Palau has been noted to exhibit 65 endemic species and 10 endemic varieties of plants (Canfield, 1981 cited Maiava, 1994). The health and wise use of these vegetation species are a significant factor in determining the integrity of the terrestrial habitat system. Approximately 75% of the land area is occupied by a variety of forested habitat; upland forests on volcanic substrata, limestone forests on coral islands, coastal mangrove forests, lowland swamp forests in areas of slightly brackish or freshwaters, casuarina forests and strand or atoll forests (Coel *et al*, 1987 cited Wiles *et al*, 1997).

Although the terrestrial fauna in Palau is limited in comparison to neighbors such as the Phillipines and Papua New Guinea, it is again the richest in Micronesia. Mammals are predominantly introduced species and include monkeys. The native terrestrial mammals of Palau are limited to two species of bat and one species of rat (Otobed and Maiava, 1994). Reptiles and amphibians are abundant, and Palau hosts a significantly richer herpetofauna with more unique taxa than is found on other Pacific islands to the east (Crombie and Pregill, 1999). The checklist of 46 species includes geckos, monitor lizards, and two species of snakes (Rock & Toribiong, 1994, Crombie & Pregill, 1999). The Marine toad, *Bufo marinus* was introduced during the Japanese time, but has now become a pest and the Amphibian tree frog, *Platymantis pelewensis* is a species endemic to Palau (Etpison, 1994). There is also one species of saltwater crocodile, *Crocodylus porosus* is indigenous to Palau and is listed under the US Endangered Species Act but is not protected in Palau and is thought to be on its way to extinction (Messel and King, 1991).

Avifauna diversity in Palau is also among the richest in Micronesia. More species of birds have been recorded from Palau than from any other islands in Eastern Micronesia. Major reasons for Palau's relatively high diversity of birds include its proximity to surrounding land masses, comparatively diverse geology, and relatively large size. There exist 41 families of birds, producing 141 different species that have been recorded in Palau. The majority, 91 species are migratory or vagrant and do not breed in Palau. The remaining 50 species are resident. Out of the 50 resident species, 14 are seabirds and 36 are land or wetland species. No native species have become extinct. However there are several that are rare and one land species, the Micronesian Megapode (Bekai) is on the U.S endangered species list (Engbring, 1988). Seabirds are also in a precarious position because nesting habitat is limited primarily to the Southwest Islands and the atolls of Kayangel and Ngeruangel in the north. Although seabirds are by law protected from all disturbances, their nesting grounds are highly accessible and are readily exploited by hunters.

Aside from the terrestrial diversity of flora and fauna, the marine diversity is also very rich and can depend heavily on the terrestrial systems to maintain the health of the reef systems. Eighteen (18) species of mangroves have been confirmed to exist in Palau and act as a buffer zone between the land and sea (Duke, et. al, 1998). The mangrove system acts as a filtering system to ensure that sediment and waste run-off from the land does not interfere with the health of the marine ecosystems. Mangrove vegetation also ensures the protection of the shoreline, provides organic matter and nutrients utilized by fish and other marine resources, provides the service of nutrient processing which can directly improve coastal water quality, and support both land and sea animals by providing habitat and food sources (Metz, 1999). The regions underwater biodiversity includes over 1500 species of fish and 700 species of coral and anemone. Other significant species are the giant tridacna clams and the chambered nautilus, *Nautilus belauensis* that is endemic to Palau. Four species of sea turtles are found in Palau, including the Green Sea Turtle, *Chelonia Mydas* which feeds on seagrasses and algae and the Hawksbill Turtle, *Eretmochelys imbricata* which feeds on sponges (Maragos et al, 1992). Although there are laws to protect these turtles, heavy exploitation and little enforcement of laws has caused a significant decline in population. The dugong, *Dugong dugon*, is also endemic to Palau and the most recent survey recorded 26 animals, a much lower number than previous studies in 1977, 1978 and 1983 (Marsh et al, 1992).

Efforts to conserve these important species and to preserve the biodiversity of Palau have been made through a number of measures. The Palauan Government has set aside the Ngerukewid Islands also known as the "Seventy Island" as a non-public access preserve. In 1997, the Ngaremeduu Conservation Area Project Preparation Document gained approval to establish the Ngaremeduu area as a conservation zone (Ridep-Morris, 1999) because it encompasses a bay area that acts as an important breeding ground to many marine species.

PROBLEMS TO BE ADDRESSED

The major issues of concern that will place pressure upon the natural environment and resources are that of the increasing population growth. Since 1980 growth has continued at rates exceeding 2% per annum (global average 1.5%). The Republic of Palau has now put forward to build a new capital within the state of Melekeok. This latest dramatic construction will place new-sprung environmental pressures to the area (Otobed & Maiava, 1994). The development of the 53 miles Babeldaob Compact Road will potentially increase development in Babeldaob, which in turn can increase environmental impacts to the fragile biodiversity in Babeldaob. Virtually all growth in recent years has been the result of foreign immigration rather than natural growth among the ethnic Palauans. Furthermore, the increasing number of tourists visiting Palau has in one way or another put certain pressure on the environment. The growing need for development of tourism, agriculture and fisheries depends upon the sustainable use of Palau's environmental resources. Consequently strong environmental preservation is imperative for both economic development and maintaining its biological diversity resources in a sustainable manner.

Palau supports many laws for the protection and conservation of the environment. However there is concern that the enforcement of these laws and regulations is weak. The need to strengthen the enforcement capacity is vital if the laws and regulations are to be followed. It has been suggested that a greater degree of enforcement is needed towards domestic fishing laws to prevent the exporting of illegal marine resource such as the giant clam, the use of destructive fishing techniques, and the poaching of endangered species (DMR, 1998).

Other difficulties faced are that of the government management. All legislation plans must make provisions for traditional landowner involvement in support for protected area management. This process involves traditional leaders, the local state government and the national government. Consequently time

may become a problem if projects need to be completed during a certain period. Adequate funding for ventures, has become one of the biggest determinants for project standstill in the past. Projects such as the shrimp and oyster aquaculture projects and fish aggregation devices (FAD) have all been terminated as a result of lack of funds.

There exists a stronger need for environmental education at community, school, and government levels. It has been noted that there is an overall lack of awareness of ecological processes and of the issues of sustainable development in Palau (Otobed & Maiava, 1994).

The formulation of Palau's Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (BSAP) must involve and receive participation from the national government, traditional leaders, local state government and the community of the major and surrounding island groups.

B. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

The aim of this Enabling Activity is to produce through a sequence of analytical processes, the strategies and actions required for the protection and sustainable use of the biodiversity within Palau. A formal plan will then be prepared for implementation. A National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan will be the primary product. With a National Report to the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) being the secondary product. The Government of Palau is aware of the possibility of accessing funds for the CHM through the GEF, however, it has decided to undertake this process at a later date due to capacity and infrastructure constraints.

The objectives of this project involve:

- Conduct a complete assessment of existing information, including existing legislation arrangements, on the biodiversity within Palau.
- Conduct an inventory on past and present management practices of biodiversity resource use.
- The provision for familiarization with methodologies necessary for biodiversity planning in order to enhance individual and institutional capacity.
- Implement a participatory, strategic planning process and develop priorities for implementing actions in protecting the biodiversity within Palau; and
- To prepare a BSAP and the first National Report for submission to the CBD.

This project will introduce practices allowing Palau to identify, through consultation, areas of poor sustainable resource use practices and preservation of biological diversity. Combining local, traditional and national governments, NGOs and the community in a consultative process, will induce an increase in national awareness of the economic, cultural and genuine values of biological diversity. In turn the subsequent action plan will be conducted with the partnership of the traditional landowners, the government, and the Palauan community.

The Government of Palau and UNDP/GEF are satisfied the activities proposed conform fully with the GEF Criteria for Expedited Financing of Enabling Activities in Biodiversity.

C. COVERAGE WITHOUT DUPLICATION

Although free of some of the major environmental problems faced by its neighbours, Palau has recognized that there are some concerns, regarding the present status of the environment and the pressures placed upon its natural resources. Palau's first initiative was to develop a Comprehensive Conservation Strategy in 1991. During 1992 the Republic of Palau actively participated and produced a National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS), in the context of preparation for the UNCED conference. The NEMS was primarily concerned with establishing a network of protected areas.

As part of the developing process for Palau's NEMS an additional report was developed. This State of the Environment report (SOE) was prepared and published employing the Comprehensive Conservation Strategy (CCS) as a basis.

Although the Republic of Palau has been acceded to the CBD it is yet to send representations to meetings of the COP, and no national response to the CBD has been initiated. For example, the Republic of Palau has not developed state-based biodiversity conservation programs that are supported by the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Program (SPBCP) of the GEF. The country, however lacks the financial resources to be able to carry out the participatory process necessary to formulate a BSAP, since the consultative process is time consuming and costs are high in the Republic of Palau due to expensive inter-state travel. Palau also does not have the adequately trained human resources needed to conduct the analysis required. The participatory planning and consultative workshops related to biodiversity management would be a first for the Republic of Palau, which, unlike other countries, has not initiated measurements towards this activity.

Presently, no duplicative efforts are being undertaken regarding biodiversity planning and management in the Republic of Palau. Although disparate scientific research has been conducted in Palau since World War II, and recent qualitative inventories contain data relevant to the assessment of biological diversity, no overall assessment of existing information on Palau's biological diversity has ever been done.

The NEMS, REA and SOE are three of a few existing sources or strategies related to conservation and sustainable development in Palau. While both of these documents recognize the importance of biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of marine resources, no overarching strategy or action plan for biodiversity management has been completed through these frameworks. A task force was appointed for agriculture and aquaculture by the president, executive order. A draft for both agriculture and aquaculture are presently in the process of preparation. Biodiversity in and of itself has not been an issue that has been considered in other sectoral plans.

The Fisheries Management Plan is currently in its final draft through technical assistance from CIDA and FFA. The plan will encompass all sectoral policy issues in relation to potential pollution posed by the locally based foreign fishing vessels. The plan emphasizes development of pelagic fisheries to maximize benefits to the stakeholders, however it provides little attention to the inclusion of biodiversity issues into the state fisheries development projects.

The Government of Palau has not yet adopted a comprehensive policy on the environment and conservation status, although there are numerous statutes and regulations that exist for the purpose of protecting the environment and promoting conservation and sustainable development.

National legislation related to conservation, management and utilization of biological

resources include:

- Palau's Marine Protection Act brought into action in 1994. This act places restrictions upon marine exports, places seasonal capture boundaries on such species as the mangrove crab, coconut crab, and sea cucumber. This act also brings in regulations of marine resources for the purpose of aquaria and research purposes.
- Within the 1986 Environmental Quality Protection Act reference is made to the policy of creating and maintaining environmentally friendly resource use practices. "Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation". The act recognizes the impact of human activity to the natural environment with such influences as population growth and resource exploitation.
- Other existing acts include the Endangered Species Act, Protected Sea Life Act, Protected Land Life Act, Illegal Method of Capture, and Fishery Zones and Regulation of Foreign Fishing. All of these Acts addresses the exploitation of Palau's living resources, nevertheless the enforcement of these regulations is inadequate. This project will assess the policy and regulatory framework of conservation in the Republic of Palau, based on the current reality of resource exploitation and the status of biodiversity.

The BSAP will be the first attempt of Palau to outline strategies for biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing. Assistance from GEF/UNDP would provide the necessary financial resources to enable the Republic of Palau to set up a participatory process that would allow all communities, including those in the outer islands, to participate in the formulation of the BSAP. Technical assistance under the project would also help to provide training in participatory planning and analysis of options.

D. BEST PRACTICE

The methodology for implementing the project is based on WRI/UNEP/IUCN's "National Biodiversity Planning" (Miller and Lanou, 1995). The project is additionally based on the "Suggested Guidelines for National Reporting on the Implementation of Article 6 of the CBD" (as set out in the Annex to decision II/17 of the COP – document UNEP/CBD/COP/2/19).

E. DEVIATION FROM CRITERIA AND NORMS

The project is consistent with the GEF Enabling Activity criteria and cost norms. However, the amount requested is towards the upper end of the spectrum due to high costs in Palau as well as participatory process envisaged to develop the BSAP. Due to the large distances between islands, travel costs for participants to the national and state workshops are extremely high and have contributed to the budget amount requested. Palau is a federal state, therefore, extensive inter-island consultation is required to build national ownership and to take the viewpoints of the different states into account.

F. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The Ministry of Resource and Development (MRD) will execute this Enabling Activity project. The Ministry will appoint a national project coordinator and appoint a national Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will be made up of representatives from the Ministry of Resources and

Development, the Environmental Quality Protection Board (EQPB), Governors Association, women's organizations, NGOs, and the private sector. The Steering Committee will meet, when required to provide policy guidance, ensure the participation of stakeholders, and to form a work plan.

The project coordinator will be appointed as a national consultant, and will fulfill the role of organizing and directing a planning group. The planning group will comprise representatives from the Division of Marine Resources, the Division of Agriculture, the Division of Conservation, the Division of Technical Assistance and the Division of Cultural Affairs. With the support of two national and one international consultant, the planning group will be accountable for the project activities and systematization required in developing the BSAP. The international consultant will provide technical expertise, as well as aiding in informing the planning group, the project coordinator and the national consultants in: strategic analysis and planning for biological diversity management, participatory methods and the use of the WRI/IUCN/UNEP guidelines. Experts from the regional and global institutions such as Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), South Pacific Regional Environmental Program (SPREP) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), will be requested to take a role in technical expertise where that is lacking. These institutions are in position to act expeditiously to assist member countries whenever the need arises. Formal contracts will be negotiated with the regional organisations.

The planning group and consultants will assess present information on biodiversity. This group will consist of members from the private sector, NGO's, local and national governments, local communities and civil society. The group will review the resource uses practices and the indigenous knowledge related to biodiversity management. This will allow threats and pressures to be identified and to analyze the foundation of the causes of these realities. Furthermore, the international consultant will assist the project coordinator in project management and implementation, as well as assist the project coordinator to carry out a comprehensive assessment and analysis of existing information, including existing legislation and institutional arrangements, on biodiversity in the Republic of Palau, by identifying any gaps between desired and current situations.

The project coordinator and the assisting planning group and consultants will prepare reports for the Steering Committee that contain the results of the assessment and inventory. The planning group and consultants through field workshops on 7 of the 16 states will then present this information. To begin the workshop, participants will become familiarized with the value of biodiversity, its function and the implications of its loss. Through group discussions they will analyze results, identify issues needing action and address local strategies and actions for dealing with these issues.

The planning group and consultants will formulate information collected from the results of the state workshops into a report. These reports will be consolidated into a draft version of the BSAP that will then be reviewed by the Steering Committee. The state workshops will involve the state and national governments, communities, civil society, private sector, and any other relevant groups. A national workshop will be conducted with all participants of the 16 states to discuss the draft BSAP. Foregoing finalization of the BSAP report, an inclusive agreement among the participants will be attained. If required new opinions will be developed.

Once approved by the Steering Committee, the BSAP will be presented to the office of the President of the Republic of Palau and the Olbiil Era Kelulau (OEK) for ratification. The planning committee and the international consultant during the last stage of the project will complete the first national report to the CBD. This will then be approved by the Steering Committee. Refer to Figure 2 for a summary of the project process.

G. TIME PLAN AND SEQUENCING

Table 1. Activity matrix summarizing activities undertaken during an 18-month period.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Preparatory Phase																		
Appointment of project coordinator	*																	
Steering Committee established	*																	
Planning Group		*																
Consultants recruited		*																
Project document	*																	
Biodiversity Information																		
Gather information		*	*	*	*	*												
Analysis						*	*	*										
Resource Use Practices																		
Gather information					*	*												
Analysis							*	*										
Identify people and methods									*	*	*							
First National Workshop							*											
Participation																		
State workshops				*		*		*	*		*	*	*					
State consultation			*					*				*						
Second National workshop														*				
National Report															*	*	*	
Submission to COP																	*	
BSAP																		
National workshop consultation						*												
Revision to Final Draft															*			
ROP President/OEK Approval																*		
Translation/printing/dissemination													*				*	

H. PROJECT BUDGET COVERING THE UNDP/GEF CONTRIBUTIONS

Country: Republic of Palau

Project Title: National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and Report to the COP.

Table 2. Representation of project budget displaying estimated total cost.

PROJECT FINANCING

	Product	Process	Total
<i>Stocktaking and Assessment of Existing Information</i>			
National consultants (2)	28,000		28,000
Documentation and Miscellaneous	7,000		7,000

<i>Identification and Analysis of Information</i>			
National consultant	5,000	26,000	31,000
Regional/local/international experts	20,000	10,000	30,000
Support staff	10,000	15,000	25,000
First national workshop		20,000	20,000
State workshops		45,000	45,000
Travel		30,000	30,000
<i>Preparation of Strategy and Plan</i>			
National consultant	10,000	5,000	15,000
Combined workshop	5,000	15,000	20,000
State workshops		20,000	20,000
Communications		10,000	10,000
Dissemination and Printing	15,000	10,000	25,000
<i>Preparation of first National Report</i>			
National consultant	5,000	5,000	10,000
Publication/translation ¹ , printing, dissemination	9,000		9,000
Promotion, communications		5,000	5,000
Total	114,000	216,000	330,000

¹ Translation in Palauan and English.

I. ACTIVITY MATRIX

Table 3. Summary of activities undertaken to meet project needs.

Enabling Activity Commitment	Output	Capacity Building		Public Participation	Comments
		Planning Execution	Institutional Strengthening		
<i>Stocking and Assessment</i>					
- biodiversity and biological resources	X				1
- cross sectoral issues	X				2
- policy and regulatory framework	X				3
- institutional and human capacity	X				
- analysis of root causes of biodiversity loss	X				
- technologies for conservation and sustainable use	X				
- activities with adverse impacts	X				
- existing measures and programs	X				
- preliminary statement of objectives	X				
- identification of gaps	X				
- Assessment of existing needs	X				
<i>Identification and Analysis of Options to meet the Objectives of the CBD</i>					
- strategies for conservation	X	X	X	X	
- strategies for sustainable use	X	X	X	X	
- Strategies for benefit sharing	X	X	X	X	4
<i>Planning and Preparation of a Strategy and Plan</i>					
- national strategy					
- National action plan	X	X	X	X	4
<i>Preparation of first National Report</i>					
- interim report	X				
- first national report	X			X	

Legend: x = activity to be undertaken by the project

Footnotes:

1. Disparate scientific research conducted in the Republic of Palau since World War II and recent qualitative inventories contain data relevant to the assessment of biological diversity. However, no overall assessment of existing information on the Republic of Palau's biological diversity has been conducted.
2. The NEMS, SOE, The Ngaremeduu Conservation Area management plan, Sustainable human development in Palau report, are all existing policies related to conservation and sustainable development. Together they recognize biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of marine resources; however, no overarching strategy or action plan for biodiversity management has been developed through these two frameworks. A task force was appointed for agriculture and aquaculture by the president, executive order. A draft for both agriculture and aquaculture are presently in the process of fabrication. Biodiversity in and of itself has been an issue that has been considered in other sectoral plans.
3. At present there exist numerous laws and regulations for the conservation of Palau's environment. The project will assess the policy and regulatory framework based on the current reality of resource exploitation and the status of biodiversity.
4. The BSAP will be the first attempt of the Republic of Palau to outline strategies for biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing. Although many other separate reports exist that consider biodiversity and sustainable resource use planning, the BSAP will be the start of a process of factoring in biodiversity concerns and management into sectoral strategies and plans.

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Figure 1. Management Structure for BSAP Project

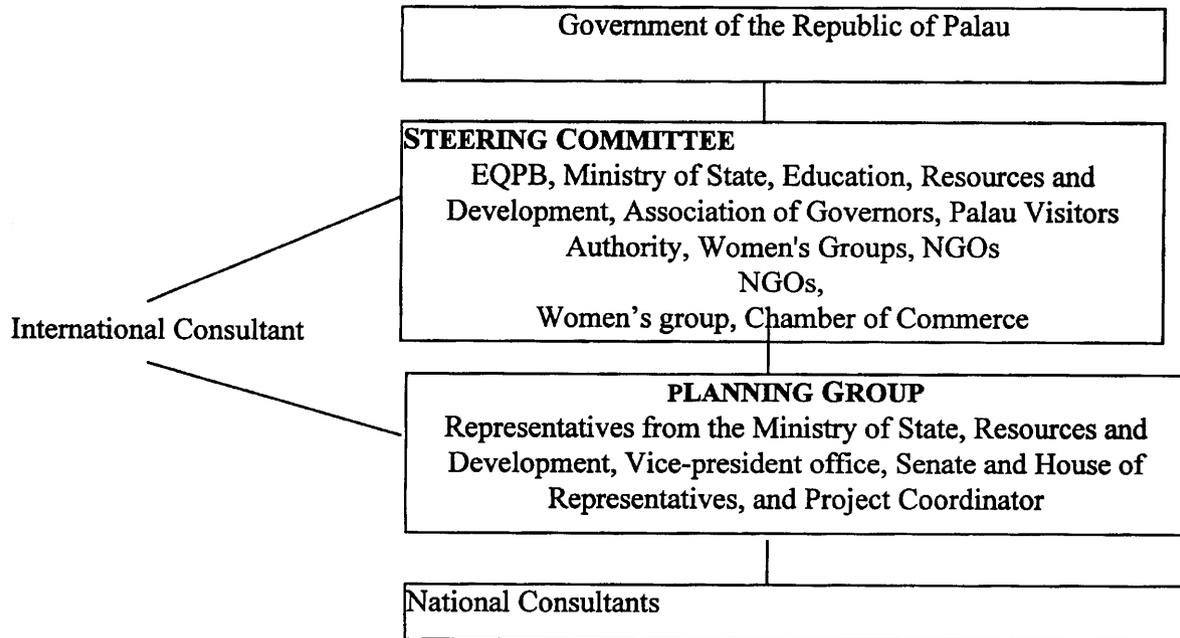
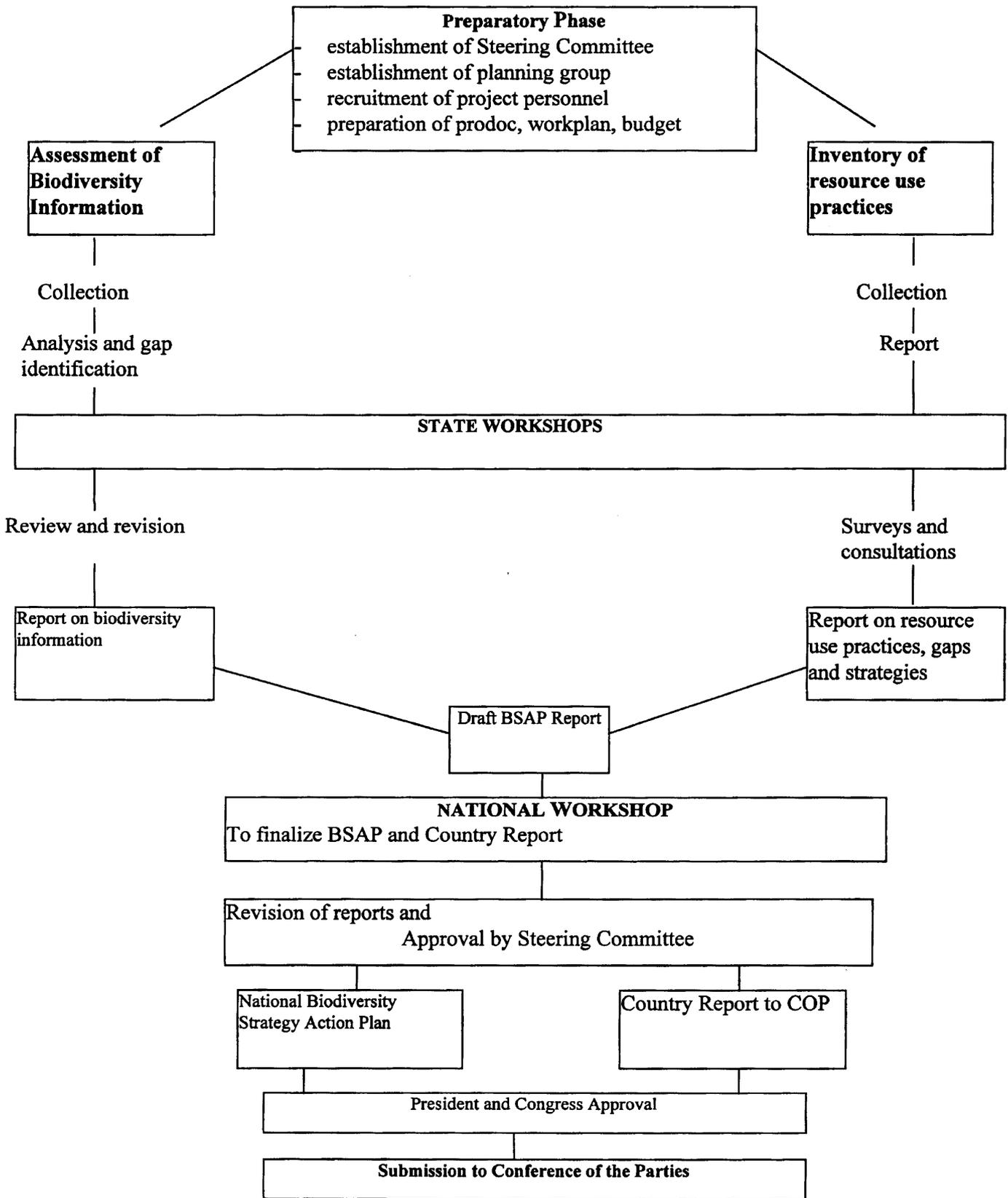


Figure 2. Enabling Activity Process





REPUBLIC OF PALAU

Office of the President

TOMMY E. REMENGESAU, JR.
President

P.O. Box 100, Koror • Republic of Palau 96940
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May 14, 2001
Serial No. 01-279

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
Mr. Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary
World Trade Centre
393 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 300
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**SUBJECT: Endorsement of the Enabling Activity or Palau's National Biodiversity
Strategies and Action Plan**

Dear Mr. Zedan:

The Republic of Palau fully endorses the enabling activity to assist Palau create its National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan per our obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Please also be informed that the Office of Environmental Response and Coordination (OERC) is the Republic's Operational Focal Point for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Clearing-house Mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Contact details for OERC are as follows:

Office of Environmental Response and Coordination
P.O. Box 7086
Koror, Republic of Palau 96940

Phone: +(680) 488-6950/52/53/55 ext. 249/250



Mr. Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary
U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity
Re: Endorsement of the Enabling Activity or Palau's National Biodiversity
Strategies and Action Plan
5/14/01

Fax: +(680) 488-8638
E-mail: ERCPalau@hotmail.com

Sincerely,



Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau