

+GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITY

Country:	Trinidad and Tobago
Project Title:	National Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and First Report to the CBD
GEF Focal Area:	Biodiversity
Country Eligibility:	Ratified on August 01, 1996
GEF Financing:	US \$ 127,000
Government Contribution:	In-kind
GEF Implementing Agency:	UNDP
National Executing Agency:	Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources
GEF Operational Focal Point:	Environmental Management Authority
CBD Focal Point:	Environmental Management Authority
Estimated Starting Date:	July, 1997
Project Duration:	14 Months

1. Background

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (*T&T*) is an archipelagic state located at the southernmost extremity of the Caribbean island chain. The two main islands, Trinidad and Tobago, together comprise a total land area of 5,126 km². Both are situated on the Continental Shelf of South America from which they became separated in geologically recent times, however, they have substantial differences. Trinidad (4,826 km²) has three mountain ranges, the *Northern Range*, rising over 900m and representing the eastern most extension of the Andean Mountain System; the *Central Range*, an area of rolling hills with many limestone peaks and the *Southern Range* a series of anticlinal folds separated by complicated fault systems which have resulted in low hills. These three mountain ranges are interspersed by two fertile plains, the *Northern Basin*, lying between the Northern and Central Ranges, and the low-lying, rolling *Southern Basin* with a shallow, inland fresh water lagoon, known as the Nariva Swamp, separated from the sea by 25 km sand bar.

The smaller Tobago (300 km²) has the *Main Ridge* that occupies the north-eastern two-thirds of the island and reaches 576m, and the *Southern Lowlands* that comprise a coastal plain of coral terraces terminating in a fringing reef.

In addition to these main islands, *T&T* has extensive marine-areas, 15 times greater than the land mass, covering approximately 104,000 nautical km². These are comprised of *The Columbus Channel*, lying between the South Coast of Trinidad and the Orinoco Coast of Venezuela; *the Gulf of Paria*, separating Trinidad from Venezuela; *The Caribbean Sea*, off the north coast of Trinidad and the leeward coast of Tobago and *The Atlantic Ocean*, off the east coast of Trinidad and the windward coast of Tobago.

The continental origin and position between the Caribbean Island chain and South America, together with the topography, geology and tropical wet climate (average annual rainfall of 2200 mm), account for Trinidad and Tobago's unusually rich landscape and biological diversity. The range of different terrestrial ecosystems include the evergreen seasonal, semi-evergreen seasonal, deciduous seasonal, littoral woodlands, lower montane rainforests, seasonal montane forests, montane rainforests, elfin woodlands, swamp forests, palm swamps, herbaceous marshes, mangrove woodlands, marsh forests, palm marsh forests and savannahs (Beard 1946). These

support a rich species diversity with a high degree of endemism arising from the separation from the mainland. Of 2,160 species of flowering plants, 110 are endemic, including many palms. There are 420 species of birds, 100 mammals, 55 snakes, 25 amphibians, 85 reptiles.

The range of marine systems include the water masses; mud bottoms; coral reefs and communities; sandy bottoms; rocky shores and mud flats. These support a range of biota-plankton and benthos; an estimated 36 species of reef building corals found mainly in the reefs of Tobago; sea grasses; polychaetes; bivalves; marine turtles; etc. Riverine discharges from South American rivers, notably the Orinoco River, have seasonal effects on the salinity and turbidity of marine systems.

T&T has an ethnically diverse population of 1.27 million, GNP per capita of TT \$ 22,326 (approx. US \$ 3,600) and an economy based primarily on oil production and natural gas-based petrochemical industries. With the fall in world oil prices after the "oil boom" of 1976-85, the agricultural and tourism sectors are now being targeted to play important roles in the diversification of the country's economy. In addition to mass tourism, eco-tourism is being explored, capitalising on the country's unusual landscape and species diversity. However, increasing industrialisation, urbanisation, illegal occupation of land (squatting), forest fires, quarrying and logging have caused expanding habitat loss and more species are becoming rare, vulnerable and endangered. This degradation is threatening the viability of efforts to diversify the economy away from non-renewable resources towards activities such as agriculture and eco-tourism that require sound management of renewable resources and biodiversity.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GoRTT) has recognised the need for streamlining and co-ordinating environmental management activities in the country to address this degradation and loss of biodiversity. In 1995, overarching environmental legislation was enacted - the *Environmental Management Act* No. 3 - which established the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) as responsible for co-ordinating, facilitating and overseeing the execution of the national environmental strategy and programmes; promoting public awareness of environmental concerns and establishing an effective regulatory regime to protect, enhance and conserve the environment.

The recent ratification of the CBD, in August 1996, further demonstrates GoRTT's intention to halt and reverse these trends. The formulation of a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) will provide the country with a framework within which concrete actions can be implemented to conserve and sustainably use the nation's rich diversity.

2. Project Objectives and Short Description

The primary objective of the project is to assist the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GoRTT) in formulating a National Biodiversity Strategy and defining the priority actions for the conservation and wise use of the country's biodiversity within the context of its socio-economic development. A secondary objective is to prepare the First National Report to the CBD.

A project team of government agency staff and national consultants will be formed as the core unit for planning activities and preparing the different drafts of the NBSAP. This team will be led

by a project co-ordinator under the overall guidance of a multi-sectoral Taskforce, to be set up under this project and to be chaired by the EMA. Members of the project team (selected according to their biodiversity and planning expertise) will undertake a survey and evaluation of existing information on a range of biodiversity-related issues (see Standard Activity Matrix). The results of the stocktaking exercises will be consolidated by the project team in a document that will form the basis for a series of consultations to identify options and outline possible strategies to meet the objectives of the CBD, indicating priority actions and institutions responsible for their implementation. To ensure that stakeholders, even in the most remote areas of Trinidad and Tobago, are reached for their input at this stage, a series of local-level consultations have been planned to cover the main regions of the two islands as opposed to fewer larger meetings centralised in the main cities. These local consultations will be held in the North East, North West, East, South East, South West of Trinidad and in the South West and North East of Tobago. Envisaged to count on the participation of approximately 400 participants in total, they will include representatives from local communities, NGOs, government institutions, academic institutions, private sector and individual biodiversity specialists.

Recommendations from these consultations will be consolidated into a first draft of the NBSAP by the project team. A national workshop will be held to review this draft with a range of different stakeholders thus engendering synergies and national ownership of the final product. This workshop to be held in Port of Spain will have approximately 150 representatives from government agencies, research institutions, communities, non-governmental organisations, the media, academic institutions and professional associations. Participation in these consultations will be enhanced by an information campaign using varying media approaches to inform on the CBD, implications for its implementation in *T&T* and the process of the NBSAP formulation.

The findings of this National Workshop will be used by the project team to amend the draft NBSAP into a version that will be reviewed by the Taskforce and submitted as a final NBSAP to Cabinet for government approval. Once this has been obtained, the NBSAP will be edited and published. Summaries of the full NBSAP will be disseminated through various media including television, radio and newspapers, to promote the support of the implementation of the strategy throughout civil society.

A draft of the First National Report to the CBD will be prepared by consultants appointed by the Taskforce. This will subsequently be reviewed by them and, once approved, published and submitted to the CBD Secretariat. In view of the deadline of December 31st, 1997 for submitting this report, it is expected that the *T&T* report will be prepared before full government approval of the NBSAP but will be based on final version submitted to Cabinet (see schedule of activities).

Notwithstanding the specialist skills available in *T&T* in the area of biodiversity, the high demand on the time of these experts is recognised. Some technical assistance from international consultants, preferably from the Caribbean region, will therefore be required at specific points in the process. These are envisaged to be at the start-up of the project, to instruct the project team and members of the Taskforce in biodiversity analysis and planning strategies facilitating them to become more familiar with internationally accepted guidelines such as those prepared by WRI, IUCN and UNEP (1995) and assisting in the planning of activities, and later, to review the first draft of the NBSAP.

The project will be conducted over a period of 14 months as this will provide for the full participation that is envisioned, accompanied by public outreach using varying media approaches.

3. Operational Criteria

Coverage Without Duplication: On-going initiatives in *T&T* and other identified projects which can either provide a foundation on which aspects of this project can be built or provide complementary data/information are summarised in the Standard Activity Matrix. Two initiatives are of particular relevance: the State of the Environment (SOE) Assessment required under the Environmental Management Act, 1995 to start in November 1996; and the National Environmental Policy and Action Plan, partially funded by the World Bank, to start in December 1996. The former will provide some generic information on the quality of information available on biodiversity and is expected to provide a base which can lever more in-depth analyses in specific areas. The broad-based consultative approach to be used in the latter can either be combined with or feed into the consultations sessions proposed for the NBSAP depending on their timing. The project proposed herein will use and build on these initiatives in the most cost-effective way. Moreover, as the EMA will be co-ordinating these three projects, no duplication is envisaged. Further, lessons learnt from the implementation of other relevant projects will be used to enhance the work of this project.

Appropriate Sequencing of Activities:

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Establish Interagency Task Force and Project Team	X													
Stocktaking of existing information		X	X	X	X									
Instruction session in BD Analysis and Planning		X												
Identification of Options Consultations (7)					X	X								
Prepare Draft NBSAP							X	X						
National Workshop to review draft NBSAP									X					
Amend draft, task-force revision and prepare final NBSAP									X	X				
Government approval of the NBSAP											X	X		
Printing and Publication of NBSAP													X	
Dissemination of NBSAP through media campaign											X	X		
Preparation of First National Report to CoP					X	X								X

Best Practice: The preparation of the strategy will follow the recommendations established in the document "National Biodiversity Planning: Guidelines Based on Early Country Experiences" prepared by WRI, IUCN and UNEP (1995). The multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral nature of the Taskforce will facilitate the integration of the strategy into sectoral and national development planning. The process of NBSAP formulation will be country-driven with broad participation and with the majority of activities being undertaken by governmental agency staff, national consultants and NGOs. Input from international experts will be sought for biodiversity planning instruction and strategy preparation and revision.

Deviations from Cost Norms: None

4. Institutional Framework and Project Implementation

The Environmental Management Authority EMA is the GEF Operational Focal Point in the country and is responsible for CBD implementation. It is a small agency that operates through establishing co-ordinating mechanisms with other governmental entities for the integration of

environmental management programmes. Whilst this will facilitate the preparation of the NBSAP and strengthen the co-operation among public sector agencies in its formulation and implementation, it does not present the most appropriate structure for executing the project. Consequently, at the operational level, the project will be executed through the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources which has direct responsibility for the research and management of the country's forest, fishery and wild life resources. The input and support of research and academic institutions such as the Institute of Marine Affairs and the University of the West Indies will be critical to the success of the project.

A multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral Taskforce led by the (EMA) will be responsible for co-ordinating and overseeing the whole process and ensuring that the NBSAP is incorporated into national and sectoral planning. The output from this exercise will provide information for project development for incorporation into future national budgets. This Taskforce will be appropriately constituted with representation from government and, statutory bodies, NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) collectively involved in national policy formulation, sectoral planning, project analysis, evaluation and financing, natural resources conservation, use and surveillance and the use of the country's non-renewable natural resources.

5. Budget

	Product	Process	Total
Stocktaking and Inventory Existing Information	15,000		15,000
1. National Consultants	12,000		
2. Documentation and miscellaneous.	3,000		
Identification and Analysis of Options	11,800	28,600	40,400
1. National Consultants (project team/preparation of cons. doc)	8,000		
2. Biodiversity Planning Instruction Session		3,600	
3. International consultant for instruction session and planning		8,000	
4. Local Consultations in Trinidad and Tobago (7)		14,000	
5. Information campaign on CBD to enhance participation		3,000	
6. Travel, misc (Int. cons. and Tobago members of Task-Force)	3,800		
Preparation of a Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	28,400	24,200	52,600
1. Preparation and dissemination of first draft of NBSAP	18,000	2,000	
2. International consultant to advise on first draft		5,000	
3. National Workshop on first draft NBSAP		5,000	
4. Preparation of Final version of Strategy and Action Plan	6,600	2,000	
5. Editing and Printing of Final NBSAP after official approval		5,700	
6. Travel and communications (includes Tobago members of TF)	3,800		
7. Dissemination of NBSAP in public awareness campaign		4,500	
First National Report	8,000	2,000	10,000
1. Preparation, publication and dissemination of National Report	8,000	2,000	
Co-ordination and Management	6,000	3,000	9,000
TOTAL	69,200	57,800	127,000

STANDARD ACTIVITY MATRIX

ENABLING ACTIVITY	OUTPUT	CAPACITY BUILDING		PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	COMMENT
		Institutional Strengthening	Training		
Commitment	Execution				
1. Stocktaking and Assessment, based on Existing Information					
1.1. Biodiversity and biological resources	SOE /NEP/ X				1
1.2. Cross-sectoral Issues	X				2
1.3. Policy and Regulatory Framework	EMAct/MALMR				3
1.4. Institutional and Human Capacity	SOE / X				4
1.5. Analysis of root causes of BD loss	X				
1.6. Technologies for Conservation and SU	X				
1.7. Activities with Adverse Impact	X				
1.8. Existing Measures and Programmes	X				
1.9. Preliminary Statement of Objectives	Var / X				5
1.10. Identification of Gaps	X				
1.11. Assessment of Existing Needs	X				
2. Identification and Analysis of options to Meet the Objectives of the CBD					
2.1. Strategies for Conservation <i>in & ex situ</i>	X	X	X	X	6,9
2.2. Strategies for Sustainable Use	X	X	X	X	6,9
2.3. Strategies for Benefit Sharing	X	X	X	X	6,9
3. Planning and Preparation of a Strategy and Plan					
3.1. National Strategy	X	X		X	7,8,9,10
3.2. National Action Plan	NEAP/NEMP/ X	X		X	7,8,9,10
4. Preparation of First National Report to CBD					
4.1. First National Report	X			X	

X = Activity Undertaken Within Enabling Activities Proposal; SOE - State of the Environment Assessment; MALMR - National Parks and Watershed Management project of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources; EMA - Environmental Management Authority; Var (includes various sources e.g. - Fisheries Act; Tobago House of Assembly Act - Environmental Management Act; Forests Act; - National Parks and Wild Life Resources Act (Draft); NEP - National Environmental Policy; NEAP - National Environmental Policy and Action Plan partially funded by the World Bank .

Footnotes

1. *Some information on biodiversity and biological resources exists*, however, it is dispersed in different institutions, universities and amongst individual experts and must be collated and evaluated. The EMA is required to do an annual State of the Environment Assessment (SOE) for T&T. The 1996 SOE (which is due in 1997, April) will review existing environmental information related to socio-economic activities and waste production in land, air, fresh water, coastal/marine areas. Whilst this will include some information on biodiversity which will feed into the NBSAP, stocktaking in the present project will be more in-depth and species and area-specific to provide the kind of output necessary for strategy development.

2. *The recently established Environmental Management Authority (EMA)* is responsible for co-ordinating, facilitating and overseeing the execution of national environmental strategies and programmes. It operates through establishing co-ordinating mechanisms with other governmental entities and thus provides the basis for co-ordinating environmental cross-sectoral issues. However it has yet to specifically evaluate and address biodiversity issues and this will be undertaken in the present project.

3. *The EMA is responsible for undertaking a comprehensive evaluation* of the written laws and various programmes which address environmental issues and developing an Environmental Code which consolidates, rationalises and modernises these laws. This must be completed by 1998 and will provide some input to the present project. It is also drafting subsidiary legislation on environmentally sensitive areas and species for public comment. Close co-ordination between this drafting and the results of the stocktaking exercises will be developed. In addition, to these inputs the MALMR, project to be funded by the World Bank, will undertake a revision of the regulatory framework for national parks and wildlife. Forestry legislation will be dealt with separately.

4. *As one of its functions, the EMA is to make recommendations for the rationalising of all governmental entities performing environmental functions.* However, this does not specifically address biodiversity or the implementation of the CBD. This project will include this aspect and collate and evaluate institutional and human capacity outside the governmental sector.

5. *Several documents outline preliminary objectives related to the country's biodiversity.* These include Fisheries Act; Tobago House of Assembly Act - Environmental Management Act; Forests Act; - National Parks and Wild Life Resources Act (Draft). This project will build on these to determine more specific objectives on which the NBSAP can be based.

6. *The identification of options for the implementation of the CBD will take place through a series of consultations to review the results of the stocktaking exercises.* These consultations (approximately 7) will be held in different localities of the two islands to ensure the participation of the broadest range of stakeholders possible including local governments, leaders of local communities, NGOs, academia, private and public sector representatives. Potential localities are Toco, Chaguaramas/Diego Martin, Sangre Grande, Rio Claro, Siparia, Roxborough, Plymouth/Scarborough. Participation in these consultations will be enhanced by an information campaign on the CBD and its implementation in the country.

7. *Findings from the local-level consultations will be used to develop a draft NBSAP with specific priorities and responsibilities for their implementation.* The National Environmental Policy, Action and Management Plans that propose to identify priority areas for action and investment in respect of environmental management issues, while not specifically addressing biodiversity, will be used to complement the definition of priority areas for the NBSAP.

8. *A national workshop will be held with a range of public and private sector stakeholders to review the draft NBSAP.* Findings from this workshop will be used by the project team to amend the draft NBSAP into a version that will be reviewed and revised by the Taskforce. The resulting version will be submitted to Cabinet for full government approval.

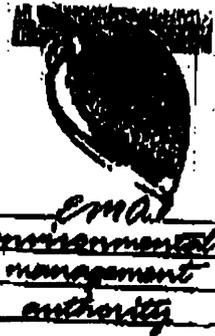
9 *Institutional strengthening will occur at two levels: (i) directly, for the project team and Taskforce members through the biodiversity planning instruction session held with the assistance of an international expert at the start up of the project; (ii) indirectly, through the participation of a range of stakeholders from the public and private sector in the consultations and workshop held throughout the process.*

10. *The final version of the NBSAP will be disseminated through a well-designated and executed public awareness campaign designed to enhance support throughout the civil society for the NBSAP implementation.*

FROM UNDP/RBLAC DIV. LATIN AMERICA

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February 18, 1997

Ms. Hilda Paparoni
UNDP/RBLAC
Rm. DC I-2290
1 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10025
U.S.A.

Fax: 212 906 5363

Dear Ms. Paparoni

Biodiversity Strategy for Trinidad and Tobago

As the focal point for GEF in the country, the EMA is pleased to submit, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, a proposal for the project entitled: **"National Biodiversity Strategy: Action Plan and First Report to the CBD."**

We look forward to a favourable response to our request for funding of the project.

Yours very truly
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Patrice LeBlanc
Managing Director/CEO

Encl:

- cc: Dr. C. James, UNDP, Trinidad & Tobago
- Dr. D. McIntosh, EMA
- Mrs. M. Salvador-Arthur, EMA

sl8:paparoni/undp

2nd floor, The Mutual Centre, 16 Queen's Park West, P.O. Bag 180, Newtown P.O., Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, West Indies.
Tel: (800) 628-8042; 8044/8 Fax: (800) 628-9122.

DIRECTORS: Sir Bill Clarke (Chairman), Mr. John Andrews (Deputy Chairman), Mr. Patrice LeBlanc (Managing Director/C.E.O.), Ms. Molly Clarke