

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION



United Nations Development Programme
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF)



To: Mr. Kenneth King
Assistant Chief Executive Officer
GEF Secretariat

Date: 29 May 1998

Mr. Lars Vidaeus, Chief
Global Environment Div.
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Pages: (14 including this sheet)

From: Rafael Asenjo
Executive Coordinator

Subject: PDF A Medium-Sized Grants - Georgia: Arid and Semi-Arid Eco-System Conservation in the Caucasus; UZBEKISTAN: Establishment of Nuratau-Kyzylkum Biosphere Reserve as Model for Biodiversity Conservation in Uzbekistan

Please find attached for your review two Medium-Sized Grants PDF Block A requests entitled "GEORGIA: Arid and Semi-Arid Eco-System Conservation in the Caucasus, UZBEKISTAN: Establishment of Nuratau-Kyzylkum Biosphere Reserve as Model for Biodiversity Conservation in Uzbekistan".

We would appreciate receiving your comments no later than c.o.b. Friday 5 June 1998.

Thank you.

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PART I. ELIGIBILITY	
1. Project Name: Establishment of Nuratau-Kyzylkum Biosphere Reserve as Model for Biodiversity Conservation in Uzbekistan	2. GEF Implementing Agency: UNDP
3. Country or countries in which project is being implemented: Republic of Uzbekistan	4. Country eligibility: Ratified Convention on Biological Diversity on July 19, 1995.
5. GEF focal area(s): Biodiversity	6. Operational programs/Short-term measure: <u>Operational programme:</u> Arid and semi-arid ecosystem, forest ecosystems, mountain ecosystems
7. Project linkage to national priorities, action plans and programs: The project exactly meets the aims of the National Biodiversity Action Plan for protected areas redevelopment and will be important in practically testing approaches and models for development of protected areas in other parts of the country/the region. A protocol concerning cooperation in the establishment of biosphere reserves in Uzbekistan has been signed between Uzbekistan authorities concerned and the project proposer.	
8. Status of national operational focal point review (dates): Submitted: 02.03.98 Acknowledged: 05.03.98 Endorsed: 24.03.98	
9. Project rationale and objectives: The Nuratau Mountains range and the adjacent Kyzylkum Desert is an area of key national and international biodiversity value incorporating high mountain, foothills and desert ecosystems uninterrupted by any intensively used land. The flora of Central Asia is considered to be globally 'hotspot' being the place of origin of some of the largest plant families and genera of the Eurasian continent, including numerous species of cultivated plants. The flora of the Nuratau area, because of its diverse landscape and bio-geographical location on the border between the Pamir-Alai System and the Kyzylkum Desert, is especially interesting. Its flora has over 900 species (28 endemic), including wild varieties of utilized species such as walnut. Its fauna, which is composed of species from both the Central Asian Mountains (Afghan-Turkmenian Province) and the continental deserts (Turan Province) includes over 250 birds, 30 reptiles, and 35 mammal species, is also of significant global biodiversity value. For example the Nuratau Nature Reserve includes 95% of the world's population of the Kyzylkum (Severtsov) Sheep, which is a globally endangered species. In addition, initial research has revealed a number of palaearctic, endemic and Central Asia invertebrate species some of which are rare or endangered. In summary, the unique bio-geographical peculiarities and the presence of numerous endangered species make the area one of undoubted global biodiversity value. The Nuratau Mountains, though utilized for centuries by local populations, have been fortunate in avoiding the full impacts that decades of misguided agricultural development have had on other parts of Uzbekistan. Human influence in the area ranges from - ancient and elaborate irrigated systems in some deep valley areas where fruit trees were originally cultivated, to - low intensity livestock herding. The Strict Nature Reserve and some other locations retain their original state. Thus the area as a whole is made up of a diverse mosaic of natural and semi-natural ecosystems and landscapes which reflects both the natural biodiversity of the area and the historic relationship between humans and their environment. However, in recent years the area has come under increasing threat from over intensive use and a break down of effective protection or management. The main underlying causes of this are the declining economic conditions for rural people in the area, which are now exacerbated by the general difficulties experienced by the country during its political and economic transition following the breakup of the FSU. As a result the Nuratau Nature Reserve is suffering from a severe lack of funds, including wages for staff and from increased illegal activity (encroachment by local herders and hunting). There is currently little prospect for development in the area and thus local people have limited livelihood choices which is causing over intensification of traditional livelihood practices, particularly sheep breeding. This is leading to overgrazing, erosion, desertification and increasing water shortages. While part of the population has begun moving into urban centers, pressure on the intact areas of the Nuratau mountains, such as the reserve, is mounting. Thus, in the short to medium term there is a significant and growing pressure on the area which threatens to have a very negative effect on the natural balance of the mountain range and thereby its biodiversity, quality of life for people and the sustainability of local livelihoods.	

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Project Strategy and Components The project intends to create the basis for the conservation of the area's globally important biodiversity and the long term sustainable development of the area, through the establishment of an integrated conservation and local development programme, based on local traditions and capacities. It is intended to act as a model and a 'test case' for new approaches to conserve biodiversity in Uzbekistan and the region as a whole. The Project will include, under the umbrella of a biosphere reserve, both the reform of the reserve management itself and also the establishment of sustainable land-use regimes and local economic structures in the wider area around the reserve. This will improve the protection of biodiversity in and around the reserve by reducing overall land use pressures and provide a basis for the sustainable livelihoods of the local population. The main components of the project will be: initial assessment and planning (both biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods components); preparation for the legal, managerial and infra structural basis for establishing the Biosphere Reserve; establishment of Biosphere Reserve and implementation of initial pilot activities; and finally, the preparation of a long term management plan for the Biosphere Reserve on the basis of experience from the pilot period.

A critical aspect of the project will be the full involvement of local authorities and rural populations to ensure support and understanding of its objectives and a stake in its outcome. This approach will also help ensure that local peoples knowledge and experience is utilized. The project will therefore place strong emphasis on achieving maximum local participation. In addition, during the early stages of project implementation, when no tangible benefits for local people are likely, specific short term support in the form of small scale grants for the most vulnerable or effected people are envisaged.

Incremental Cost: The total costs of the project is tentatively estimated at USD\$ 750,000, of which USD 700,000 is sort from GEF. GEF financing is limited to the incremental costs of the proposed project, i.e. those costs which go beyond baseline costs of similar activities designed for purely national purposes. Although the government is committed to biodiversity conservation the current economic circumstances mean that the budget allocations will be insufficient to meet the levels required to address anything but the most immediate short term needs. This would not provide sufficient protection to realize global environmental benefits. In addition, project costs related to addressing purely national concerns such as poverty alleviation will be funded from the co-financing component of the budget.

10. Expected outcomes:

- Maintain and increase biodiversity through improved management and reduction of hunting and livestock pressure
- Stop and reverse deforestation and desertification through appropriate land use.
- Protect mountain ecosystems through restriction of unsustainable types of development.
- Remedy poverty through providing investment opportunities, general development incentives and improved education.
- Reduce ethnic conflict potential through equal participation processes.
- Provide a "tried and tested" model for similar biodiversity conservation efforts and sustainable rural development, both nationally and regionally

Specific expected outcomes are:

- establishment of Biosphere Reserve
- production of detailed initial 'pilot period' management plan (including biodiversity conservation and sustainable land use / appropriate livelihoods development)
- creation of Biosphere Reserve administrative structures and purchase of required equipment
- creation of education and training facilities
- establishment of the capacity of the Biosphere Reserve administration to managed the integrated development of conservation and sustainable land use/local (small scale) economic initiatives and establish its position as focal point in this respect.
- completion of pilot period of Biosphere Reserve development and management.
- assessment report of pilot period (activities and approaches tried and tested and recommendations for future planning and development of the Biosphere Reserve)
- production of long term management plan

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11. Planned activities to achieve outcomes:

- carry out preparation of all documents for establishing the Nuratau-Kyzylkum Biosphere Reserve, including, inter alia, basic inventory and survey reports, boundary demarcation, zoning plan and legal/administrative documents.
- carry out, using a participatory approach, preparation of an initial 'pilot period' management plan for integrating biodiversity conservation and sustainable economic development.
- establishment of Biosphere Reserve by government / UNESCO
- creation of a functioning administration for the administration of the Biosphere Reserve and the implementation of the management plan by setting up of an office in a suitable building in the Jangikishlak, purchase of required equipment, recruitment and training of personnel
- implement small grants fund for meeting immediate needs of local communities in line with the project objectives.
- implement specific project sub-components designed to meet objectives of different Biosphere Reserve zones
- set up an effective monitoring system for assessing effectiveness of project activities
- after completion of "pilot period" carry out preparation of an assessment report and recommendations.
- prepare long term management plan based on above assessment.
- identify and document additional activities and investment in the area (both within project area and around it) that may contribute to its biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.
- seek support from donors and interested organizations for additional activities and investments identified above.

12. Stakeholders involved in project:

Local - General population of Nuratau area, land users, state and private businesses, protected areas administration, district administration, teachers, NGO's, representatives of traditional bodies and structures.
National - State Committee for Forestry, State Committee for Nature Protection, Uzbek Academy of Science, Uzbek Man and Biosphere Committee (UNESCO); other government agencies responsible for economic and agricultural development, infrastructure, conservation and education; environmental and social NGO's.
International - NAHU, UNDP, and other conservation and sustainable use development organizations/donors.

PART II. INFORMATION ON BLOCK A PDF ACTIVITIES

13. Activities to be financed by the PDF:

Step 1:

- Compile and revise all existing data on the current ecological, economic, social and legal situation in the project area and identify gaps for further research / clarification required for preparation of Project Brief / Project Document
- Carry out required additional research and survey work
- Prepare summary report in English, Russian, Uzbek and Tadjik language. Report will include relevant : ecological, land use and administrative system description and mapping; an assessment of socio-economic situation, an assessment of national / local legal framework; identification of critical threats to biodiversity and linkage to socio-economic and land use situation.

Step 2 - On basis of this work:

- Provisional identification of options / mechanisms to address threats to biodiversity in the target area
- Identify partners and experts for the project
- Identify stakeholders
- Identify and develop a participatory process and mechanism for fully involving stakeholders, especially the local residents.

Step 3:

Together with the involved parties, identify specific objectives, options and approaches for project implementation and design using the participatory processes and mechanisms identified previously (individual meetings, workshops and a public hearings etc.).

Step 4:

Prepare Project Brief and Draft Project Document

14. Expected outputs and completion dates:

Development of a project brief for submission to GEF and draft UNDP project document. To be completed by 01.10.1998

15. Other possible contributors/donors and amounts:

NAHU: 2000 US \$, UNDP 2.000 US\$

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16. Total budget and information on how costs will be met (including Block A grant):

29,000 US \$ (GEF 25,000 US \$, NABU 2,000 US \$, UNDP 2,000 US\$)

Compilation / processing of existing data - 7,000 US \$

Additional research and survey work - 5,000 US\$

Preparation of report - 2,000 US\$

Translation / interpretation - 2,000 US \$

Travel - 4,000 US \$

Participatory review of project implementation options and design (hearings, workshop with stakeholders, etc) - 6,000 US \$

Preparation of Project Brief and draft UNDP Project document- 3,000

PART III: INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANT INSTITUTION

17. Name: NABU (Naturschutzbund Deutschland, Federation for Nature Protection of Germany)

18. Date of Establishment, membership, and leadership:
1898; 210,000 members in 14 regional groups and 1,300 local chapters; NA

19. Mandates / terms of reference: German non-profit, non-government organization for nature conservation and sustainable development

20: Source of revenue:
Membership fees and donor contributions

21. Recent activities / programs, in particular those relevant to the GEF:

NABU experts from East Germany have extensive biodiversity experience in Central Asia and have initiated biosphere reserve and national park programmes in GOR (1990), Georgia (1991), Mongolia (1992), Kyrgyzstan (1993) and Kazakhstan (1996). NABU has been working in Central Asia on a programme for biosphere reserves since 1993 and organized a visit of the Chairman of the State Committee for Forestry of Uzbekistan to Germany in 1996 in order to provide information about existing biosphere reserves in Germany. NABU experts have regularly visited the Nuratau project site and have carried out interdisciplinary scientific research since 1993. As a result of NABU's support four small business projects in the project area have been initiated with German Embassy grants. A protocol concerning cooperation in the establishment of biosphere reserves in Uzbekistan has been signed between Uzbekistan authorities concerned and the project proposer.

PART IV: INFORMATION TO BE COMPLETED BY IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

22: Project identification number:

23. Implementing Agency contact person:

UNDP New York - Mr David Vousden (UNDP GEF Coordinator for Europe and CIS)

UNDP Uzbekistan Field Office: Mr. S. Gasanov (SDA) / M. Anstey (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Project)

24. Project linkage to Implementing Agency Program:

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Project, National Sustainable Development Commission Project

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24.03.98 No 06-10/02-43

**To : Mr. Peter Simkin
UNDP Officer-in-Charge
Tashkent**

**From: Ms Tatyana Ososkova
GEF Operational Focal Point in Uzbekistan**

**Subject : Endorsement of GEF Medium Size Project Concept Paper – Nuratau –
Kyzylkum Biosphere Reserve.**

Dear Mr. Simkin,

I wish to inform you that, in my position as official Operational Focal Point for the Global Environmental Facility in Uzbekistan, I would like to fully endorse the submission of the above mentioned Medium Size Project Concept Paper for GEF.

Yours sincerely,


Tatyana Ososkova

Date sent: Thu, 16 Apr 1998 16:18:50 -0400
From: Christian Mittag <100541.403@compuserve.com>
Subject: PDF A "ready for take off"
To: Mark Anstey <laura@fouzb.undp.org>

Dear Mr. Anstey,

after explaining the Situation to our President, we decided, that we will not have to involve the board now and that we can go ahead with the PDF A application without another board decision. This saves us at least a week, which is important, since Stefan Michel will be in Usbekistan soon and should start working on the preparations as soon as possible.

In view of the additional funds that will have to be raised, I would suggest however, that we stretch the time schedule a little and plan to complete the PDF activities Oktober 1st. Everything else looks o.k. to us. Thank you again for preparing it. Could you forward it to NY (since I only have a fax copy)? Or do would we better include a letter by NABU?

Best regards

Christian Mittag