

Developing Capacity Conserving Biodiversity Sustaining Livelihoods



United Nations
Development
Programme



Global
Environment
Facility

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United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.

World leaders have pledged to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, including the overarching goal of cutting poverty in half by 2015. UNDP's network links and coordinates global and national efforts to reach these Goals. Our focus is helping countries build and share solutions to the challenges of:

- Democratic Governance
- Poverty Reduction
- Crisis Prevention and Recovery
- Energy and Environment
- Information and Communications Technology
- HIV/AIDS

UNDP helps developing countries attract and use aid effectively. In all our activities, we encourage the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women.

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established to forge international cooperation and finance actions to address four critical threats to the global environment: biodiversity loss, climate change, degradation of international waters and ozone depletion. Launched in 1991 as an experimental facility, the GEF was restructured after the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The facility that emerged after restructuring was more strategic, effective, transparent and participatory. During its first decade, GEF allocated US\$4.5 billion in grants, supplemented by more than \$14.5 billion in additional financing, for more than 1,300 projects in 140 developing countries and transitional economies, as well as more than 5,000 projects in 73 countries that participate in the GEF Small Grants Programme, managed by UNDP. In 2002,

donors pledged \$3 billion to finance projects from 2002 to 2006.

In addition to its original mandate, the May 2003 GEF Council approved two new focal areas. The GEF now provides financial assistance for the mitigation and prevention of land degradation and persistent organic pollutants. GEF-funded projects are implemented through the following development agencies: UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank. The GEF also benefits from having the following executing agencies: African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Food and Agricultural Organization, Inter-American Development Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

The UNDP-GEF Team

The Global Environment Facility team of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP-GEF) is headquartered in New York. UNDP-GEF has six regional coordination units located in Malaysia, Slovakia, Lebanon, Mexico, Senegal and South Africa. Working with other international organizations, bilateral development agencies, national institutions, non-governmental organizations, private sector entities and academic institutions, the UNDP-GEF team supports the development of projects and oversees a mature portfolio of projects in all six GEF focal areas of biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, persistent organic pollutants and ozone depleting substance phase-out (the latter minimally). The cumulative UNDP-GEF portfolio is valued at \$1.8 billion in core grants, with approximately \$3 billion raised in additional co-financing. On behalf of the GEF partnership, UNDP-GEF also manages its two corporate programmes, the GEF Small Grants Programme and the GEF National Dialogue Initiative.

Developing Capacity, Conserving Biodiversity, Sustaining Livelihoods

From the wind-swept peaks of the world's highest mountains to the underwater canyons and reefs of the Caribbean and South Pacific, communities are working with their national government, non-governmental organizations and businesses to protect not only own livelihoods, but also the unique collection of ecosystems on which these livelihoods depend. Helping countries strengthen the management of natural resources is critical to supporting sustainable development and ensuring the protection of global biodiversity. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) have been working together to help support these efforts and share the lessons they provide with countries around the world.

This UNDP-GEF partnership is guided by the Convention on Biological Diversity. The convention, signed at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, calls for the “conservation, sustainable use, and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources”. From a modest beginning following the Rio Earth Summit, the UNDP-GEF partnership to protect global biodiversity has expanded to more than 200 projects covering more than 100 countries. Of the \$1.6 billion invested in UNDP's GEF portfolio, nearly \$1 billion comes from UNDP partners at the community, national, and international level.

UNDP-GEF assists countries in achieving the objectives of the convention in several ways, but primarily by helping countries strengthen their own technical, financial, legal, management and organizational abilities, a process often referred to as ‘capacity development’. Recipients include a broad swath of society, from small non-governmental organizations and indigenous groups to private sector entrepreneurs and national government agencies.

In biodiversity conservation, UNDP-GEF's focus is guided by a series of strategic priorities which foster partnerships among local and national governments, indigenous communities, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. These priorities consist of:

- Ensuring the sustainability of protected areas;
- Mainstreaming biodiversity into production sectors and landscapes;
- Building capacity for biosafety;
- Generating, disseminating and adopting best practices in biodiversity.

The following sections highlight various manifestations of activities in these areas.

Why protect biological diversity?

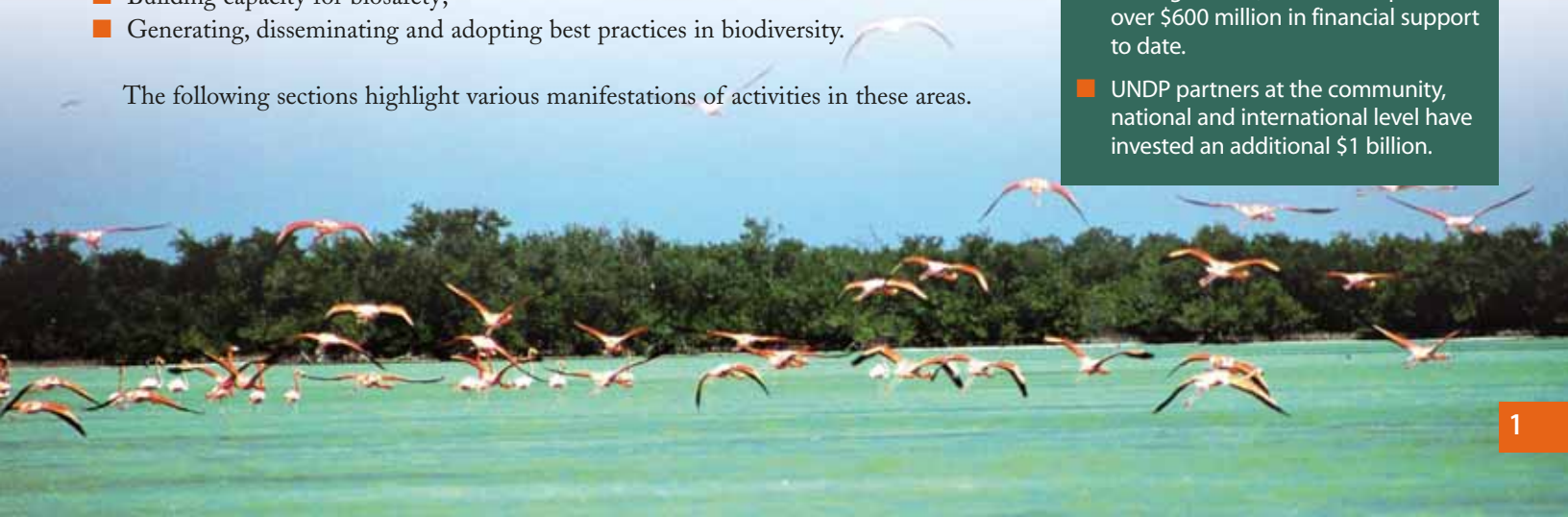
The phrase “biological diversity” refers not just to the multitude of plant and animal species on Earth, but the environments – or ecosystems – in which they live. Tropical rainforests, for example, are more than a home to millions of individual species. As a functioning ecosystem, these forests, through a daily cycle of respiration, help produce the very rainfall we associate with them. As a result, they regulate regional and global climate on a scale that humans could never re-create.

Services drawn from ecosystems – water filtration, crop pollination, nutrient cycling, soil formation and flood control, among others – make a critical contribution towards humanity's well-being. In fact, nearly everything we ultimately depend on for survival is linked to the health of global ecosystems.

Today, the biggest threat to Earth's biological diversity, or biodiversity, comes from the fragmentation and degradation of ecosystems – the unfettered destruction of forests, draining of wetlands, pollution of waters and erosion of fragile desert areas. Short-term development schemes often leave long-lasting scars on the landscape and its ability to provide the services on which people depend.

The UNDP-GEF biodiversity portfolio

- Biodiversity conservation activities are taking place in more than 100 countries.
- Through UNDP, the GEF has provided over \$600 million in financial support to date.
- UNDP partners at the community, national and international level have invested an additional \$1 billion.



Getting started with the Convention on Biological Diversity

One of the first responsibilities of countries that sign the Convention on Biological Diversity is to prepare a national biodiversity strategy and action plan. This process includes an assessment of the status of biodiversity within the country, on-going and future threats, and opportunities for conservation and sustainable use.

Countries use the process to highlight priorities for government action, including policy changes and on-the-ground activities to ensure conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Priorities are developed through a broad consultative process that usually includes government representatives, academic institutions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local communities and indigenous groups.

Once prepared, these plans are endorsed at the highest levels of government. Progress on achieving the goals of the plans is then reported to the convention every two years.

More information on national biodiversity strategy and action plans, including the texts of completed plans, is available at: <http://www.biodiv.org>.

To date, through UNDP-GEF, close to \$32 million in funding for small-scale projects has been extended to more than 85 countries – this represents 115 initiatives.

Working with Countries to Develop Capacity

The fundamental work of UNDP-GEF is helping countries to develop their own capacity to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity. Projects can result in broad environmental and policy impacts or assist countries to initiate their activities in support of biodiversity. In the early stages of addressing biodiversity problems, UNDP-GEF plays a key role by providing small-scale funding support for countries to prepare their national biodiversity strategy and action plans. Many times, this assistance has also helped countries establish electronic databases and information exchange systems on biodiversity. These national mechanisms are then linked to a common global database supported by the Convention on Biological Diversity.

As countries move beyond preparation of their national biodiversity strategy and action plans and the establishment of database systems, small-scale projects are being used to assess the capacity development needs for countries in carrying out priority actions under the convention – including actions that UNDP-GEF helps support.

Yet the most significant contributions to global biodiversity come from UNDP-GEF's larger scale project activities. By strengthening national and local institutions, as well as communities and businesses, project work can lead to the development of appropriate policies and regulations, encourage participation and consensus, and develop new partnerships. Raising awareness, passing on lessons, and training and coaching are all essential ingredients. Often simply connecting people with others who have already addressed, or are addressing, similar problems generates new ideas and solutions and empowers people to solve their own problems. The goal in all initiatives is the same: to ensure that all parties have the knowledge and abilities to resolve the biodiversity problems being faced.

In Pakistan, for example, the *Mountain Areas Conservancy* project helped establish and strengthen village and valley-level conservation committees in 65 of 70 valleys and set up the Valley Conservation Fund and Mountain Areas Conservancy Fund as financing mechanisms. It also helped develop the official policy that empowered these committees to take responsibility for sustainable management of their own forests and wildlife. The objective

of the UNDP-GEF project was to help protect the rich biological heritage of the Karakorum, Hindu Kush and Western Himalayan Mountain ranges.

The *Community-Based Rangeland Rehabilitation* project in **Sudan** undertook a similar effort in providing leaders of rural councils with intensive training on environmental awareness. Following that, the project supported requests from council authorities for assistance in drafting a decree to stop the inefficient expansion of agricultural fields. In addition, the project supported the planting of native trees and grasses, an effort that led to increased soil cover, reduced erosion, and more productive rangelands.

In **Sri Lanka's** *Wildlife Conservation and Protected Area Management* project, this has meant the training of more than 475 resource professionals – 90 per cent of the Department of Wildlife Conservation's rangers, guards, and park staff – who are now better prepared to manage protected areas and interact positively with local populations whose communities surround them. Prior to this UNDP-GEF initiative, most staff in the department had received no professional training whatsoever.

Helping countries help themselves

Developing capacities can take many forms, but many of the longest lasting and most far reaching benefits for countries are observed in changes in policy:

- In **Bhutan**, the *Integrated Management of Jigme Dorji National Park* project led to the implementation of the country's first environmental impact assessment. A more widespread use of this key development tool in the future is now foreseen.
- **Yemen's** *Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Biodiversity of the Socotra Archipelago* project is widely seen as having raised national awareness on the importance of coral reef habitats and encouraged the Yemeni government to sign the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES). The project carried out the biodiversity research that provided the basis for designing a comprehensive conservation zoning plan for the islands, which was ratified by the government. Another result was the articulation of a general development model for the islands based on sustainable fisheries and ecotourism.
- The **Belize** *Coastal Zone Management* project helped develop a coastal zone management agency which now guides and monitors the management of coastal resources, including globally important coral reef ecosystems.
- **Ethiopia's** *Plant Genetics* project has inspired the announcement of a national policy on biodiversity conservation and research. The project also contributed to preparation of the new draft agricultural policy, specifically on the utilization of farmer varieties in marginal areas.

Supporting biodiversity planning

In addition to providing financial support to countries to help with the preparation of a national biodiversity strategy and action plan, UNDP-GEF has also assisted countries in developing the capacity to prepare these plans through the Biodiversity Planning Support Programme.

Beginning in 1999, the programme:

- Developed a decentralized network for the exchange of information, techniques, methodology and experience among 160 countries, including more than 130 that were receiving GEF funding.
- Built a community of over 2,000 national biodiversity planners through its network of web sites, listservs and e-mail discussion groups.
- Organized and sponsored more than a dozen sub-regional workshops to facilitate an exchange of experience and expertise among more than 300 planners from over 60 countries.
- Fostered the creation of regional newsletters, technical analyses, maintenance of expert rosters, bibliographic databases, and easy-to-understand translations of key documents into local languages.

A number of these accomplishments continue to benefit the biodiversity community. The biodiversity list-serv known as 'Bioplan', for instance, is still active at the global level. To register, or for more information, send a message to bioplan@groups.undp.org.



Total financing: \$11.43 million

More information on this project is available at:
http://www.birdlife.net/action/capacity/african_psba/

Overall, the project has been responsible for significant increases in the availability of information on birds and other biodiversity. At least 19 Important Bird Areas have attained increased legal protection status as a direct result of the project. Monitoring programmes are under way in all ten project countries and, for the first time, many now have site action plans. The success of the partnerships and the capacity development it has provided has led several governments to invite NGO members to join their delegations at negotiations of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Most importantly, however, the local community groups and the national NGOs are now able to continue effective local biodiversity conservation action on their own, and even to increase the scale of their work. It is these lasting impacts of the support provided through the project which will endure and keep biodiversity conservation going long into the future, long after the project itself has been forgotten.



Promoting and Ensuring the Sustainability of Protected Areas

For decades, protected areas – forest and biosphere reserves, parks, and conservation zones – have been a cornerstone of conservation. Internationally, more than 17 million square kilometres, or 11.5 per cent of the earth's land surface, is under protected status, an area greater than the combined landmass of China, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. In countries like Zambia, the total area of land under protected status is as high as 31 per cent.

While the concept behind protected areas has evolved – no longer limited to fenced-in, guarded landscapes – they remain a primary means of protecting biodiversity and supporting sustainable use of natural resources. With more than a decade of experience behind it, UNDP-GEF is now focusing on the sustainability of protected area systems, rather than the more traditional park-by-park approach. The goal is to support efforts that foster long-term capacity development within institutions and governments, thereby increasing the likelihood of long-term success.

The Russian Federation's remote Kamchatka Peninsula, for example, is one of the largest remaining landscapes in the world offering an opportunity to conserve globally significant biodiversity. The region is home to four protected areas in which UNDP-GEF is currently active.

An assessment of these parks undertaken in 2000 painted a grim future. Organized poaching, uncontrolled access and unmanaged use of the protected areas were expected to place unsustainable demands on them in the years to come. Exacerbating these threats was the fact that local communities were not being effectively enlisted in the protection of their resources, leaving them few alternatives to unsustainable fishing, hunting and fur trapping.

Begun in early 2002, the *Demonstrating Sustainable Conservation of the Biological Diversity in Four Protected Areas in Russia's Kamchatka Oblast* project identified a series of policies, legislation, and regulations needed to improve the park's prospects. As a first step, a law on tourism activities in Kamchatka has been enforced; a second draft law related to protected areas of Kamchatka has been sent to the Russian Cabinet for review. Efforts to strengthen the administrative and management skills of park staff are under way. Local communities are being supported in their efforts to develop alternative livelihoods, in part through the creation of a Kamchatka Conservation Trust Fund and the distribution of funds for small and medium-size businesses such as herbal tea collection, drying and marketing, reindeer breeding and carpentry.

Conserving and promoting protected areas

The efforts of UNDP-GEF to assist countries in establishing new protected areas and improving the management of existing ones are wide-ranging. A representative sample of projects involving protected areas illustrates the effectiveness of this aspect of work – across all regions of the world – in support of biodiversity conservation.

- It is anticipated that current projects with protected areas components are expanding protected areas globally by nearly *2 million hectares*. Furthermore, approximately *6 million hectares* of protected areas are benefiting from improved management.
- For the newest biodiversity projects alone, the total surface area of protected areas covered will be over *22.8 million hectares* more – twenty-nine projects covering lands in 29 different countries.

Overall, these projects embrace the range of ecoregions, such as tropical and subtropical forests, grasslands, deserts, savannahs and shrublands.

In focus: Conserving biodiversity in the Kamchatka oblast

Country: Russian Federation

Executing agency: Ministry of Natural Resources

Co-financing partners: Kamchatka Oblast Administration, Government of the Russian Federation, non-governmental organizations, bilateral donors

GEF financing: \$2.33 million

Co-financing: \$4.04 million

Total financing: \$6.37 million

The Kamchatka Peninsula is home to more than 1,168 species of plants (10 per cent endemic), large populations of brown bear and Stellar's sea eagle, some of the greatest diversity of salmon, trout and char.

Project profile

Country: Sudan

Executing agency: Ministry of International Co-operation and Investment

Co-financing partners: UNDP, FAO, Government of Sudan

GEF financing: \$0.75 million

Co-financing: \$1.18 million

Total financing: \$1.93 million

Protecting national parks

In Viet Nam, the organizational and management skills of the country's Forest Protection Department has been strengthened to help benefit Yok Don and Ba Be National Parks and the Na Hang Nature Reserve. Yok Don is the only national park in Viet Nam protecting the country's dry deciduous forests; Ba Be hosts the country's largest natural freshwater mountain lake along with several types of rare mammals; and Na Hang has the globally endangered Tonkin snub-nosed monkey, which prior to 1992 scientists believed had gone extinct.

In addition to working with government agencies, UNDP-GEF's \$2 million project is giving local communities around all three areas a greater stake and a stronger voice in managing their region's natural resources. For the first time, village management boards established by the project have created a forum for local people to participate in resource use planning activities. This is critical for long-term success because of the project's emphasis on addressing the often-competing needs of economic development and resource conservation across the entire landscape.

Another good example of a community-based project is unfolding in **Sudan's** Dinder National Park, where a relatively modest amount of financing (\$750,000) has been invested to improve park management, better define the park's boundaries, undertake inventories of the park's resources and strengthen the capacity of park rangers and managers.

The results of efforts through the *Conservation and Management of Habitats and Species, and Sustainable Community-Use of Biodiversity in Dinder National Park* project have been increased – and more effective – patrolling inside the park and improving relations with surrounding communities. In addition, the populations of key species within the park, including reedbuck, tiang, oribi and the red-fronted gazelle, have stabilized or increased. Partly because of these positive changes, Sudan is in the process of accession to the *Ramsar Convention on Wetlands* and will nominate Dinder National Park as its first Ramsar site, an internationally recognized standard for globally important wetlands.

As the Kamchatka and Sudan projects illustrate, the UNDP-GEF approach towards strengthening the sustainability of protected areas operates on a broad front. The specific types of activities envisioned for protected area support include:

- Assisting in the development of appropriate policies and legislation governing protected areas, as in the Kamchatka project;
- Building and improving the planning for protected area management and the effectiveness of that management, an underlying principle of UNDP-GEF's approach in Sudan's Dinder National Park;
- Building and strengthening the capacity for protected area management at an individual and institutional level (see Viet Nam box, left, and Cuba, below);
- Demonstrating, implementing and introducing innovative financial mechanisms (see Suriname below);
- Promoting the active involvement of indigenous and community groups in protected areas management.

A clear example of this final point can be seen in the islands of the **Comoros**. There, a \$2.3 million UNDP-GEF investment has collaborated with 10 village communities to establish the Mohéli Marine Park, a goal the villagers had been working towards since 1995. As a result of the dedication of community residents and the collaborative Park Management Committee, Mohéli has now seen a doubling of revenues for local fisher folk, protection of 45 green turtle breeding beaches, and a halt to destructive reef fishing practices.

On the other side of the globe, four globally significant types of forests and wetlands within **Cuba's** protected areas system are benefiting from a \$2 million UNDP-GEF investment focused on strengthening the capacity of protected area managers and government institutions. There, park staff have received training in protected areas management, the use of Global Positioning System technology and financial management. As a result, 233,000 hectares of critical land are on a more secure footing, including 71,000 hectares in Alexander von Humboldt National Park, which has some of the world's highest levels of endemism – species found nowhere else in the world.

Empowering the people: Indigenous and private reserves in Colombia's Macizo

In the Macizo region of **Colombia**, UNDP-GEF has been assisting the Ministry of Environment to establish new and innovative partnerships between the indigenous communities inhabiting the Macizo and public and private entities. Each of these groups had jurisdiction over natural resources in the area. But through the development of a set of instruments, techniques for community conservation and other resources, the *Conservation of Montane Forest and Paramo in the Colombian Massif* project accelerated implementation of the newly approved "Social Participation in Conservation Policy". This led to improved management in more than 375,000 hectares of reserves, carried out by seven different indigenous groups – the *Paeces, Yanaconas, Guambianos, Koconucos, Totoroes, Inganos*, and *Kamtza* peoples. In addition, the number of privately owned reserves in the area increased from 16 to 92. Along with more than 27 different agreements, the result is that the separate 'indigenous communal reserves' and private reserves have been integrated into a common regional protected area system protecting six globally outstanding ecoregions. These help to connect geographically the 4 national parks of the Andean Biosphere Reserve, reducing the risk of genetic erosion and species loss. Success is owed in large measure to conferring the authority to make decisions and responsibilities for conservation management on all affected local groups – literally giving power to the people of the region.

The power of financial innovation: Suriname

The vast forests of Suriname include some of the largest relatively untouched patches of remaining Amazonian rainforest in all of South America. Suriname's efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of two key protected areas within this region – the Central Suriname Nature Reserve and the Sipaliwini Nature Reserve – received a significant boost with the creation, endowment and support of the Suriname Conservation Foundation.

The Central Suriname Nature Reserve alone covers 1.6 million hectares, the headwaters of several major rivers, and is home to a tremendous variety of wildlife, including jaguars, giant armadillos, eight species of primates, and some 400 bird species. In 2000, the reserve was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

With a \$7.9 million endowment from the UNDP-GEF *Conservation of Globally Significant Forest Ecosystems in Suriname's Guyana Shield Bio-region* project, the Suriname Conservation Foundation will have a reliable source of financing for the conservation of these two biodiversity-rich reserves in the Guyana Shield bio-region. The creation of a foundation to help administer conservation trust funds is an innovative approach that UNDP-GEF helped pioneer.

An additional \$1.3 million from UNDP-GEF will support capacity building at the Foundation, including training in financial management, the design of management plans and policy work. Other partners, who are providing \$8.8 million in funding for the trust fund and Foundation operations, include the Government of the Netherlands, the United Nations Foundation, WWF and Conservation International.

Project profile

Country: Colombia

Executing agency: Ministry of Environment

Co-financing partners: Inter-American Development Bank, National Royalties Fund, Netherlands, National Reconstruction and Peace Fund, Upper Magdalena Regional Environmental Authority, other donors

GEF financing: \$4.0 million

Co-financing: \$13.466 million

Total financing: \$17.466 million

Newly forged private, public and indigenous alliances in the Colombian Massif have increased coverage of the four national parks included in the project from 40 to 90 per cent – an addition of 222,000 hectares under management frameworks.

The number of privately owned reserves in the area increased from 16 to 92.



Incorporating Biodiversity Concerns into Diverse Sectors

Moving beyond parks

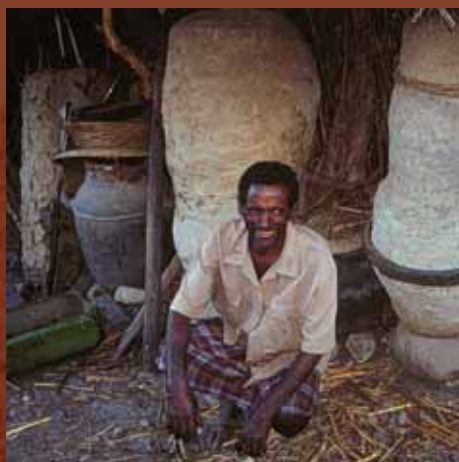
Targeting relatively small areas that are rich in biodiversity can work in certain situations, but with nearly 90 per cent of the earth's surface lacking any form of protection at all, other strategies have to be deployed to conserve biodiversity. These landscapes – which may encompass a mosaic of productive uses and which surround and include both rural and urban environments – provide a vastly different set of challenges to the conservation and development community.

In recent years, UNDP-GEF projects have increasingly focused on incorporating biodiversity concerns into economic development activities, legal and policy reforms, and productive sectors and landscapes such as agriculture and forestry. While this three-tiered approach can allow countries to prevent or slow biodiversity loss before it happens, it also requires working with a broader set of people, institutions and industries than traditional protected area projects.

At a national level, this can mean engaging ministries of agriculture, fisheries, tourism, water, mining and others who oversee activities that can profoundly impact biodiversity. Often, the development of a UNDP-GEF project is the first time some of these ministries have ever interacted to jointly consider the impacts of their activities on biodiversity. Working to enhance sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity within the economy has the potential to generate additional benefits, such as improved governance and decentralization, job creation and poverty alleviation.

In Ethiopia, for example, the *Dynamic Farmer-Based Approach to the Conservation of Ethiopia's Plant Genetic Resources* project has fostered a unique partnership between local farmers, extension agents, scientific institutions, and government departments to conserve 316 varieties of 22 different crops on farms. The project has developed the capacity of local farmer associations and established twelve community gene banks, with farmer conservators trained and organized to lead the banks. More than 3,000 members of community conservation association members were also trained to manage the banks. At the same time, the project developed market incentives for maintaining genetic diversity. This includes a pioneering and effective programme for reimbursing farmers for conserving different varieties, or landraces, of the same crop species.

In Mongolia, where the economy is heavily dependent on pastoral activities, a \$10.1 million project (including \$2.7 million from UNDP-GEF) is under way to help strengthen decentralized governance, support the formation of 'herder community' groups, and promote sustainable use of the Altai-Sayan ecoregion, home to the endangered snow leopard and argali sheep.



Protecting agro-biodiversity in **Peru** is a particular challenge. Thanks to their extraordinary geography, the Peruvian Andes are a global centre of genetic crop diversity. Peru has more than 4,500 native plant species, nearly 800 of which are food crops or their relatives. Dinner tables around the world have benefited from this genetic wealth – Andean crops such as potatoes, lima beans, peppers and tomatoes are major portions of the global food market. Many other Peruvian crops, such as *camu-camu* and *maca* have the potential for becoming useful new crops in other parts of the world.

Despite this promising potential, a commercial focus on a handful of crop species threatens the future of this diversity. In many cases, native species exist only in small, isolated ‘islands’ within their native region. As large farming operations continue to expand, and native species are replaced by modern varieties, traditional knowledge about these crops is rapidly being lost.

UNDP-GEF’s \$5 million *In-Situ Cultivation of Cultivars and Wild Relatives* project is focusing on the conservation of 11 native crops species, varieties and wild relatives within six geographic areas of the Peruvian Andes. Project activities include:

- Establishing the required legal, regulatory and institutional requirements for the designation of “Special Management Areas” for agro-biodiversity conservation;
- Improving the conservation of native species and habitats by farmers through the maintenance of traditional and cultural productive practices by using targeted incentives;
- Improving the availability and dissemination of traditional ecological knowledge about native crop species;
- Increasing the demand for native crops and their wild relatives by raising awareness about their ecological, cultural and nutritional value;
- Developing a policy and market incentive framework for agro-biodiversity conservation to incorporate agro-biodiversity into the tourism industry as a culinary and cultural asset;
- Establishing an information and monitoring system for coordinating and planning agro-biodiversity conservation activities.

The project has already had some early success. More than 600 traditional practices linked to the promotion of agro-biodiversity have been identified, recorded and disseminated. Half of the targeted species have seen their populations stabilize since the project began and the project has defined 78,000 hectares of critical habitat for wild crop relatives. Just as importantly, the project has been able to include agro-biodiversity conservation as part of regional planning frameworks so that – for the first time ever – the local government in Cuzco is dedicating special attention and budgetary resources towards the promotion and maintenance of *in situ* conservation oriented agro-ecosystems.

In **Kenya**, the **United Republic of Tanzania**, and **Uganda**, the \$12.5 million UNDP-GEF *Reducing Biodiversity Loss at Cross Border Sites in East Africa* project has fostered policy reforms in the forestry sectors of all three countries that helped bring biodiversity concerns and land management concerns at the local level to the forefront of discussions at the state and national level – in some cases, for the first time ever. Locally, concerns led to putting in place village and district bylaws in support of biodiversity.

Project profile

Country: Peru

Executing agency: IIAP Institute for Research on the Peruvian Amazon

Co-financing partners: Government of Peru, bilateral donor (Italy)

GEF financing: \$5.24 million

Co-financing: \$1.32 million

Total financing: \$6.56 million

Target species

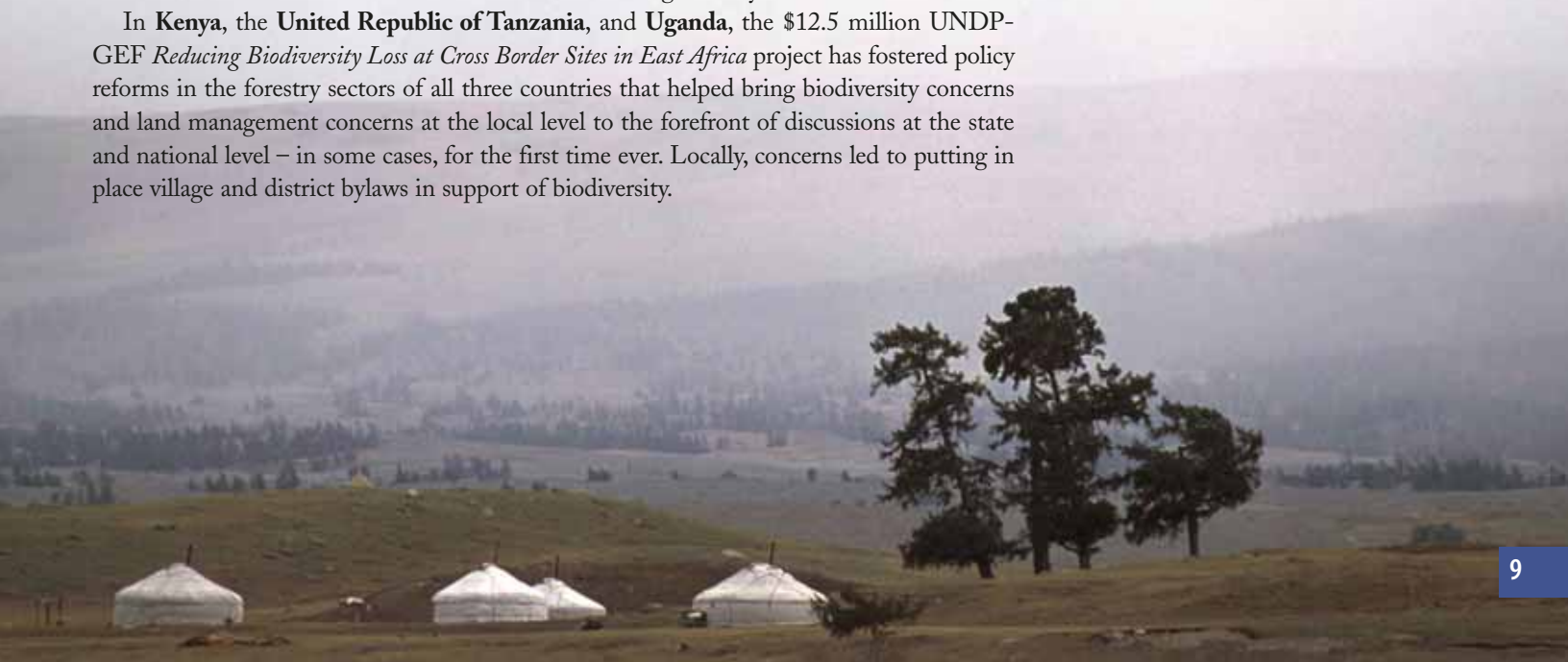
Fruits: Camu-camu, passionfruit

Grains: Canihua, maize, quinoa

Legumes: Bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*)

Roots: Arracacha, maca, manioc, sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*)

Tubers: Wild potato (*Solanum spp.*)



Project profile

Countries: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia

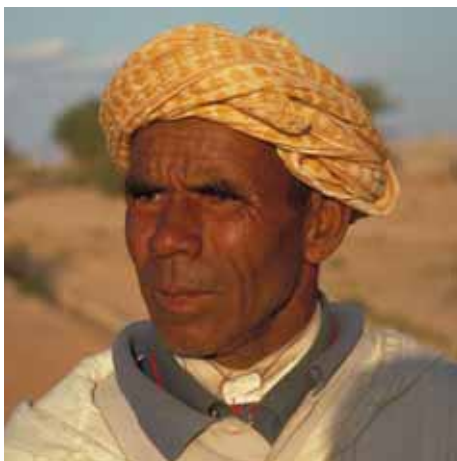
Executing agency: International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI)

Co-financing partners: Ministries of Agriculture: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, UNOPS Denmark Trust Fund, other donors

GEF financing: \$2.78 million

Co-financing: \$1.28 million

Total financing: \$4.06 million



Date palm conservation in North Africa

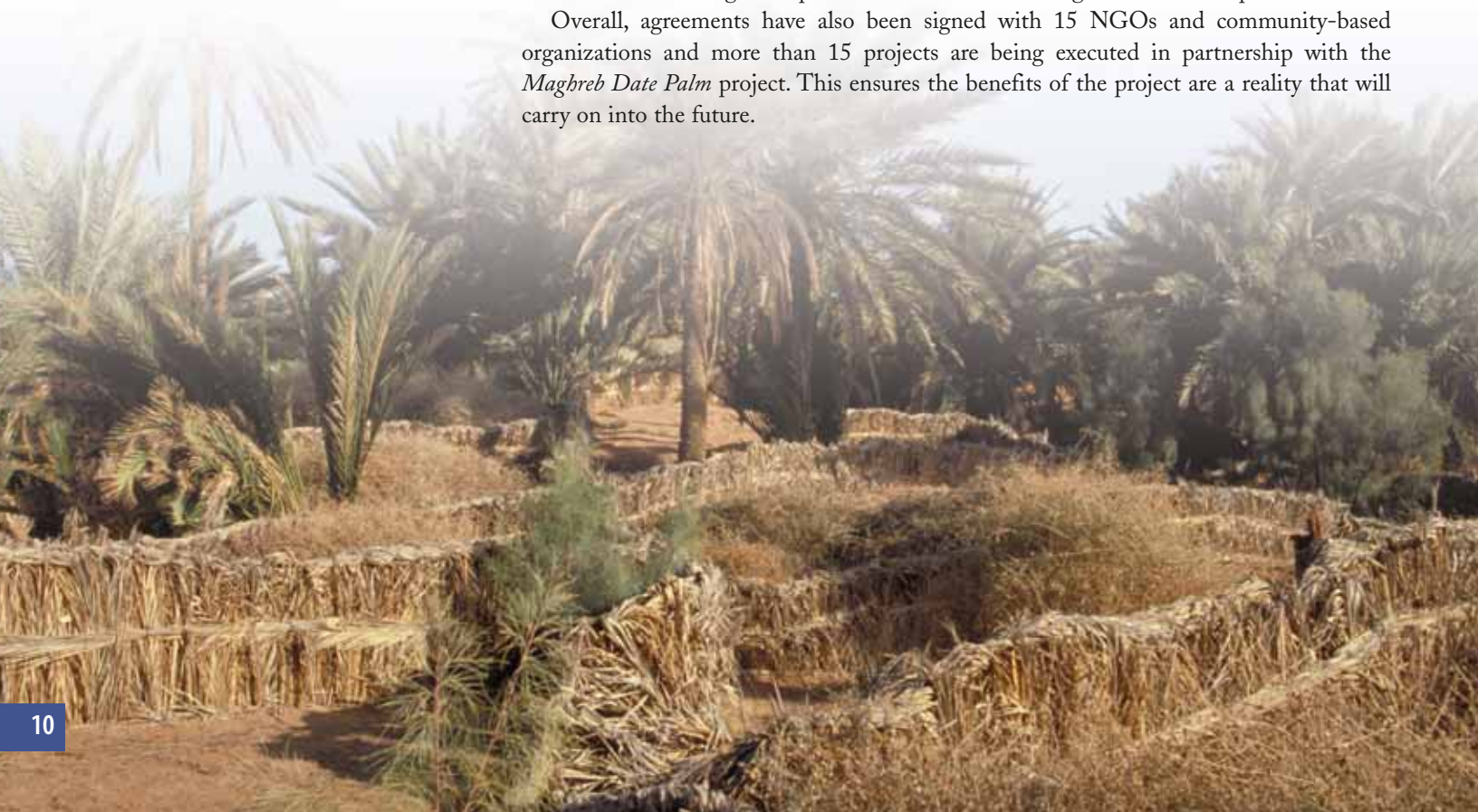
For millennia, the date palm has been intertwined with the rise of human civilization. Mentioned in both the Qur'an and the Bible, the date palm has long been utilized for food, fuel, shelter and fibre. Despite this storied past, however, the genetic diversity of these "trees of the desert" is increasingly at risk by a commercial focus on just a handful of date palm varieties.

To combat this genetic erosion, since 2000 UNDP-GEF has been working closely with agriculture agencies, scientific institutions, farmers and consumers in **Algeria, Morocco** and **Tunisia** as part of the five-year, \$2.8 million *Regional Maghreb Date Palm* project. Key components of the project have included:

- Supporting the cultivation of date palm varieties in the wild and building the capacity of farmers to manage and maintain date palm diversity on their productive lands.
- Promoting broader awareness of the threat to date palms through media and publicity campaigns and the organization of date palm fairs which, in turn, helps drive greater market demand for different varieties of the fruit.
- Working with government agencies to promote policies that favour maintenance of genetic diversity and reverse those which have led to such limited demand. This includes developing a means to protect traditional knowledge and intellectual property rights of date palm growers. Analyses of the date palm markets in each country have been carried out in support of these activities. Furthermore, a Material Transfer Agreement has been prepared and proposed to regulate the transfer of genetic material from one country to another.

This project is innovative in its participatory approach with local farmers. Advice from farmers in Algeria led the project there to focus on the conservation of 17 traditional date palm varieties. In Tunisia, local farmers helped researchers identify 20 new varieties of date palms and the conservation of 44 varieties, including 34 considered 'rare' or 'very rare', has been strengthened. Meanwhile, Morocco has made tremendous strides in raising awareness among both farmers and the general public about the threats facing traditional date palm varieties.

Overall, agreements have also been signed with 15 NGOs and community-based organizations and more than 15 projects are being executed in partnership with the *Maghreb Date Palm* project. This ensures the benefits of the project are a reality that will carry on into the future.



Promoting biodiversity through the private sector

Depending on the circumstances, mainstreaming may also involve the full spectrum of private sector entities from small household and community businesses to multinational corporations.

Working more directly with the private sector to conserve biodiversity and promote better ecosystem management presents a different set of challenges and represents an entirely new area for UNDP-GEF. The organization is focusing its current efforts on working with industries to reduce the negative environmental impact of on-going activities and to promote new, environmentally friendly niche markets and businesses. This includes partnering with global companies that can influence the production of natural resources as well as engaging local producers to commercialize new products and services that can promote conservation.

This novel approach has led to support for, and partnerships in, four main sectors: *tourism*, *agro-forestry* (e.g., coffee and cocoa), *forestry*, and *non-timber forest products*. Lessons learned from these experiences are expected to lead to greater partnerships with livestock, fisheries and aquaculture as well as the financial sector. Such partnerships are relatively new for UNDP-GEF and the number of these types of projects is growing rapidly.

More than 50 per cent of UNDP-GEF's biodiversity projects promote ecotourism as one means to increasing the value of the natural assets being conserved. This approach takes many forms including partnering with investors in hotels and eco-lodges as well as in-country tour operators to bring tour groups to targeted project destinations.

- In **Chile**, enlisting the private sector to support the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity includes work with a planned 'sand and sun' tourism complex and expanding opportunities for Amerindian communities to take part in the growing eco-tourism market. It also demonstrating how effective management of cruise-based tourism can be used to support biodiversity conservation.
- The cocoa fields of **Ghana** are harvested among forests that include one of the world's top-25 'hot spots' of biodiversity. There, in a region that includes more than half of all mammal species found in Africa, a UNDP-GEF project is initiating work with local stakeholders, government, donors and the global cocoa industry to develop sustainable cocoa production systems that can both benefit the region's biodiversity and prove economically viable.

Like cocoa, coffee is another crop that can grow intermixed with tropical trees and be produced in a habitat that can maintain birds and other important species. The international demand for coffee requires interventions at multiple levels in order to connect the consumer drinking the coffee to the farmer growing and selling the coffee.

In **Latin America**, UNDP-GEF is developing with the Rainforest Alliance a project entitled *Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into Coffee Production and Sales through Private Sector Sourcing Partnerships*. This project will work closely with major coffee roasters, traders, and specialty coffee importers to increase the amount of biodiversity-friendly coffee available to consumers. Using a certification programme implemented by Rainforest Alliance, the project's goal is for more than half of the 12 participating companies to purchase up to 5 per cent of their coffee supply from certified producers, a tremendous volume for such a large market.

Engaging Bulgaria's entrepreneurs

The unique and diverse habitats surrounding **Bulgaria's** Rhodope mountains encompass a mosaic of land-uses including agriculture, forestry, protected reserves, and ancient human habitations in an area with important watershed values.

In 2004, UNDP-GEF launched the *Bulgaria Rhodope Mountains: Integrating biodiversity conservation principles into agriculture and forestry* initiative to prevent threats to two new Nature Parks by working with the agriculture, forestry, tourism, rural development and water sectors to integrate conservation concerns into their activities.

The project capitalizes on Bulgaria's recent accession to the European Union, which has stimulated a number of new legal reforms and policy directives. These changes are in addition to the socio-economic and political reforms facing the country following the transition from a socialist planned economy to a market based one. Such changes include the land restitution process, in which forestlands are being transferred from state control to private owners. In this regard the project is working with other partners to develop guidelines and build capacity for biodiversity friendly management by the new forest owners.

The transition to a market economy has also generated new opportunities for business development in the region, and the project is cooperating with the fledgling private sector to facilitate forest certification processes, organic farming, eco-labeling, and biodiversity friendly enterprises such as ecotourism and medicinal plants production. Several Bulgarian private sector firms, including those involved in ecotourism, medicinal plant production, and organic farming are committed to cooperating closely with the project.

Executing agency: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Co-financing partners: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Environment and Water, UNDP

GEF financing: \$3.81 million

Co-financing: \$14.81 million

Total financing: \$18.62 million



Project profile

Country: Argentina

Executing agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Co-financing partners: Government of Argentina, Inter-American Development Bank, World Conservation Society, Fundación Patagonia Natural

GEF financing: \$5.20 million

Co-financing: \$8.80 million

Total financing: \$14 million

To achieve this goal, the project will engage the entire supply chain that the coffee market depends on. This requires:

- Providing capacity development on sustainable coffee methods and marketing to farmers and traders.
- Guiding and rewarding moves towards sustainability on coffee farms.
- Connecting responsible producers and traders with interested buyers.

The project targets productive lands outside protected areas and the certification programme incorporates requirements for independent monitoring of ecosystems, wildlife and water resources within and adjacent to participating farms.

The experiences from all these on-going efforts are expected to provide a wide range of lessons learned not just for UNDP, but the entire development community as it moves to build stronger ties with the private sector to promote environmental sustainability and human development.

Tourism and conservation in Patagonia

Begun in 1999, the UNDP-GEF *Consolidation and Implementation of the Patagonian Coastal Zone Management Programme and Biodiversity Conservation* project builds on an earlier effort to promote the conservation and sustainable use of **Argentina's** internationally renowned marine resources.

The first phase of the project focused on establishing a sound, scientific basis for the conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity. It expanded the knowledge of the region's biodiversity, identified the relationship between on-going economic activities and conservation, increased public awareness about coastal zone management and identified changes needed to make conservation a reality.

One of the most remarkable impacts of this project has been related to the reduction of oil pollution at sea and the effect it has had on many wildlife species, particularly on Magellanic penguin populations. Estimates made in the 1980s along the coast of Patagonia indicated that 41,000 penguins were dying at sea as a result of chronic oiling. The first phase of the project, carried out from 1993-1996 by Fundación Patagonia Natural and the Wildlife Conservation Society, produced a significant reduction in the number of deaths of Magellanic penguins. By drawing attention to the problem in the press, and developing technical data to address the issue, oil-shipping companies substantially improved their practices at sea. As a result, surveys undertaken in 2000 indicated that the presence of oiled penguins in the same areas was negligible.

The second phase has continued this work and provided additional protection to a large number of penguin breeding sites. These sites include Punta Tombo, a popular tourist site that generates an estimated \$3 million in revenue each year and numerous jobs for the local communities. One immediate result of this approach is that Magellanic penguin populations have remained stable since 2000 at approximately 1 million breeding pairs. In addition, South American sea lions and Southern elephant seal populations have increased annually at 3 per cent since the project began.

Controlling Invasive Species

For centuries, invasive, or alien, species have arrived on foreign shores and, facing little natural competition, wreaked havoc on local ecosystems. But in a world where rapid travel and global trade have become ubiquitous, these threats have grown exponentially.

In Africa, for example, millions of dollars are spent every year on the control of water hyacinths, an invasive species whose rapidly growing stalks and leaves quickly clog waterways and destroy productive fisheries. The fisheries of the Black Sea have been decimated by the arrival of a comb jelly, while in the Philippines rice farmers have lost nearly \$1 billion in crops due to the invasive golden apple snail.

Perhaps no place on earth symbolizes the importance of controlling invasive species more than the celebrated islands of the Galapagos. Since Charles Darwin's arrival, this renowned centre of endemism and diversity has come under increasing threat from a variety of invasive species – now the single largest threat to the archipelago's biodiversity. Goats have turned previously vegetated areas into grasslands and scrub. The densely forested landscape of Acedo Volcano on Isabela Island became a desert of bleached tree trunks and dry grasslands in just four years. Pigs, goats and rats have feasted on tortoises, sea turtle eggs and birds, while black flies, fire ants and avian pox are spreading.

The UNDP-GEF *Integrated Programme for the Control of Introduced Species in the Galapagos Islands* project begun in 2001 is addressing these threats by strengthening Ecuador's capacity to quarantine incoming materials and demonstrating cost effective means of eradication, control and mitigation. A new "Special Regulation on Total Control of Invasive Species" went into effect in 2003 while the level of offshore and onshore inspection of organic cargo, passengers and luggage increased from a baseline of 5 per cent to a solid 100 per cent. Goat populations have been completely eradicated on Pinta Island, have been reduced to extremely low density on Santiago Island and are expected to decline significantly in northern Isabela Island by 2006.

For Côte d'Ivoire's *Biological Control of Aquatic Weeds* project, UNDP-GEF is providing the training and tools needed to control existing infestations of water hyacinths, water lettuce, and water ferns. Since their presence was first noted in the 1980s, these invasives have had serious impacts on aquatic species and the lives of riparian human populations. Some freshwater lakes and streams are entirely covered by the plants.

In 1987, Côte d'Ivoire began a publicly funded weed control effort. In 1992, UNDP-GEF built upon this with a ten-year programme to establish breeding sites and introduce techniques utilizing biological control agents to counter the spread of hyacinths and other weeds. The project also began regular monitoring of species impacted by the weeds and facilitated greater cooperation with aquatic weed projects in Benin, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania and Senegal.

This has led to a new generation of Ivorian scientists trained to research and implement policies to address biodiversity loss and biological control of invasives. In addition, government authorities have been convinced of the benefits of biological – rather than chemical or mechanical control of invasives – and public awareness of how to prevent and reduce the threat of invasive weeds has increased.

The eradication of invasive species in the Galapagos Islands will allow for the recovery of natural habitats of the unique giant tortoises that depend on native plants for food, shade and water.

Project profile

Country: Ecuador

Executing agency: Ministry of Environment

Co-financing partners: UNDP, UN Foundation, UNFPA, SPNG, Ecuadorian Service for Agriculture and Livestock Sanitation, USAID, Spanish International Cooperation Agency, Inter-American Development Bank, Charles Darwin Foundation, Galapagos National Park Service,

GEF financing: \$18.30 million

Co-financing: \$24.83 million

Total financing: \$43.13 million

Controlling aquatic weeds

In Côte d'Ivoire, 15 riparian villages were sensitized and trained to produce the insects that control the aquatic weed problem. Over 200,000 of these agents for biological control were released. Most importantly, by the project's completion in 2002, aquatic weed populations in the project areas had been reduced. Water pollution decreased in many waterbodies and the affected villagers were able to resume fishing activities.

Country: Côte d'Ivoire

Executing agency: Ministry of Environment and Tourism

Co-financing partners: UNDP, Government of Côte d'Ivoire, bilateral donor

GEF financing: \$3 million

Co-financing: \$2.11 million

Total financing: \$5.11 million

Invasive species are one of the largest threats to global biodiversity along with habitat destruction and climate change.

Source: Convention on Biological Diversity

Meeting international obligations: The National Capacity Self-Assessment programme

UNDP participates in and provides support to the National Capacity Self-Assessment programme, funded by the GEF. The programme assists developing countries and economies in transition in assessing their capacity to meet multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Land Degradation.

The National Capacity Self-Assessment programme is unique in that it promotes synergy among the three conventions. Through the self-assessment, countries identify capacity gaps and then come up with their own solutions to rectify them. To date, approximately 75 per cent of the resulting activities are implemented by UNDP-GEF.

Project profile

Country: Mexico

Executing agency: Commission on Biosafety and Genetically Modified Organisms

Co-financing partners: Government of Mexico, other donors

GEF financing: \$1.46 million

Co-financing: \$ 4.94 million

Total financing: \$6.4 million

**More information on the
Cartagena Protocol on
Biosafety is available at:
<http://www.biodiv.org/biosafety/>.**

Developing Capacity for Biosafety

Modern biotechnology has had a tremendous impact on our understanding of disease and our ability to support agriculture. It has also, however, posed a new set of risks to global biodiversity. Scientists are racing to understand the range of possible impacts resulting from the introduction of living modified organisms into the environment. In the meantime, reducing and eliminating the potential risks from living modified organisms (see below) is a central tenet of both the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

UNDP-GEF began its efforts to address biosafety concerns in 2002, even before the Biosafety Protocol entered into force. The goal was to use a limited number of demonstration projects to gain experience and develop good practices that could be shared more broadly once the Protocol took effect. In **Mexico**, for instance, the *Country-based demonstration project to assist in capacity-building to implement national biosafety framework* is partnering with the government's National Commission on Biosafety and Genetically Modified Organisms to develop a long-range plan addressing biosafety concerns.

Specifically, the project is helping develop the skills and capacity needed to carry out scientific and technical risk assessments; implement activities for risk management; foster an evaluation and strengthening, where necessary, of Mexico's legal and regulatory framework; and develop an infrastructure for information exchange and data management on biosafety issues.

Although the project is still in its early stages, the experience so far highlights that prioritizing the creation of a flexible information sharing system was a significant influence in helping co-ordinate government activities, standardize risk assessments, and provide effective oversight of living modified organisms issues. More lessons from this experience, for Mexico and other countries that have signed the Biosafety Protocol, are expected as the project is carried to completion.

What is a living modified organism?

As defined by the Biosafety Protocol, a living modified organism, or LMO, is a living organism that possesses a novel combination of genetic material obtained through the use of modern biotechnology. The term genetically modified organism, or GMO, is essentially interchangeable with LMO.

In the agriculture sector, LMOs include crops that have been genetically modified for greater productivity or for resistance to pests or diseases. Examples of modified crops include tomatoes, cassava, corn, cotton and soybeans.

The GEF Small Grants Programme and Biodiversity

Communities and non-governmental organizations on the front lines of conservation are essential partners with UNDP-GEF and encapsulate the very spirit of sustainable development. Experience has consistently shown that relatively modest investments in these partners can pay tremendous dividends in terms of raising public awareness, involvement and support for biodiversity conservation. That is the philosophy behind the GEF Small Grants Programme implemented by UNDP.

Launched in 1992, the Small Grants Programme disburses relatively small grants directly to non-governmental and community-based organizations, often matched by co-financing commitments from the grantees themselves. Through this spirit of cooperation and collective action, the programme has also established partnerships with literally thousands of universities, government research institutes, foundations and environmental trust funds.

This approach has proven enormously successful both in terms of livelihood benefits to local populations as well as in stimulating increased governmental recognition of the value of civil society involvement in environmental governance. For example:

- Through a \$35,000 grant to the Fish Farmers Committee of Lake Pomacanchi in Peru, the *Recovery and Conservation of the Suche in Lake Pomacanchi, Cuzco* project raised and re-introduced 15,000 juvenile *suche* (*Trichomycterus rivulatus*) trout into the lake, allowing the local population to re-establish the fish as an important source of nutrition and income generation. The Committee went on to make use of its newly-found organizational capacity to start a small-scale ecotourism effort, and gained official endorsement by the Regional Fisheries Bureau to stimulate further local efforts to re-introduce fish species in lakes throughout the Lake Pomacanchi watershed.
- The true pistachio (*Pistacia vera*) and Vavilov almond (*Amugdalus Vavilovii*) are unique nut species which grow in a belt of foothill deserts and the dry steppes of Kyrgyzstan. The Small Grants Programme provided a \$10,000 grant to rehabilitate fragments of a pistachio forest belt in a 30-hectare landslide prone plot in the vicinity of the town of Suluctu. Some of the activities undertaken include the planting of 15,000 saplings and preparation of an irrigation network.

As these examples highlight, communities involved in GEF Small Grants Programme projects have adopted improved conservation techniques and practices and learned how sustainable use of natural resources can directly improve their lives. Through both traditional and innovative approaches, the programme promotes fair and workable balances between conservation and productive use of natural resources. In addition, the experience gained by grant beneficiaries often catalyzes interest and engagement by neighbouring communities, state and national governments, contributing to the achievement of more effective long-term conservation at all scales in the landscape.

Fast facts:

The GEF Small Grants Programme

Grants distributed: 5,000

Number of countries: 73

Total funding: \$130 million

Average grant size: \$20,000

Maximum Grant: \$50,000

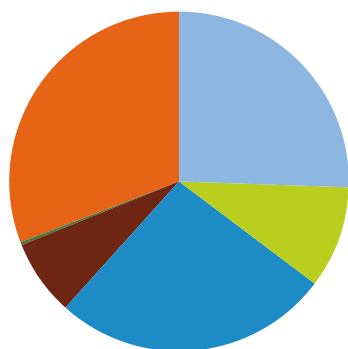
More information is available at:
<http://sgp.undp.org/>

Improving livelihoods

The Toco Foundation in **Trinidad and Tobago** was the recipient of a \$41,000 grant, through the *Agricultural Project in Toco and Mission Villages, with an Emphasis on Organic Agriculture, Agro-forestry and Agro-tourism*, to improve the potential for community-based eco-tourism by establishing a network of nature trails, visitor facilities and a micro-credit programme. Through the micro-credit facility, community members can access small loans to establish or strengthen micro-enterprise activities including the marketing of handicrafts, honey, fruit preserves and local cuisine, based on the growing number of eco-tourists and other visitors in the community.



UNDP-GEF biodiversity portfolio by region (US\$)



Region	\$millions
Africa	163.888
Arab States	62.130
Asia & Pacific	168.985
Europe & CIS	45.254
Global	3.316
Latin America & Caribbean	195.394
Grand Total	638.966

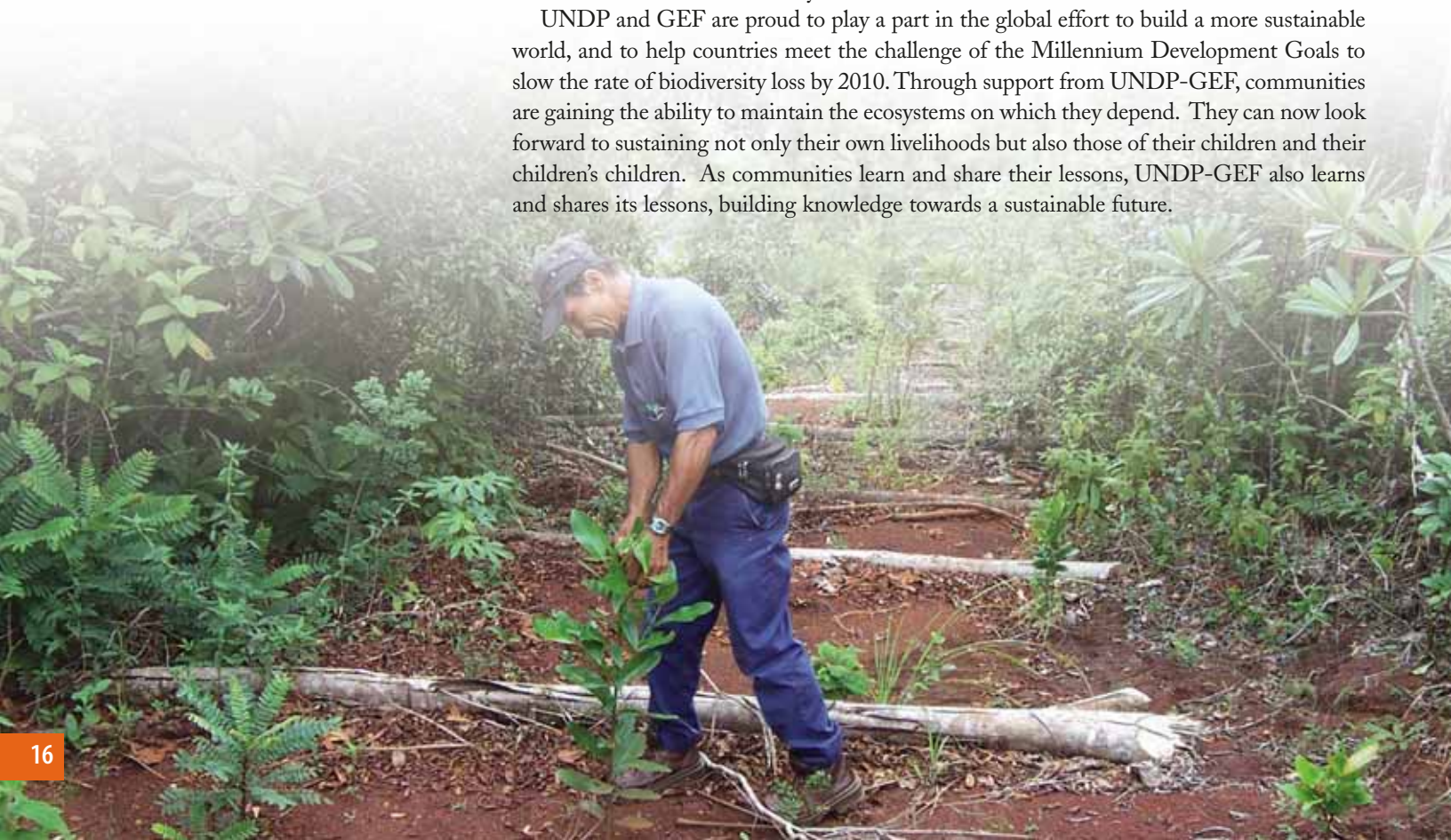
Figures are historical – cumulative from July 1991 through June 2004

Looking Ahead

In 1992 in Rio de Janeiro the global community came together and agreed to protect, sustainably use, and equitably share the benefits arising from biodiversity. Eight years later, world leaders met in New York City at the dawn of the new millennium to reaffirm these commitments and redouble their efforts to make sustainable development a reality. In a world with a human population of over six billion and growing and the global scourges of poverty and HIV/AIDS, the destruction of the world's ecosystems and climate change threaten our survival, there simply is no other option. In the words of internationally-recognized biodiversity expert Peter Schei, “biodiversity is the life insurance policy for life itself”.

While supporting communities and their partners working together on biodiversity issues all over the world, UNDP-GEF is also improving the way this work is done. Much still remains to be learned about the best solutions for different conditions and locations. Critically evaluating existing approaches, developing new approaches, testing and piloting these, and transferring the lessons learned to others involved in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use is a critical element of our work. Drawing on past experience, UNDP-GEF is currently leading a joint effort with the World Bank, UNEP and a number of NGOs to establish a systematic programme on learning and disseminating lessons about how to manage biodiversity. Through this programme, the effectiveness and efficiency of biodiversity activities the world over is anticipated to increase, benefiting both the people of the world and its biodiversity.

UNDP and GEF are proud to play a part in the global effort to build a more sustainable world, and to help countries meet the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals to slow the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. Through support from UNDP-GEF, communities are gaining the ability to maintain the ecosystems on which they depend. They can now look forward to sustaining not only their own livelihoods but also those of their children and their children's children. As communities learn and share their lessons, UNDP-GEF also learns and shares its lessons, building knowledge towards a sustainable future.



GEF National Dialogue Initiative

The GEF National Dialogue Initiative, launched in 2004, is a joint undertaking of the GEF Secretariat, UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank. It is implemented by UNDP and carried out in close collaboration with UN Member States. Through a targeted, multi-stakeholder dialogue, the initiative aims to strengthen GEF assistance to participating countries by:

- Promoting in-depth understanding of the GEF's strategic directions, policies and procedures;
- Strengthening country coordination and ownership of GEF operations and information-sharing about GEF-funded projects;
- Mainstreaming GEF activities into national planning frameworks and encouraging better coordination at the national level of the GEF focus areas and international agreements, in response to country priorities.

National dialogues sponsored under the programme bring together representatives from governmental and non-governmental institutions, the scientific and academic communities, donor organizations, the private sector, the media, and the GEF Secretariat and its associated agencies. The initiative builds upon lessons from the GEF Country Dialogue Workshops Programme, during which 76 countries and over 5,000 stakeholders participated in 50 national and subregional consultations. For more information, please visit <http://www.undp.org/gef/dialogue/index.htm>.

GEF Small Grants Programme

Launched in 1992, the GEF Small Grants Programme supports activities of non-governmental and community-based organizations in 73 developing countries working in areas of GEF concern. The objective of the programme is to foster environment stewardship while helping people generate sustainable livelihoods. Grants provided by the programme average \$20,000 per project (though they can reach a maximum limit of \$50,000) and are channelled directly through community-based or non-governmental organizations. Decisions concerning

the awarding of grants are decentralized, based on the directives of a voluntary National Steering Committee in each participating country. To date, more than 5,000 grants have been awarded worldwide, with many benefiting more than one community. Over 600 partner organizations now provide co-financing and other support to Small Grants Programme activities, including the United Nations Foundation, the European Commission, the governments of Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The programme is implemented by UNDP on behalf of the World Bank and UNEP, and executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services.

UNDP's Energy and Environment Group

The Energy and Environment Group is part of UNDP's Bureau of Development Policy. It focuses on the central aspects of sustainable development, especially the links between poverty and the environment. The Group offers six services lines, in areas relating to:

- Frameworks and strategies for sustainable development;
- Effective water governance;
- Access to sustainable energy services;
- Sustainable land management;
- Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- National and sectoral policy and planning to control emissions of ozone depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants.

The Energy and Environment Group also includes UNDP-GEF, the Montreal Protocol Unit and the Nairobi-based Drylands Development Centre. Energy and environment policy advisers are based at UNDP Headquarters in New York and eight regional locations to ensure the highest quality policy advice and services to client countries. In addition, every UNDP country office has at least one environmental focal point and a network of local practitioners that provide a forum for sharing knowledge.

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