

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

ENABLING ACTIVITY PROPOSAL

Country:	Poland
Project Title:	National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and First National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity
GEF Focal Area:	Biodiversity
Country Eligibility:	Ratified the CBD on 18 January 1996
GEF Financing:	US\$ 205,000
Government Contribution:	In kind and personnel
Estimated Total Budget:	US\$ 205,000
GEF Implementing Agency:	UNEP
National Executing Agency:	National Foundation For Environmental Protection (NFEP)
GEF Operational Focal Point:	Director, Department of the United Nations System, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
CBD Focal Point:	Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry
Estimated Starting Date:	September 1996
Project Duration:	12 months

I. Background/Context:

Poland is a Central European country with an area of 312,700 sq.km. and a population of 38 million. The country is 649 km long in the north-south direction and 689 km in the east-west direction. Poland has borders with the Baltic Sea and the Russian Federation in the North; Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine in the East; the Czech and Slovak Republics in the South and Germany in the West. It has a land border of about 3147 km and its coastline with the Baltic sea is 528 km in length. Poland is a lowland country with more than 70% of its land only 200 m above sea level (a.s.l), but is characterized by a varied landscape, shaped

by several advances of the Scandinavian ice sheet. On its southern edge lies a high chain of mountains of the Alpine type (The Carpathian and Sudety Mountains), on its Northern edge a belt of lakelands created by early glaciation and a Baltic coastal belt with varied coastal formations. The interior of the country is shaped by parallel east-west bands of upland and lowland, with a preponderance of the latter.

Almost all of Poland lies in a vast zone of mixed forest that is distinctly indicative of the prevailing climate. The ecosystem of Poland is diverse in nature. Surviving on Polish soil are fragments of the natural lowland forest of central Europe (at Bialowieza). This has a rich zoocenosis of vertebrates, including large herbivorous mammals (roe deer, red deer, bison and wild boar), carnivores (wolf, lynx, fox and several species of mustelids), and forest birds, as well as an enormously rich invertebrate fauna. In addition to this most valuable fragment of forest, there are other well preserved lowland forest complexes of a natural character: meadow forest, rich oak-beech forest or dryland forest, woods with fir and beech, mixed forest, pine forest and spruce forest. There are also relatively intact ecosystems in the mountain region, including the only Alpine habitats in Europe away from the Alps themselves, with a well preserved richness of endemic and relict species of plants, invertebrates and vertebrates forming and inhabiting altitudinal zones of diversity.

Surviving over a considerable area of north-east Poland are the largely intact plant and animal communities of marshes, wetlands and raised or basin mires. Coastal sand dunes with characteristic psammophilous vegetation and animals also constitute valuable fragments of landscape preserved in Poland. Small fragments of the steppe ecosystem have survived along the south-east edge of the country. In addition, Poland's biggest river, the Vistula, remains unregulated along several hundred kilometres of its middle course and thus creates habitats for many species of animals that are unique on the European scale.

An important part of biodiversity constitute agricultural ecosystems, which account for 60% of the total land in Poland. There are cultivated fields, with meadows and pastures and shelter-belts with the remainder comprising village roads, small lakes, channels and marshy areas. These elements compose enormously mosaic landscapes - favouring the maintenance of biodiversity.

In Poland, there are currently an estimated 2600 species of vascular plants and 3500 species of lower land plants. The invertebrate fauna has about 31,000 species and the vertebrate fauna about 600, including 434 vertebrate species breeding within the country, and the remainder migratory. Among the vertebrates, birds are characterized by the greatest species richness - about 370 species of which 229 breed within the country. There are 98 species of mammals, amongst which there are large herbivores (e.g. bison) and large predators (wolf, lynx and wildcat), which are species that are extinct in other European countries, or which occur in very small numbers - especially in lowland forest.

Poland has considerable achievements and valuable experience in the field of traditional nature conservation, as well as biological diversity protection. Existing systems of protected areas in Poland covers one-fourth of the total area of the country. It is formed of 22 National parks, more than 100 landscape parks, about 1200 nature reserves and a few hundred protected landscape areas.

Although many of these ecosystems have so far remained in a more or less pristine state, and although many of them are in protected areas, they nevertheless face constant and severe pressure from factors operating in the surrounding transformed areas. Thus their continued existence in an intact state is endangered to a significant extent.

In the course of the last 400 years, 15 species of animals (2.5%) and 31 species of vascular plants have become extinct in Poland. According to latest data, 258 species of vascular plants are threatened with extinction. Among the vertebrates, almost 90% (about 400) of the 434 animals which breed within the country are under threat including 41 species which are extremely endangered animals. If the present situation in the country continues, there is a serious danger that the present rich biodiversity in Poland will fall rapidly to the low levels found in the neighbouring highly industrialised European countries (or even lower). The greatest threats come from the very poor economic situation of the country and the sudden changes in politics and ownership which are occurring currently which are very hard to predict and control. This is particularly noticeable in agricultural systems where complex social-economic issues related to property rights aspects, access to land, credit and other resources, as well as problems associated with methods of agricultural production are likely to have adverse impacts on the biodiversity in agro-ecosystems. Hence there is an urgent need to put forward a national strategy on biodiversity conservation in Poland and to take immediate action.

II Project Objectives and Short Description:

Given the serious threats facing biodiversity of Poland including those resulting from the sudden changes in the politico-socio-economic set up of the country, it is imperative that all efforts to conserve the remaining Biodiversity in Poland be given as much support as possible. Hence the principal objective of the project is to assist the Government of Poland (GoP) define priority actions to conserve and sustainably use its biodiversity within the context of socio-economic development as well as international cooperation particularly within the framework of the Pan-European Biological & Landscape Strategy and European integration. The preparation of the first national report to the CBD will enable Poland to meet the obligations under Article 26 of the Convention as stipulated in Decision II/17 adopted by the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 2). It will be prepared in the time frame set out in Decision II/17.

The process will be as participatory as possible. Under the supervision of the National Foundation for Environmental protection (NFEP), a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral **Task Force** will be formed to co-ordinate the implementation of this project ensuring that public outreach is integrated in the process. Key sectors and institutions will be represented in the Task Force (see section IV). It will organise nine seminars in the various regions of Poland and one national workshop to ensure as much involvement as possible from all stakeholders, including the rural people.

The regional seminars will focus on identifying and analysing threats, problems, challenges and opportunities for conservation sustainable use of biodiversity and fair and equitable sharing of benefits, in the following aspects of biodiversity: fauna, flora, fresh water ecosystems, terrestrial non-forestry ecosystems, biodiversity in agricultural systems, coastal and marine biodiversity, mountain ecosystems, biotechnology.

The national workshop will draw together representatives selected to cover the full range of actors involved with biodiversity in Poland. Drawing on the results of the regional seminars, the national workshop will identify and synthesize key issues and options to include in the NBSAP.

At the beginning of the process, the planning team will receive support from an international consultant on the use of the WRI/UNEP/IUCN Guidelines for Biodiversity Planning and review existing information on the status of, and threats to biodiversity of Poland, to serve as a baseline in preparing the NBSAP. The biodiversity country study produced in 1992 and any additional data compiled since then will form the basis of this review exercise. It may be facilitated by the activities conducted so far under the Biodiversity Data Management and Networking project supported by UNEP and the GEF.

III Operational Criteria:

i) Coverage without duplication:

The NBSAP will make use of existing capacity and information. Poland has a long and fine scientific tradition in the field of biology and related sciences and thus the inventory of native fauna and flora is quite advanced. There is rich cartographic documentation of both potential and existing habitats and plant communities and also of the distribution of most animal species. The outputs, information and capacity generated by the UNEP funded biodiversity country study project, the UNEP/GEF biodiversity data management and networking project (BDM), the World Bank/GEF Forest Biodiversity Protection project, among others, will be fully utilized so that there is no duplication.

ii) Appropriate overall sequencing of activities:

The project will be conducted over a period of 12 months as reflected in the schedule shown in the following table.

	Activity/Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Formation of Task Force and Planning Team	x											
2	Training of Planning Team & Orientation of Consultants in BD Analysis & Planning	x											
3	Survey of Existing Information		x	x									
4	Regional Seminars, Discussions, Workshops ¹		x	x	x	x	x						
5	Drafting of NBSAP							x	x				
6	Circulation of NBSAP for Comments								x	x			
7	Finalization of NBSAP									x	x		
8	Printing & Publication of NBSAP											x	x
9	Preparation of First National Report and submission to COP*									x	x		

*Because of the deadline of 30 June 1997 stipulated in Decision II/7, an interim report will be submitted by that date

¹ The Task Force will organize 9 seminars in the various regions and a national workshop in order to have consultations with representatives of as many sectors of society as possible (the local communities, government field officers, senior government officials, academic institutions, local & national NGOs, the private sector, etc.). The National Foundation for Environmental Protection has identified the following areas to be discussed in these seminars within the context of the 3 objectives of the CBD: fauna, flora, water ecosystems, terrestrial non-forestry ecosystems, forest ecosystems, biodiversity in agriculture, coastal & marine biodiversity, biotechnologies and mountain ecosystems.

iii) Best practice:

The methodology for the implementation of this project will be based on "Guidelines for Biodiversity Planning " (WRI/UNEP/IUCN 1995). The lessons learned from the UNEP project in Poland and other countries on biodiversity country studies and biodiversity data management and networking will be fully utilized. The First National Report to the CBD will be based on the information contained in the country study and the progress achieved in preparing the NBSAP. This report will be done in the time frame stipulated in Decision II/17 of COP 2.

iv) Cost effectiveness and consistency of approach and procedures:

The cost effectiveness of this proposal is based on maximum reliance on existing information and capacity developed in the course of the UNEP biodiversity country study project. Under that project, Poland has already completed the compilation of a report defining the status of biological diversity in Poland including: a survey of habitat diversity in Poland, state-of-the art reports on the main groups of biota in Poland, a study on the socio-economic aspects of biodiversity, etc. Elements of a national biodiversity strategy were outlined in the country study report and this project will build on that preliminary analysis, consolidate and enrich it by making the process as participatory as possible in order to enhance the national authorship and ownership of the outputs.

IV Institutional Framework:

The National Foundation for Environmental Environmental Protection (NFEP) will coordinate the execution of this project. It has the status of scientific advisory body to the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural resources and Forestry, which is responsible for setting national environmental policies and their implementation, including conservation of heritage. In this, it is supported by a national programme for environment research and studies conducted by scientists in 10 institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences (6 research institutes and 4 independent institutions), in the biology departments of 10 universities, at departments of forestry, gardening and environment protection in 4 agricultural universities and in 2 scientific institutes in the department of environmental protection. The **Task Force** for this project shall comprise representatives from Government, Academic and other institutions mentioned above, local communities, NGOs and the private sector.

V Project Financing

Project Budget (US\$) Poland NBSAP

Activity	Product	Process	Total
1. Assessment of Existing Information	0	0	0
2. Identification and analysis of options	12,000	95,000	107,000
- Training for Planning Team		4,000	
- Regional seminars (travel, per diem, facilities) 9 seminars @ \$6000 each		54,000	
- National workshop (travel, per diem, facilities)		25,000	
- International Consultants	4,000	8,000	
- National Consultants	4,000	4,000	
- Reports	3,000		
- Miscellaneous	1,000		
3. Preparation of NBSAP	49,000	14,000	63,000
- National Consultants	24,000		
- International Consultant	3,000	3,000	
- 2 Task Force Consultations (travel, per diem, facilities)		6,000	
- Dissemination, Public awareness		5,000	
- Printing & Publication	20,000		
- Miscellaneous	2,000		
4. Preparation of First National Report	25,000	0	25,000
- National Consultants	10,000		
- Printing & Publication	14,000		
- Miscellaneous	1,000		
5. Co-ordination & Management Costs	10,000	0	10,000
Total	96,000	109,000	205,000

VI Deviations from norms and criteria: The cost of the preparation of the NBSAP and the first National Report to the CBD is slightly higher than the norm recommended in the GEF operational criteria for biodiversity enabling activities. The increase is due to the cost of printing and publication of the NBSAP report and of the first National Report to the CBD because the Government of Poland has expressed the wish to have these 2 reports published in the Polish language as well, and disseminated widely in Poland (a minimum of 5,000 copies in Polish version and 1,000 copies in English version).

TABLE A: Dimensions of Enabling Activities (Standard Activity Matrix), Poland NBSAP

Enabling Activity	Out-put	Capacity Building		Public Participa-tion	Comments (To see footnotes)
		Institutional Strengthening	Training		
Stocktaking of existing information	UNEP & WB				1, 2, 3
Identification and Analysis of Options to meet the objectives of the CBD - strategies for conservation - strategies for sustainable use - strategies for benefit sharing	x,1,2 x,1,2 x,1,2			x x x	1,2,3,4,5
Planning and Preparation of NBSAP - national strategy - national action plan	x x	x x	x x	x x	
Preparation of the First National Report - First National Report	x	x	x	x	

x - Activity undertaken by this project

- 1 Poland has already carried out a Biodiversity country study with assistance from UNEP which also attempted a preliminary identification of priority actions. In addition, the UNEP/GEF Biodiversity Data Management and networking currently underway is helping Poland manage the biodiversity data collected through various initiatives.
- 2 The World Bank/GEF Forest Biodiversity Protection project has contributed information with regard to forest biodiversity. This project has initiated programs to conserve the biodiversity of key endangered forests and is providing institutional support to the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Forests to carry out biodiversity conservation management activities. Innovative features include the establishment of a gene bank and arboreta to protect genetic diversity and to provide plants for reforestation in areas degraded by pollution.
- 3 Poland has a long and fine scientific tradition in the field of Biology and related sciences. Studies have been made for many years in the disciplines of taxonomy, evolution, phytosociology, ecology and genetics. There has been a strong "school" of ecology in Poland for the past 50 years. Due to this, the inventory of the native fauna and flora is quite advanced. There is a rich cartographic documentation of both potential and existing habitats, plant communities and the distribution of some animal species.
- 4 A training session for the Project Planning Team in biodiversity analysis and planning as well as in the use of the WRI/UNEP/IUCN Guidelines will be conducted at the onset of the project.
- 5 Regional seminars and a national workshop will be conducted to initiate public participation on biodiversity issues and enhance national authorship of the NBSAP. Both the NBSAP and the first national report to the CBD will be widely distributed in the country.

EAs

Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych
Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej
Departament Systemu Narodów
Zjednoczonych
telefon (4822) 6285578
fax (4822) 6210217

U N E **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
of the Republic of Poland
 GEF COORD. OFFICE
Department of the United Nations
 System
 phone (4822) 6285578
 fax (4822) 6210217

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TELEFAX MESSAGE

To: Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaf, Executive Coordinator,
Coordination Office, UNEP Nairobi, telefax (254 2) 520825

From: Jan Woroniecki, Director, GEF Operational Focal Point for Poland,
Tadeusz Strójwas, GEF Political Focal Point and Council Member

Number of pages: (including cover)07

Date: 10-06-96


Dear Mr. Djoghlaf,

Further to your letter dated 20 May 1996, addressed to Mr. Mieczysław Ostojski, Director, Department of International Cooperation at the Polish Ministry of Environmental Protection, I am sending to you, in my capacity as the GEF Operational Focal Point for Poland, the GEF enabling activity proposal regarding the preparation of the Polish National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and First National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, duly adjusted by Polish authorities on environmental protection.

There are several suggestions to the above mentioned project proposal, introduced and explained on page 1 of the attachment. Pages 2 and 3 of the said attachment contain some corrections to be inserted to your original project proposal, brought to us with your said letter of 20 May 1996; these corrections are self-explanatory and do not require, hopefully, further justifications. Finally, on pages 4, 5 and 6 follow: the amended project front page, the table sequencing project activities and the table containing project budget.

Thanking you for your cooperation, we remain

Sincerely yours,


 in Jan Woroniecki,
 Tadeusz Strójwas

cc. Mr. W. Jasiński, Counsellor, Embassy
of Poland, Nairobi, fax nr 0-02542 562 588

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