National Capacity Self-Assessments

Results and Lessons Learned for Global Environmental Sustainability

Global Support Programme to the National Capacity Self-Assessments
Global Environment Facility
United Nations Development Programme
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACM	Adaptive Collaborative Management
BD	Biodiversity
CB	Capacity Building
CB-2	Cross-Cutting Capacity Development Projects
CBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CBPAR	Community Based Participatory Action Research
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
CD	Capacity Development
CDG	Capacity Development Group
CDI	Capacity Development Initiative
COP	Conference of the Parties
ECIS	Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States
EEG	Energy and Environment Group
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GSP	Global Support Programme
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LDC	Least Developed Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEI	Poverty-Environment Initiative
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

The misty forests of Sierra Gorda, Mexico. Photo by Kevin Hill.

They are beautiful in their peace, they are wise in their silence. They will stand after we are dust. They teach us, and we tend them. **Galeain ip Altiem MacDunelmor**

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Foreword

This report is an important milestone of the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI) that began in 1998. At the time, governments, donors and practitioners recognized that achieving environmental sustainability of development interventions required a more targeted and in-depth assessment of countries' underlying capacities. With a focus on meeting and sustaining global environmental objectives, as framed by the Rio Conventions on biodiversity, climate change, and desertification and drought, the CDI set the stage for the Global Environment Facility's Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building in 2003. As the first new programmatic pathway of the Strategic Approach, the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) was a country-driven Enabling Activity that catalyzed a systematic and cross-cutting analysis of individual, organizational and systemic capacities. These Enabling Activities were built on the principle of learning-by-doing as a strategy to institutionalize the capacity assessment process. To support countries' NCSA, a Global Support Programme (GSP) was established in 2005 and jointly implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

With most of the NCSAs now completed, and almost a decade after inception of the first NCSAs, important lessons are to be learned on countries' challenges and opportunities to meet and sustain global environmental objectives. As a summary of the results and lessons learned from 82% of the 146 NCSAs, this report is a critical contribution to our knowledge of the types of capacities countries need to meet Rio Convention objectives. When compared to the strategic programming of development support, the results and analysis in this report reaffirms the support being provided by UNDP and UNEP with funding from the GEF, not to mention the support being provided by many other development partners and donors throughout the NCSA process.

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There have been a number of important studies and assessments of countries' environmental capacities, and this report serves to complement these. In particular, this report serves to update the "state of global environmental sustainability", providing a strong rationale for the new strategic GEF programming of for the 2010-2014 period. We have known for a long time that countries need to improve public awareness of the global environment, mainstream environmental priorities into sectoral development policies, programmes and plans, and undertake environmental fiscal reform. What we have learned from this report is the extent of the global need and demand of the critical cross-cutting capacities that are central to meeting and sustaining global environmental objectives.

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The next pathway of the capacity assessment phase focuses on targeted cross-cutting capacity development, otherwise known as CB-2s, with 23 projects initiated under GEF-4. This report highlights the need to better link the programming of CB-2s during GEF-5 to other strategic cross-cutting programming by countries for greater synergies and cost-effectiveness. The results of the NCSAs have clearly demonstrated that in the GEF capacity building should not be seen as a separate silo, but part of a strategic set of interventions to enable countries to meet shared global environmental objectives.

Executive Summary

A strategic partnership in the late 1990s between the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat and UNDP led to the creation of the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI). This was a central part of the process to formulate and promote a conceptual framework for the assessment and development of countries' environmental capacities. Based on an assessment of capacity development in the GEF portfolio, the CDI's recommendations formed the basis of the GEF's strategic programming on capacity development. This led to the creation of the National Capacity Self-Assessments.

The first National Capacity Self-Assessments (NCSA) began in 2002 with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), some being implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with others by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The primary objective of the NCSAs was to determine the challenges of countries' underlying capacities to meet their global environmental commitments, commitments that are framed by the Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought, and the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The total value of the NCSA portfolio was US$ 28.9 million, with an average allotment of US$ 200,000 per NCSA.

In 2003, the GEF approved the *Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building*, which delineated the guiding principles and framed the programming of GEF resources. The *Strategic Approach* reaffirmed that the capacities necessary to meet global environmental objectives are closely related to, indeed are dependent on those capacities necessary to meet broader national environmental priorities. In addition to capacity development being pursued by the NCSAs, the *Strategic Approach* outlined three other pathways of capacity development: (i) the strengthening of capacity building components in GEF focal area projects; (ii) targeted capacity building projects, both within and across focal areas; and (iii) the capacity development programme in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Since 2002, a total of 153 out of 166 eligible countries received GEF funding to implement an NCSA. UNDP was the implementing agency for 76% of these NCSA projects, followed by UNEP with 23%. The World Bank was responsible for Nigeria's NCSA. In 2004, the GEF approved the Global Support Programme (GSP) to provide methodological assistance to the NCSA country teams, as well as to produce learning materials. This included the NCSA Resource Kit, which outlined the basic approaches to NCSA implementation, including consultative requirements, assessments and analyses to be undertaken. The GSP also produced guidelines to monitor and assess capacity development, which would be used as the first stage of a three-point, time-series outcome evaluation of cross-cutting capacity development projects.

The NCSAs called for countries to identify their priority environmental issues such as combating deforestation, promoting sustainable land management, or minimizing their vulnerabilities to the impact of climate change.

Of the 119 countries that completed their NCSA, 23 countries are at various stages in the implementation the priority recommendations identified in their NCSA *Final Report and Action Plan*. Whereas the NCSAs were fully funded projects, the NCSA follow-up projects, otherwise known as CB-2 projects, require equal amounts of GEF and co-financing resources. Nine (9) of the 23 projects were approved for the European and Commonwealth of Independent States region, with the rest distributed equally among the other regions, with the exception of the Pacific region, which do not have any CB-2 projects at the time of this report. These 23 CB-2 projects generally focus on environmental governance systems and

mainstreaming global environmental issues into national development programmes.

The NCSAs called for countries to identify their priority environmental issues such as combating deforestation, promoting sustainable land management, or minimizing their vulnerabilities to the impact of climate change. They were to undertake a root cause analysis to determine the institutional capacities (e.g., knowledge, decision support systems, and governance structures) necessary to meet programme objectives. While the thematic assessments for each focal area identified the capacity needs specific to that particular environmental concern, the cross-cutting (or synergy) reports took an over-arching approach to understanding more basic challenges countries face in meeting and sustaining global environmental objectives. The latter analyses were an important catalyst in helping decision-makers and other stakeholders gain a better appreciation of the important linkages between and among the Conventions, and the capacities indicative of resilient systems.

This analysis revealed that the top five capacity development needs expressed by countries to achieve and sustain global environmental outcomes are: 1) public awareness and environmental education; 2) information management and exchange; 3) development and enforcement of policy and regulatory frameworks; 4) strengthening organizational mandates and structures; and 5) economic instruments and sustainable financing mechanisms.

At the other end of the spectrum, the NCSA analysis showed that capacities to negotiate at the Conventions' Conference of the Parties were of a relatively low priority, with only 17 out of 119 NCSAs identifying this as a capacity need. Similarly, only 32 out of 119 NCSAs identified integrated ecosystem management as a priority.

The analysis of the 119 NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans yielded insights and lessons from countries' quest to meet global environmental commitments. Organized under the five main types of capacities to meet and sustain global environmental objectives, the key lessons learned are:

Stakeholder Engagement

- A sense of readiness is necessary from all parties involved, including at the political level, in order to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives.
- Achieving environmental sustainability necessitates the engagement of stakeholders, which in turn is predicated on their level of awareness and understanding, as well as having the skills to take action.
- NGOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) must be fully engaged in order to reach marginalized communities, who in turn engage civil society stakeholders.
- Best practice methodologies are needed to engage stakeholders.
- The NCSA process was innovative, benefitting from broad and interactive participation of stakeholders, which made the assessments highly relevant.

Information Management and Knowledge

- Although not complete, environmental information exists. However, the capacities to access and manage this information, including coordination with other management information systems remain weak.
- There is a need to incorporate traditional/ indigenous knowledge into the environmental management information system.

Organizational Capacities

- Many countries lack clarity in their organizational set-up to adequately finance environmental management.

Environmental Governance

- Many countries continue to lack a comprehensive and adequate set of environmental policies, with missing or unenforced legislative and regulatory instruments that further hinder environmental management.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Countries are monitoring and evaluating their projects, but the knowledge that is generated is not being adequately used in decision-making processes.

Despite some notable achievements, the NCSAs were an initial step toward the larger programme of effort to develop capacities in the name of the global environment. The NCSAs catalyzed a heightened agreement among policy-makers and practitioners on the overall set of capacities necessary to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives, endorsing the NCSA recommendations as a set of initial actions for support from the international community.
The focus of targeted cross-cutting capacity development (CB-2) in GEF-5 (2010-2014) builds on these NCSA recommendations. In addition to the existing 23 projects currently underway, future CB-2 projects will address those urgent capacity challenges and priorities necessary to enhance a country's ability to meet its obligations under the three Rio Conventions. Targeted cross-cutting capacity development projects will focus on strengthening environmental governance systems through mechanisms and tools for improved collaboration, management information systems, decision-making, as well as mainstreaming global environmental issues into national development programmes. The four programmatic frameworks in GEF-5[1] are:

Targeted cross-cutting capacity development projects will focus on particular sets of countries' underlying individual, organizational, and systemic capacities to meet and sustain global environmental commitments.

- Enhancing the capacities of stakeholders to engage throughout a consultative process
- Generating, accessing, and using information and knowledge
- Strengthening capacities to develop policy and legislative frameworks
- Strengthening capacities to implement and manage global Convention guidelines

These projects will also be developed and implemented as part of an overall programme of donor support to countries. In GEF-4, the GSP developed guidelines to monitor the outcomes of the CB-2 projects[2] , having produced a scorecard to rate the capacities developed as part of a time-series evaluation exercise. These guidelines are in the early stage of their application, with the expectation that they will be applied to focal area projects, producing a valuable set of indicators to measure the achievements and sustainability of the GEF's broader set of country interventions.

[1] See Table 7, page 77, Summary of Negotiations, Fifth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, GEF/C.37/3, 17 May, 2010, Global Environment Facility/World Bank.

[2] See Bellamy, Jean-Joseph and Kevin Hill (2010), "Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in Global Environment Facility Operations", Global Support Programme, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme, New York, USA.

Sommaire Exécutif

Un partenariat stratégique noué à la fin des années 1990 entre le Secrétariat du Fonds pour l'environnement mondial (FEM) et le PNUD a conduit à la création de l'Initiative de renforcement des capacités (IRC), élément central du processus de formulation et de promotion d'un cadre conceptuel pour l'évaluation et le développement des capacités des pays en matière environnementale. Fondées sur une évaluation du développement des capacités dans le portefeuille du FEM, les recommandations issues de l'IRC ont constitué la base de la programmation stratégique du FEM sur le renforcement de capacités. Cela a conduit à la création de l'auto-évaluation nationale des capacités à renforcer pour la gestion de l'environnement global (ANCR).

Les premières auto-évaluations nationales des capacités à renforcer (ANCR) ont débuté en 2002 avec un financement du Fonds pour l'environnement mondial (FEM), certaines ayant été mises en œuvre par le Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (PNUD) et d'autres par le Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement (PNUE). L'objectif principal de l'ANCR a été de déterminer les défis liés aux véritables capacités des pays à répondre à leurs engagements mondiaux en matière d'environnement, engagements qui sont encadrés par la Convention sur la diversité biologique, la Convention sur la lutte contre la désertification et la sécheresse, et la Convention-cadre sur les changements climatiques. La valeur totale du portefeuille de l'ANCR était de 28, 9 millions $ US, avec une allocation moyenne de 200.000 US $ par ANCR.

En 2003, le FEM a approuvé *l'Approche stratégique pour améliorer le renforcement des capacités*, définissant les principes directeurs et encadrant la programmation des ressources du FEM. L'Approche stratégique a réaffirmé que les capacités nécessaires pour répondre aux objectifs environnementaux mondiaux sont étroitement liées, voire dépendent de ces autres capacités nécessaires pour répondre à des priorités nationales plus larges en matière d'environnement. Outre le renforcement de capacités mis en place dans le cadre des auto-évaluations, l'Approche stratégique définit trois autres voies de développement des capacités : (i) le renforcement des composantes en matière de renforcement de capacités dans les projets des domaines d'intervention du FEM, (ii) des projets ciblés de renforcement des capacités, à la fois dans et entre les domaines d'intervention, et (iii) le programme de développement des capacités dans les pays les moins avancés (PMA) et les petits États insulaires en développement (PEID).

Depuis 2002, 153 sur 166 pays éligibles ont reçu des fonds du FEM en vue de mettre en œuvre une ANCR. Le PNUD a été l'agence d'exécution pour 76% de ces projets d'ANCR, suivie du PNUE avec 23%. La Banque mondiale a assuré la mise en œuvre de l'ANCR du Nigeria. En 2004, le FEM a approuvé le Programme mondial d'appui destiné à fournir une assistance méthodologique aux équipes en charge des ANCR dans les pays, ainsi que de produire des supports d'apprentissage. La réalisation d'un Kit des ressources d'ANCR décrivant les approches de base pour la mise en œuvre d'ANCR, notamment les exigences en matière de consultation, les évaluations et les analyses à entreprendre, en est un exemple. Le Programme mondial d'appui a également produit des lignes directrices afin de suivre et évaluer le développement des capacités, qui pourraient être utilisées comme la première étape d'une évaluation des résultats de type série chronologique en trois points, de projets de développement intersectoriel des capacités.

Sur les 119 pays qui ont achevé leur NCSA, 23 sont à des stades divers de la mise en œuvre des recommandations prioritaires identifiées dans le rapport final de leur ANCR et de leur Plan d'action. Alors que les projets d'auto-évaluation ont été entièrement financés par le FEM, les projets de suivi des ANCR, connus sous le nom de projets CB2, demandent autant de ressources du FEM que de co-financement. Sur les 23 projets, neufs (9) ont été approuvés pour l'Europe et la Communauté des États indépendants, le reste étant équitablement réparti dans les autres régions, à l'exception de la région du Pacifique, qui ne disposait d'aucun projet CB2 au

moment de la rédaction de ce rapport. Ces 23 projets CB2 se concentrent généralement sur les systèmes de gouvernance environnementale et sur l'intégration des questions globales liées à l'environnement dans les programmes nationaux de développement.

La mise en œuvre des ANCR a permis aux pays concernés d'identifier leurs enjeux environnementaux prioritaires tels que la lutte contre la déforestation, la promotion de la gestion durable des terres, ou la réduction de leur vulnérabilité face à l'impact du changement climatique. Ils auront du procéder à une analyse des causes fondamentales afin de déterminer les capacités institutionnelles (par exemple, les connaissances, les systèmes d'aide à la prise de décision et les structures de gouvernance) nécessaires pour atteindre les objectifs du programme. Tandis que les évaluations thématiques pour chaque domaine d'intervention ont permis l'identification des besoins en matière de capacités spécifiques pour cette préoccupation environnementale particulière, les rapports transversaux (ou de synergie) ont adopté une approche globale permettant de mieux comprendre les défis basiques auxquels doivent faire face les pays pour atteindre et maintenir les objectifs environnementaux globaux. Ces dernières analyses ont constitué un catalyseur important pour aider les décideurs et autres intervenants à mieux apprécier l'importance des liens existant entre et parmi les conventions, et les capacités révélatrices de systèmes résilients.

Cette analyse a révélé que les cinq principaux besoins en matière de renforcement des capacités exprimé par les pays pour atteindre et maintenir les résultats environnementaux globaux sont les suivants : 1) la sensibilisation du public et l'éducation en matière environnementale ; 2) la gestion de l'information et des échanges ; 3) l'élaboration et la mise en oeuvre de politiques et cadres réglementaires ; 4) le renforcement des mandats et structures des organisations, et 5) la mise en place d'instruments économiques et de mécanismes de financement durable.

D'autre part, l'analyse des ANCR a montré que les capacités à négocier lors de la Conférence des Parties des Conventions ont constitué une priorité relativement faible, avec seulement 17 des 119 ANCR les ayant identifié comme un besoin en termes de capacités à renforcer. De même, seules 32 des 119 ANCR ont identifié la gestion intégrée des écosystèmes comme une priorité.

L'analyse des rapports finaux et plans d'action de 119 ANCR a permis de donner un aperçu et de tirer des enseignements sur la volonté des pays à répondre aux engagements à l'échelle mondiale liés à l'environnement. Organisés dans le cadre des cinq principaux types de capacités permettant d'atteindre et maintenir les objectifs environnementaux mondiaux, les principaux enseignements tirés sont :

L'engagement des parties prenantes

- Un certain niveau de préparation est nécessaire chez toutes les parties concernées, y compris au niveau politique, afin d'atteindre et de maintenir les objectifs environnementaux mondiaux.
- Pour atteindre la durabilité environnementale, l'implication des parties prenantes est nécessaire. Celle-ci dépend elle-même de leur niveau de sensibilisation et de compréhension, ainsi que des compétences nécessaires pour prendre des mesures.
- Les ONG et les organisations communautaires de base (OCB) doivent être pleinement engagées de sorte d'atteindre les communautés marginalisées, qui à leur tour engagent les acteurs de la société civile.
- Des méthodologies sur les bonnes pratiques sont nécessaires pour engager les parties prenantes.
- Le processus de mise en œuvre des ANCR a été novateur, a bénéficié d'une participation massive et fructueuse des parties prenantes, qui ont permis aux évaluations d'être très pertinentes.

Gestion de l'information et des connaissances

- Bien qu'incomplètes, les informations sur l'environnement existent. Toutefois, les capacités

pour gérer et accéder à ces informations, y compris la coordination avec d'autres systèmes de gestion de l'information, restent faibles.
- Il est nécessaire d'intégrer les connaissances traditionnelles/autochtones dans le système de gestion de l'information environnementale.

Capacités organisationnelles

- De nombreux pays manquent de clarté dans la mise en place de leur structure organisationnelle qui permettrait de financer de manière adéquate la gestion de l'environnement.

Gouvernance environnementale

- Nombreux sont les pays qui ne disposent toujours pas d'un ensemble de politiques environnementales complètes et appropriées, avec des instruments législatifs et réglementaires inexistants ou non appliqués, ce qui rend encore plus difficile la gestion de l'environnement.

Suivi et évaluation

- Les pays assurent le suivi et l'évaluation de leurs projets, mais les connaissances produites ne sont pas utilisées de manière appropriée dans les processus décisionnels.

En dépit de quelques réalisations notables, les auto-évaluations ont surtout représenté une première étape vers un programme d'actions plus vaste visant à développer les capacités pour la gestion de l'environnement mondial. Les ANCR ont joué un rôle de catalyseur dans l'accord important trouvé entre les décideurs et les spécialistes et relatif à l'ensemble des capacités nécessaires pour atteindre et maintenir les objectifs environnementaux mondiaux, considérant les recommandations issues des ANCR comme un ensemble de mesures initiales devant être appuyées par la communauté internationale.
L'objectif du développement intersectoriel ciblé des capacités (CB2) au titre du programme FEM-5 (2010-2014) se fonde sur les recommandations issues des ANCR. Outre les 23 projets actuellement en cours d'exécution, les projets CB2 à venir tenteront de traiter ces défis urgents en termes de capacités et les priorités nécessaires pour renforcer les capacités d'un pays à respecter ses obligations prévues par les trois Conventions de Rio. Les projets ciblés de développement intersectoriel des capacités seront axés sur le renforcement des systèmes de gouvernance environnementale à travers la mise en place de mécanismes et d'outils visant à améliorer la collaboration, les systèmes de gestion de l'information, la prise de décision, ainsi que l'intégration des questions relatives à l'environnement mondial dans les programmes nationaux de développement. Les quatre cadres de programmation au titre du FEM-5[3] sont les suivants :

- Renforcer les capacités des parties prenantes à s'engager à travers un processus consultatif
- Produire, accéder et utiliser des informations et connaissances
- Renforcer les capacités pour élaborer des cadres politiques et législatifs
- Renforcer les capacités pour mettre en œuvre et gérer les lignes directrices des conventions mondiales

Ces projets seront également élaborés et mis en œuvre dans le cadre d'un programme global d'appui des donateurs aux pays. Dans le cadre du FEM-4, le Programme Mondial d'appui avait élaboré des lignes directrices afin d'assurer le suivi des résultats issus des projets CB2[4] , après avoir produit un tableau de bord visant à noter les capacités développées dans le cadre d'un exercice d'évaluation de type série chronologique. Ces lignes directrices sont à un stade précoce de leur application, mais il est attendu qu'elles soient appliquées aux projets des domaines d'intervention, produisant ainsi un ensemble d'indicateurs utiles pour mesurer les résultats et la durabilité des interventions du FEM sur un ensemble plus large de pays.

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[3] Voir tableau 7, page 77, Résumé des négociations, Cinquième reconstitution du Fonds subsidiaire du FEM, GEF/C.37/3, 17 mai 2010, Fonds pour l'Environnement Mondial/Banque mondiale

[4] Voir Bellamy, Jean-Joseph and Kevin Hill (2010), "Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in Global Environment Facility Operations", Global Support Programme, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme, New York, USA.

Resumen Ejecutivo

Una asociación estratégica a final de los años 1990 entre la Secretaría del Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial (FMAM) y el PNUD llevó a la creación de la Iniciativa de Desarrollo de Capacidades (IDC). Esta fue una parte central del proceso para formular y promover un marco conceptual para la evaluación y desarrollo de las capacidades ambientales de país. Basado en una evaluación del desarrollo de capacidades en el portafolio de FMAM, las recomendaciones de la IDC formaron la base de la programación estratégica de FMAM sobre el desarrollo de capacidades. Esto llevó a la creación de las Auto Evaluaciones de Capacidades Nacionales.

Las primeras Auto Evaluaciones de Capacidades Nacionales (NCSA) empezaron en el 2002 con financiamiento del Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial (FMAM), siendo algunas implementadas por el Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD) y otras por el Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente (PNUMA). El objetivo principal del las NCSA era determinar los retos de las capacidades subyacentes del país para cumplir con sus compromisos ambientales globales, compromisos que están enmarcados por la Convención sobre Diversidad Biológica, la Convención para Combatir la Desertificación y la Sequía, y la Convención Marco sobre Cambio Climático. El valor total del portafolio de NCSA era US$ 28.9 millones, con una asignación promedio de US$ 200,000 por cada NCSA.

En el 2003, el FMAM aprobó el Enfoque Estratégico para Mejorar el Desarrollo de Capacidades, que delineó los principios guía y enmarcó la programación de los recursos FMAM. El enfoque estratégico reafirmó que las capacidades necesarias para cumplir los objetivos del medio ambiente global están relacionados muy de cerca con, y son dependientes de estas capacidades necesarias para cumplir prioridades ambientales nacionales más amplias. En adición a que el desarrollo de capacidades sea fomentado por las NCSA, el Enfoque Estratégico delineó otros tres caminos de desarrollo de capacidades; (i) el fortalecimientos de los componentes de desarrollo de capacidades en los proyectos de área focal FMAM; (ii) proyectos de desarrollo de capacidades dirigidos tanto dentro como a través de las áreas focales; y (iii) el programa de desarrollo de capacidades en los Países Menos Desarrollados y Pequeñas Islas Estados en Desarrollo.

Desde EL 2002, un total de 153 de 166 países elegibles recibieron financiamiento FMAM para implementar los proyectos NCSA. El PNUD fue la agencia implementadora del 76% de estos proyectos NCSA, seguido por PNUMA con 23%. EL Banco Mundial fue responsable del NCSA de Nigeria. En el 2004, FMAM aprobó el Programa de Apoyo Global (GSP) para proveer asistencia metodológica al los equipos de país de las NCSA, así como también para producir material de aprendizaje. Esto incluyó el Kit de Recursos de NCSA, que delineaba los enfoques básicos para la implementación de las NCSA, incluyendo requisititos de consulta, evaluaciones y análisis a ser realizados. EL PAG también produjo directrices para monitorear y evaluar el desarrollo de capacidades, que serían utilizadas como la primera de 3 etapas, de una serie programada para la evaluación de resultados de proyectos transversales de desarrollo de capacidades.

De los 119 países que completaron su NCSA, 23 países están en diversas etapas de la implementación de recomendaciones prioritarias identificadas en su Reporte Final y Plan de Acción de NCSA. Mientras que las NCSA fueron proyectos totalmente financiados, los proyectos de seguimiento de las NCSA, conocidos también como proyectos CB2, requieren cantidades iguales de recursos FMAM y co-financiamiento. Nueve (9) de 23 proyectos fueron aprobados para la región de la Comunidad Europea de Estados Independientes, con el resto distribuido por partes iguales entre otras regiones, con la excepción de la región Pacífica, la cual no tienen ningún proyecto CB2 al momento de este reporte.

Estos 23 proyectos CB2 generalmente se enfocan en sistemas de gobernabilidad ambiental y en la incorporación de temas globales del ambiente a los programas nacionales de desarrollo.

Las NCSA requerían que los países identificaran sus temas ambientales prioritarios como por ejemplo combatir la deforestación, promover la gestión sostenible de la tierra, o minimizar su vulnerabilidad al impacto del cambio climático. Ellos debían realizar un análisis de la causa raíz para determinar las capacidades institucionales (ej., conocimiento, sistemas de apoyo de decisiones, y estructuras de gobernabilidad) necesarias para cumplir con los objetivos del programa. Mientras que la evaluación temática para cada área focal identificaba las necesidades específicas de capacidad para esa preocupación ambiental particular, los reportes transversales (ó sinergías) tomaron un enfoque general para el entendimiento de los retos más básicos que enfrentan los países en el cumplimiento y sostenibilidad de los objetivos ambientales globales. Los últimos análisis fueron un catalizador importante, ayudando a los tomadores de decisiones y partes interesadas a obtener una mejor apreciación de los importantes vínculos entre las Convenciones, y las capacidades indicativas de sistemas adaptables.

Este análisis reveló que las cinco necesidades de desarrollo de capacidades más importantes para lograr y mantener resultados ambientales globales son: 1) conciencia pública y educación ambiental; 2) gestión e intercambio de información; 3) desarrollo y cumplimiento de políticas y marcos reguladores; 4) fortalecimiento de mandatos y estructuras organizacionales; 5) instrumentos económicos y mecanismos de financiamiento sostenible.

Al otro lado del espectro, los análisis de NCSA mostraron que las capacidades para negociar en la Conferencia de las Partes de la Convención fueron de una prioridad relativamente baja, con solo 17 de 119 NCSA identificando esto como una necesidad de capacidad. De manera similar, solo 32 de 119 NCSA identificaron la gestión integrada del ecosistema como una prioridad.

El análisis de los 119 Reportes Finales y Planes de Acción de las NCSA dio como resultado mayor entendimiento sobre la búsqueda de país para lograr compromisos ambientales. Organizado bajo los cinco tipos principales de capacidades para lograr y mantener los objetivos ambientales globales, las lecciones clave aprendidas son:

Compromiso de las Partes Interesadas:

- Es necesario que todas las partes involucradas tengan un sentido de preparación, incluyendo a nivel político, para poder lograr y mantener los objetivos ambientales globales.
- Lograr sostenibilidad ambiental necesita el compromiso de las partes interesadas, que a su vez es predicada en su nivel de concienciación y entendimiento, así como tener las habilidades para tomar acción.
- Las ONG y Organizaciones con base en la Comunidad, tienen que estar completamente comprometidas para poder llegar a las comunidades marginalizadas, quienes a su vez comprometen a las partes interesadas de la sociedad civil.
- Son necesarias metodologías de mejores prácticas para comprometer a las partes interesadas.
- El proceso de las NCSA fue innovador, beneficiándose de la participación amplia e interactiva de las partes interesadas, que hizo las evaluaciones altamente relevantes.

Gestión y Conocimiento de Información

- Aunque no completa, la información ambiental existe. Sin embargo, las capacidades para acceder y manejar esta información, incluyendo coordinación con otros sistemas de gestión de información permanece débil.
- Hay una necesidad de incorporar

conocimientos tradicionales/indígenas al sistema de gestión de información ambiental.

Capacidades Organizacionales

- A muchos países les hace falta claridad en su montaje organizacional para poder financiar adecuadamente la gestión ambiental.

Gobernabilidad Ambiental

- A muchos países aún les hace falta políticas ambientales comprensivas y adecuadas, con instrumentos legislativos y regulatorios faltantes o no obligados que entorpecen aún más la gestión ambiental

Monitoreo y Evaluación

- Los países están monitoreando y evaluando sus proyectos, pero el conocimiento que es generado no está siendo utilizado adecuadamente en los procesos de toma de decisiones.

A pesar de algunos logros notables, las NCSA fueron un paso inicial hacia el más grande programa de esfuerzo para desarrollar capacidades en nombre del medio ambiente global. Las NCSA catalizaron un acuerdo exaltado entre los creadores de políticas y practicantes sobre el conjunto total de capacidades necesarias para lograr y mantener los objetivos ambientales globales, sustentando las recomendaciones de las NCSA como un conjunto de acciones iniciales para apoyo de la comunidad internacional.

El enfoque del desarrollo transversal de capacidades dirigido (CB2) en FMAM-5 (2010-2014), construye sobre estas recomendaciones de NCSA. Además de los 23 proyectos existentes que están en operación actualmente, los proyectos CB2 futuros enfrentarán esos retos urgentes de capacidad y prioridades necesarias para mejorar la habilidad del país para cumplir sus obligaciones bajo las tres Convenciones de Rio. Los proyectos dirigidos de desarrollo transversal de capacidades se enfocarán en el fortalecimiento de los sistemas de gobernabilidad ambiental a través de mecanismos y herramientas para la mejor colaboración, sistemas de gestión de información, y toma de decisiones, así como la incorporación de temas ambientales globales a los programas nacionales de desarrollo. Los cuatro marcos programáticos en FMAM-5[5] son:

- Mejorar las capacidades de las partes interesadas para comprometerse a través de todo el proceso de consultas.
- Generar, acceder y utilizar información y conocimiento
- Fortalecer las capacidades para desarrollar marcos de políticas y legislativos
- Fortalecer capacidades para implementar y manejar las directrices de convención globales

Estos proyectos también serán desarrollados e implementados como parte de un programa global de apoyo de donantes a países. En FMAM-4, el GSP desarrolló directrices para monitorear los resultados de los proyectos CB2[6], habiendo producido una tarjeta de puntuación para calificar las capacidades desarrolladas como parte de un ejercicio de evaluación programado a plazos. Estas directrices están en su etapa temprana de aplicación, con la expectativa de que serán aplicadas a los proyectos de área focal, produciendo un conjunto valioso de indicadores para medir los logros y sostenibilidad del conjunto más amplio intervenciones de país de FMAM.

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[5] Vea Tabla 7, Resumen de Negociaciones, Quinto Reabastecimiento del Fideicomiso de FMAM, FMAM/c.37/3, Mayo 17, 2010, Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial/Banco Mundial.

[6] Vea Bellamy, Jean-Joseph y Kevin Hill (2010) "Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in Global Environment Facility Operations", Programa de Apoyo Global, Agencia para Política de Desarrollo, Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, Nueva York, USA.

INTRODUCTION

1. The National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) programme was launched by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in January 2000, with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the implementing agencies. The NCSA initiative is among the most extensive of the GEF's enabling activity initiatives, delving into an assessment of countries' foundational capacities to meet global environmental objectives. That is, assessing the key individual, organizational, and systemic capacities needed to sustain achievements that satisfy the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), collectively known as the Rio Conventions, and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). From a national perspective, the distinction between global and national environmental outcomes is more abstract. The NCSAs may therefore be easier understood as an exercise to understand the key drivers of and barriers to sustained environmental protection and conservation, with particular reference to meeting and sustaining objectives codified within the Rio Conventions. The NCSA was therefore structured to produce certain key requirements, namely an in-depth analysis of the country's priority issues, capacity constraints, as well as opportunities to meet environmental goals and objectives as called for in the various articles of the Rio Conventions.

2. Building upon each country's unique set of experiences in addressing challenges for meeting commitments under the Rio Conventions, this report is intended to serve as a key tool for the broad set of social actors working to support capacity development priorities needed to meet and sustain both national and global environmental objectives. To this end, this report summarizes the main results from the NCSAs, identifying the common issues, challenges, priority capacity development needs, and recommendations for action to be undertaken through national or regional initiatives.

3. The report undertook the following steps to synthesize and analyze NCSA results: (i) a review of all NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans to extract critical parameters from each NCSA. A total of 119 reports[7] were analyzed in detail by a group of independent reviewers. They used a standard set of criteria representing the main categories of issues to compile a summary record of these reports, documenting the priority environmental issues, the capacity development needs, and the proposed actions; (ii) a review of related capacity development project documents[8]; and (iii) semi-structured interviews with a dozen key NCSA informants to provide a more rounded narrative of the context and complexity of approaches to assess capacity development needs and strategize priorities.

4. This methodology served only to validate the findings, allowing for a synthesis of the results. The methodology did not allow for an explanation as to why priority rankings were either high or low, but that they raised certain questions that decision-makers are certainly likely to ask, and thus requiring further research. The audience of this report includes the countries that undertook NCSAs; the GEF and its Implementing Agencies; other multilateral and bilateral donors supporting environmental capacity development; and other capacity development practitioners.

5. This report is organized into five chapters. Following this introduction, an overview of the NCSA programme and the concept of capacity development as used by the GEF are presented in Chapter 2. A summary of the NCSA results follows in Chapter 3, with Chapter 4 outlining some of the main lessons learned. Chapter 5 concludes with a discussion of the NCSA programme. Select NCSA and targeted cross-cutting capacity development (CB-2) projects profiles are annexed to this Report.

[7] The remaining 27 NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans were not analyzed due to either the language or their non-availability. In most cases, the NCSA was still under implementation.

[8] These are also referred to as CB-2 Projects.

THE NATIONAL CAPACITY SELF-ASSESSMENTS

2.1 Policy Framework for Capacity Development

6. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness committed to supporting recipient countries' efforts in strengthening their national capacities and national development strategies in 2005, which built upon the OECD's 2003 Declaration adopted at the High-Level Forum on Harmonization in Rome and the core principles put forward at the Marrakech Roundtable on Managing for Development Results in 2004. The Paris Declaration is based on the OECD's recognition that planning and management capacities are critical to meeting development objectives, requiring consensus-building in the early stages of problem identification and problem-solving, with crucial monitoring and evaluation approaches as part of the deep analysis necessary for effective adaptive management. The OECD also recognized that it is the responsibility of partner countries to develop their necessary capacities within the broader social, political, and economic environment, with donor countries playing a supporting role (OECD, 2005).

7. Based on donors' experience, the Paris Declaration is built on five principles of partnership commitments, namely:

a. ***Ownership:*** Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategize and coordinate development actions;
b. ***Alignment:*** Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, organizations, and procedures;
c. ***Harmonization:*** Donors' actions are more harmonized, transparent, and collectively effective;
d. ***Managing For Results:*** Managing resources and improving decision-making for desired results; and
e. ***Mutual Accountability:*** Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

8. Following the Paris Declaration, Member States have called for the United Nations (UN) system to enhance its efforts, particularly at the country level, to support national capacity development; they view capacity development as a comparative advantage of the UN development system. A UN Development Group (UNDG) position paper, *Enhancing the UN's Contribution to National Capacity Development* (UNDG, 2006), laid out a new framework for the UN's work at the country level to enhance its contribution to national capacity development. At the core of their work, UN country teams are to integrate the principles of capacity development with the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

9. The UN country teams are also to situate their capacity development work within national policy and development plans. To this end, the teams would assess the level of national and local capacity assets while responding to the identified capacity needs by drawing on, or feeding into, national or sector capacity assessments and capacity development strategies. By unpacking capacity development into tangible components, countries could design and implement targeted policy and programme interventions.

10. In order to integrate a capacity development framework in the UNDAF and country programmes, the UNDG suggests that a series of five (5) steps be followed[9]:

a. Engage partners and build consensus
b. Assess capacity assets and needs
c. Formulate capacity development strategies
d. Implement capacity development strategies
e. Monitor and evaluate capacity development efforts

[9] These are the based on UNDP's approach to capacity development, as described in *Capacity Development: A Primer* (UNDP, 2009)

11. Guidance from the Conventions to the GEF also assigns growing importance to countries' capacities. Guidance from the Conference of the Parties (COP) for the CBD and the FCCC have requested the GEF to provide funding for country-driven capacity development activities in developing country parties, in particular, Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The FCCC adopted a framework for capacity development in developing countries and requested the GEF and other organizations to support its implementation. Both the CCD and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants highlighted the need to emphasize capacity development to assist countries in meeting their commitments under the respective Conventions.

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI), a strategic partnership between the GEF Secretariat and UNDP, was a central part of the process to formulate and promote a conceptual framework for assessing and developing country capacities.

12. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI), a strategic partnership between the GEF Secretariat and UNDP, was a central part of the process to formulate and promote a conceptual framework for assessing and developing country capacities. Based on an assessment of capacity development in the GEF portfolio, the CDI's recommendations formed the basis of the GEF's strategic programming on capacity development (GEF/UNDP, 2000).

13. The resulting *GEF Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building* was approved in 2003, with the guiding principle that the capacities necessary to provide global environmental objectives are closely related to, and must be integrated with, capacities to meet broader environmental goals at the national level. Whereas the GEF had previously targeted capacity development through focal area interventions, the Strategic Approach now focused attention on the cross-cutting capacities that underpin action to meet global environmental objectives. Under this strategic approach, four pathways formed the basis of GEF programming on capacity development:

I. National Capacity Self-Assessments
II. Strengthening capacity building components of GEF projects
III. Targeted capacity building projects both within and across focal areas
IV. Country capacity development programmes in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

14. More recently, capacity development was included as a key approach in the GEF business plan 2008-2010. To further operationalize the Strategic Approach, the GEF would support novel approaches and modalities that help countries demonstrate impact and ensure cost-effectiveness, while still meeting global environmental objectives. To this end, the GEF allocated programme funds to support the strengthening of client countries' targeted cross-cutting capacity development needs as identified in their NCSA Final Report and Action Plans.

15. However, while capacity development through focal area programmes is a fundamental aspect of the GEF's work, it remains at the same time a difficult approach to implement (UNDP, 2002). The assessment phase of the CDI had previously indicated that even with a general consensus on the building blocks of capacities to meet and sustain global environmental objectives, most development cooperation organizations still did not have a clear strategy to operationalize them (GEF, 2001:19). A number of initiatives are working to further the concepts and approaches.

16. The GEF has and continues to support a number of enabling activity projects in client countries, which, through their process of stake-

holder consultation and expert analyses, have helped build important national capacities for managing the global environment. These include the focal area enabling activities such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (CBD), the National Action Programmes (CCD), and the National Adaptation Programmes of Action and National Communications under the FCCC.

17. One such initiative is UNDP's Energy and Environment Group (EEG) within the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP). Since 2009, UNDP/BDP/EEG has been undertaking a consultative and in-depth analysis of the capacity assessment and development process with a view to further elaborate conceptual approaches and practical guidance on environmental sustainability for the organization and its partners' practitioners. The final *Guidance Note on Capacity Development for Environmental Sustainability* is expected to be completed by late 2010. It will provide practical tools for environmental sustainability agents, which they can use at each stage of the capacity assessment and development process.

18. UNEP is also highly engaged in capacity development, with their over-arching approach being based on the Earth Summit's *Agenda 21*, especially the essence of Chapter 37, which states that capacity building is central to the quest for sustainable development. In February 2001, UNEP's Governing Council requested the Executive Director to prepare guidelines on compliance with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and the capacity needs for their enforcement. These guidelines recognize that bolstered capacities are needed for countries to meet and sustain their MEA commitments. UNEP's guidelines make special recognition of the challenges countries face to meeting these commitments, given the underlying conditions of poverty and poor governance, conditions that need to be addressed through other appropriate programmes.

2.2 Conceptual Framework for Capacity Development

19. There is broad agreement that capacity in the context of development cooperation refers to "the ability of people, organizations, and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully" (OECD/DAC 2006). Capacity is the sum of a series of conditions, intangible assets, and relationships: all part of an organization or system being distributed at multiple levels. Individuals have personal abilities and attributes, or competencies that contribute to the performance of the system. Organizations and larger systems have a broad range of collective attributes, skills, abilities, and expertise, collectively termed *capabilities*. Capabilities can be both technical (e.g., policy analysis, natural resource assessment, financial resource management) and social-relational (e.g., mobilizing and engaging actors to collaborate towards a shared purpose across organizational boundaries, creating collective meaning and identity, managing the tensions between collaboration and competition). Finally, capacity refers to the overall ability of a system to perform and sustain itself[10].

20. The OECD defines capacity development as "the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time" (OECD, 2006). UNDP defines capacity development as "the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time" (UNDP, 2009).

21. UNEP defined capacity building as "a holistic enterprise, encompassing a multitude of activities [that includes] building abilities, relationships and values that will enable organizations, groups and individuals to improve their performance and achieve their development objectives" (UNEP, 2002). They acknowledged that capacity development encompasses the acquisition of skills and knowl-

[10] See the study on *"Capacity, Change and Performance"* conducted by the European Center for Development Policy Management; which explored the concepts of capacity and capacity development (http://www.ecdpm.org/).

edge for individuals, but also the improvements of institutional structures, mechanisms, procedures, and finally the strengthening of an enabling environment with adequate policies and laws.

22. The CDI undertaken by UNDP and the GEF Secretariat identified the need for capacity development actions to intervene at three levels:

a. At the ***individual level,*** capacity development refers to the process of changing attitudes and behaviors, most frequently through imparting knowledge and developing skills through training. However, it also involves learning-by-doing, participation, ownership, and processes associated with increasing performance through changes in management, motivation, morale, and improving accountability and responsibility.
b. At the ***organizational level,*** capacity development focuses on overall performance and functioning capabilities, such as developing mandates, tools, guidelines, and management information systems to facilitate and catalyze organizational change. At the organizational level, capacity development aims to develop a set of constituent individuals and groups, as well as to strengthen links with its environment.
c. At the ***systemic level,*** capacity development is concerned with the "enabling environment", i.e., the overall policy, economic, regulatory, and accountability frameworks within which organizations and individuals operate. Relationships and processes between organizations, both formal and informal, as well as their mandates, are important.

23. Common to these definitions is the clear attribution of capacity to a specific objective: *Capacity is a means to achieve something, not an end in itself.* For the GEF, this objective must be in accordance with the GEF Instrument, where GEF funds are an additional source of funds to meet the incremental cost of providing global environmental benefits in focal areas. Further bounding of this objective is guided by policy decisions from the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the global environmental Conventions, and incorporated into the GEF strategic programmes and objectives.

24. Capacity development in the GEF context is therefore those sets of capabilities needed to strengthen and sustain functional environmental management systems at the global level, recognizing that these systems must build upon national governance and management systems. For effective capacity development, the *GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Building* identified a set of 11 operational principles:

- Ensure national ownership and leadership
- Ensure multi-stakeholder consultations and decision-making
- Base capacity building efforts in self-needs assessment
- Adopt a holistic approach to capacity building
- Integrate capacity building in wider sustainable development efforts
- Promote partnerships
- Accommodate the dynamic nature of capacity building
- Adopt a learning-by-doing approach
- Combine programmatic and project-based approaches
- Combine process as well as product-based approaches
- Promote regional approaches

25. Reconciling these 11 principles with the UNDG and UNDP's capacity development approach (as stated in paragraph 10 above), UNDP classified the following five types of measurable capacities[11]:

- ***Capacities for engagement:*** Capacities of relevant individuals and organizations (resource users, owners, consumers, community and political leaders, private and public

[11] GEF, UNDP, UNEP, 2010, *Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in GEF operations*

sector managers and experts) to engage proactively and constructively with one another to manage a global environmental issue.

- ***Capacities to generate, access, and use information and knowledge:*** Capacities of individuals and organizations to research, acquire, communicate, educate, and make use of pertinent information, so as to be able to diagnose and understand global environmental problems and potential solutions.
- ***Capacities for policy and legislation development:*** Capacities of individuals and organizations to plan and develop effective environmental policy and legislation, related strategies, and plans based on informed decision-making processes for global environmental management.
- ***Capacities for management and implementation:*** Capacities of individuals and organizations to enact environmental policies or regulatory decisions, as well as plan and execute relevant sustainable global environmental management actions and solutions.
- ***Capacities to monitor and evaluate:*** Capacities of individuals and organizations to effectively monitor and evaluate project or programme achievements against expected results and to provide feedback for learning and adaptive management. Monitoring and evaluation serves to catalyze adjustments to the courses of action as necessary, enabling the realization of programme and project objectives.

26. The five strategic areas of capacity development support outlined above are directly correlated to an improved, more resilient, and sustainable environmental framework. Converting these assumptions into critical success factors, capacity development to meet and sustain national and global environmental objectives must satisfy the following criteria:

1. Capacity development requires ownership
2. Capacity development requires collaborative agreements
3. Capacity development is a continuous process
4. Capacity development requires relevant and valid information for effective decision-making
5. Capacity development requires incentives and resources
6. Capacity development needs to be part of early project design
7. Capacity development needs to build on existing structures and mechanisms
8. Capacity development needs a baseline
9. Capacity development needs benchmarks
10. Capacity development needs to be specific
11. Capacity development needs to be attributable

27. These 11 criteria point to a set of practices and approaches that are embodied within the innovative approach of adaptive collaborative management. Baseline indicators, benchmarks, and performance indicators are all a critical part of a monitoring and evaluation programme to catalyze the process of adaptive management. Capacity assessment methodologies should institutionalize measurable indicators within monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and structures that are part of the project implementation process. They should be managed in such a way as to help set and re-calibrate project outputs in line with expected outcomes under changing circumstances. See Annex 1 for further details.

2.3 Programming Capacity Development: The NCSA Approach

28. The primary objective of the NCSAs was to identify country level priorities and the capacities needed to address global environmental issues (with a focus on biological diversity, climate change, and land degradation). As a process, the NCSAs were intended to catalyze domestic or externally assisted action to meet those needs in a coordinated and planned manner (GEF, 2003). In order to delve into an assessment of the foundational capacities to meet and sustain global environmental objectives, the NCSAs were to explore the synergies among the thematic areas, as well as the linkages with wider concerns of environmental management and sustainable development, such as persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and biosafety.

29. Although countries could decide how far to extend the assessment of linkages between and among thematic areas and other socio-economic issues such as poverty, the level of NCSA funding provided by the GEF was set at US$ 200,000. The additional cost of assessing other themes and issues within the NCSA exercise would therefore require additional co-financing.

30. The NCSAs were not intended to be definitive or final, as the identification of needs and priorities is a dynamic process. Rather, the GEF envisaged the identification of capacity building needs as an ongoing process, to be taken up within national consultative structures and mechanisms designed to identify and programme future GEF support (e.g., GEF National Steering Committees). Additionally, NCSAs were neither seen as a precondition for GEF assistance through regular projects and enabling activities, nor as a necessary first step prior to launching capacity building activities in particular sectors.

31. A key principle of the NCSAs was that they must be entirely country-driven, undertaken by national institutions and experts to the extent feasible, and respond to national situations and priorities. Due to the wide variety of institutional arrangements, as well as the availability of human and institutional expertise, and the extent of prior and on-going work, countries were to choose their own methodological approach.

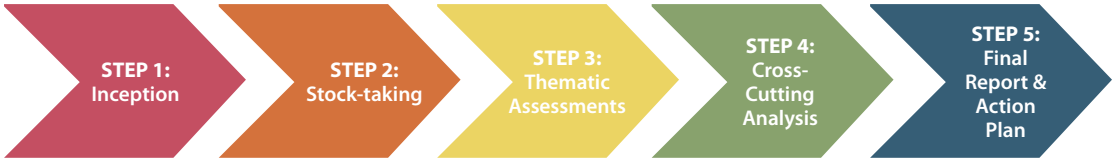
Responding to a strong demand from countries for methodological support, the GEF Council approved a Global Support Programme (GSP) in 2004 with a budget of US$ 2.9 million (US$ 1.9 million funded by the GEF) to support countries in the design and implementation of their NCSAs.

An Indian official and villagers in the Little Rann of Kutch discuss the threats to the endangered Indian Wild Ass. Photo by Kevin Hill.

32. Responding to a strong demand from countries for methodological support, the GEF Council approved a Global Support Programme (GSP) in 2004 with a budget of US$ 2.9 million (US$ 1.9 million funded by the GEF) to support countries in the design and implementation of their NCSAs. Jointly implemented by UNDP and UNEP, the GSP went on to develop guidance material, provide technical backstopping to NCSA country teams, analyze lessons learned from the NCSAs, and develop programming frameworks for the systematic implementation of cross-cutting capacity development priorities.

33. The GSP developed an NCSA Resource Kit, which outlined the basic steps that each NCSA country team were to follow, allowing for some flexibility in how they were to be operationalized (See Figure 1 below):

Figure 1: **The Five NCSA Steps**



STEP 1 - *Inception:* **During the inception phase, the administrative, management and consultative arrangements for the NCSA are to be decided and organized, and a work plan prepared. This may involve analytical work to identify linkages of the NCSA with past and on-going processes, as well as a stakeholder analysis to see which stakeholders should be involved, and a stakeholder involvement plan, which outlines how best to engage each group.**

STEP 2 - *Stocktaking Exercise:* **This step analyzes the current situation to set out the baseline of capacity development issues to be looked at in the next steps. The aim of this step is to ensure that the NCSA is built on other local or national work related to the Conventions and on past capacity development efforts. The stocktaking report should identify all national activities and documents that were relevant to the Convention themes, as well as core national environmental priorities. These include any laws, policies, plans, strategies, programmes, and project documents that may be useful for Steps 3 and 4. This step also involves reviewing past capacity assessments and assessing the strengths and weaknesses of previous capacity development efforts. The latter may include capacity-building projects, capacity components of broader projects, and mainstream programmes.**

STEP 3 - *Thematic Assessments:* **The main objective of the three thematic assessments is to analyze the country's obligations and opportunities from each MEA, and the country's performance and achievements to date. The output is to be a succinct picture of where we are now, including strengths and constraints in implementing the Conventions, as well as priority capacity needs. The thematic assessments would identify emerging cross-cutting needs that are to be analyzed in depth in Step 4. The assessments need not make recommendations, unless immediate improvements are possible.**

STEP 4 - *Cross-Cutting Analysis:* **The objective of the cross-cutting analysis is to assess capacity issues, needs, and opportunities that cut across the Conventions. This includes identifying those common needs and possible synergies that could be achieved in the country by addressing requirements across two or more themes. This analysis should also identify capacity needs that are common to both national and global environmental management, including the possible synergies between them. This step would result in a list of priority national capacity needs and opportunities for synergies. It could also identify possible capacity development actions that are to be developed in the action plan.**

STEP 5 - *Capacity Development Action Plan and NCSA Final Report:* **Drawing on the assessment of priority thematic and cross-cutting capacity needs, the action plan would outline a strategy of developing capacities to meet global and national environmental objectives, including specifying a set of actions. It should identify priority actions, time frame, possible funding, responsibilities, and outline a monitoring and evaluation plan to assess outcomes and impacts. While the action plan is recommended, it is not required. The only document required for submission to the GEF is the NCSA Final Report. This report is to summarize the work done under the NCSA, documenting the process used to produce the outputs, including the methods, tools and participants, and highlighting the major conclusions and lessons from the NCSA.**

34. Among the functions of the GSP was the convening of regional and sub-regional workshops, the aim of which was to facilitate the sharing of experiences and catalyzing the work of the NCSA country teams. A total of 14 such workshops were convened between 2004 and 2009, two of them prior to the establishment of the GSP (See Table 1 below). The workshops also helped clarify the broader development context of the NCSAs, such as demonstrating the linkages between the NCSAs and other capacity development initiatives, such as the joint European Commission/UNEP programme for the strategic implementation of MEAs in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific[12].

Among the functions of the GSP was the convening of regional and sub-regional workshops, the aim of which was to facilitate the sharing of experiences and catalyzing the work of the NCSA country teams.

***Table 1:* List of Regional and Sub-Regional Workshops**

Location	Region/ Sub-Region*	Date	# of Participants / # of countries
Bratislava, Slovakia	ECIS	14-15 September, 2004	N/A
Quito, Ecuador	LA	15-7 December, 2004	29/13
Tunis, Tunisia	MENA	17-19 June, 2005	37/10
Kingston, Jamaica	LAC	28 June – 1 July, 2005	N/A
Hanoi, Vietnam	Asia	26-28 October, 2005	36/8
Colombo, Sri Lanka	Asia	8-10 November, 2005	31/7
Nairobi, Kenya	E&S Africa	6-9 December, 2005	35/17
Dakar, Senegal	C&W Africa	19-22 April, 2006	N/A
Apia, Samoa	Pacific	2-5 May, 2006	N/A
Rabat, Morocco	MENA	7-10 June, 2006	N/A
Santiago, Chile	LAC	26-29 September, 2006	N/A
Bangkok, Thailand	Asia	20-23 November, 2006	60/9
Nairobi, Kenya	Africa	4-6 November, 2009	20/14
Nadi, Fiji	Pacific	16-18 November, 2009	19/9

**** ACRONYMS***

C&W Africa: *Central and West Africa*
E&S Africa: *East and Southern Africa*
ECIS: *Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States*
MENA: *Middle East and North Africa*
LAC: *Latin American and the Caribbean*

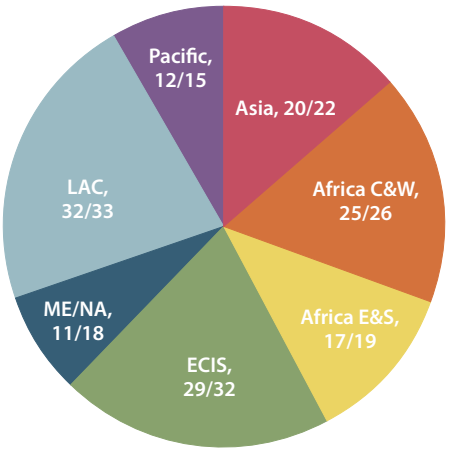
[12] Further information on the EC/UNEP Programme on MEA implementation for ACP countries can be found at http://www.unep.org/AfricanCaribbeanPacific/MEAs/index.asp

2.4 Overview of the NCSA Implementation

35. A total of 153 out of 165 eligible countries (93%) received GEF funding to implement an NCSA. Out of these 153 countries, seven NCSA projects were cancelled due to the non-delivery of NCSA products, with the remaining 146 projects implemented or under implementation. The value of the NCSA portfolio was US$ 28.7 million, with an average allotment of US$ 200,000 per NCSA. The NCSAs did not require any co-financing, with most countries contributing in-kind support to their implementation.

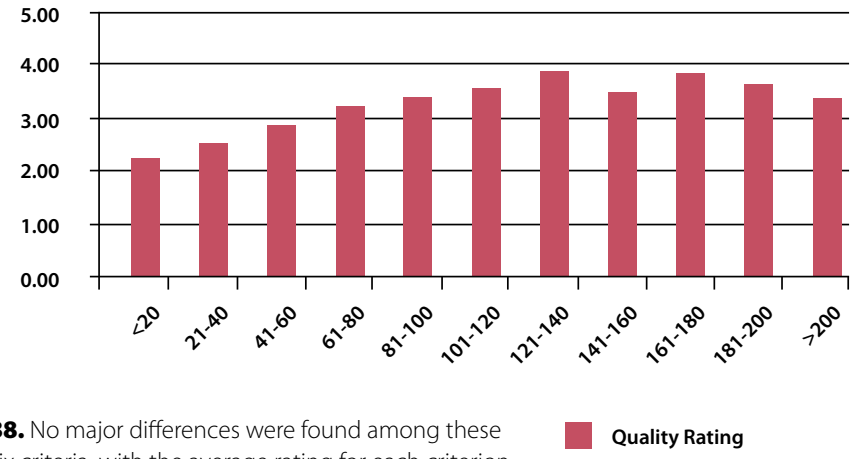
36. UNDP implemented the largest share of these NCSA projects (76%), followed by UNEP (23%). The World Bank implemented only one NCSA project (Nigeria). Figure 2 depicts the relative distribution of the NCSA across the seven sub-regions. While most of the eligible countries implemented an NCSA, only 61% of countries (11 out of 18 eligible countries) in the Middle East and North Africa undertook an NCSA.

***Figure 2:* NCSA Projects by Region**



37. As of April 2010, a total of 119 countries have completed their NCSA. The quality of the NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans were assessed by a team of independent reviewers and given an overall rating of 3.4 on a scale between 1 and 5, ranging from poor to excellent. This assessment was conducted using six criteria: (i) Clear identification of environmental issues and objectives; (ii) Identification of priority issues for each focal area and across focal areas; (iii) Adequate analysis of the identified capacity constraints; (iv) Capacity constraints are determined at the underlying system level; (v) Action Plan is clear and succinct; and (vi) Action Plan makes connections between environmental objectives and actions.

Figure 3: **NCSA report length vs. quality**



38. No major differences were found among these six criteria, with the average rating for each criterion ranging from 3.1 for (vi) to 3.6 for (iii). The weakest aspect of the NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans was the actual content of the action plans themselves, as well as the connection between environmental priorities and recommended actions. On the other hand, the most positive aspect of these same reports is that they gave an impressive analysis of their capacity constraints. When the data is disaggregated by groups of countries, such as LDC or SIDS countries, the results do not indicate significant differences from all other NCSA reports. Instead, as a group, the quality of their reports received an overall rating of 3.4.

39. Correlating the quality of the Final Reports and Action Plans with their length indicates that the quality increase if the report is longer. Reports with fewer than 40 pages had an average rating of 2.6, peaking at 4.0 for reports ranging in length between 121 and 140 pages. Longer reports had a slightly lower quality rating[13].

40. A review of the 119 NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans, as well as interviews with key informants, indicate that a significant number of countries experienced difficulties in implementing their NCSAs. Anecdotally, these implementation difficulties can be summarized into three main categories: (i) NCSA guidance was too broad, limiting NCSA country teams' ability to focus on specifics resulting in broad statements about issues, constraints, and capacity development needs and actions; (ii) NCSA guidance was too product-oriented and did not provide stronger guidance on various methodological approaches. NCSA country teams wanted more guidance on the 'how to', to help them plan the various self-assessment steps; and (iii) NCSA guidance on how to structure the various reports was insufficient, in particular the Final Report. The NCSAs also called for cultural elements to be taken into account when developing a methodology for a global programme. The take-away is that, given the unique culture and social dimensions of each country, NCSA methodology needs to be specifically tailored.

41. Of the 119 countries that have completed their NCSA, 23 countries are at different stages in implementing priority recommendations identified in their NCSA Final Report and Action Plans, while benefitting from the leveraging support of the GEF through follow-up cross-cutting capacity development projects, referred to as CB-2 projects. Nearly half of these projects were approved for the ECIS region, with the rest distributed equally among other regions, with the exception of the Pacific region.

[13] The differences may not be statistically significant. 1=poor; 2=fair; 3=satisfactory; 4=good; 5=excellent.

42. The CB-2 projects provide resources for reducing, if not eliminating, the institutional bottlenecks hampering the synergistic implementation of the Rio Conventions. The expected outcomes of these projects are, therefore, to strengthen multi-sectoral processes that promote policy harmonization, realize cost-efficiency, and enhance operational effectiveness in Convention obligations. Accordingly, the main focus of these CB-2 projects is on environmental governance systems, combined with mainstreaming global environmental issues into national development programmes. The CB-2 projects are organized under four programmatic frameworks:

a) Strengthening the policy, legislative, and regulative frameworks and their enforcement
b) Mainstreaming global environmental priorities into national policies and programmes
c) Improving national Convention institutional structures and mechanisms
d) Strengthening financial and economic instruments in support of the global environment

43. Table 2 below lists the 23 CB-2 projects that have been approved to date. A review of these projects indicates that countries tended to focus on strengthening their enabling policy and programme framework or their organizational capacities. Eight countries followed up with projects to mainstream global environmental management into national environmental management frameworks, with a strong emphasis on improving coordination of various focal areas. Nine countries opted to focus on developing national capacities to improve environmental governance and coordination.

CATEGORY		*NO. OF PROJECTS*
PF	*Policy and Programme Formulation*	*3*
EM	*Environmental Mainstreaming*	*8*
A	*Organizational and Individual Capacity Development*	*9*
FEI	*Finance and Economic Instruments*	*3*

Table 2: **List of Follow-up Projects by Country**

Country	Follow-up Project Title	Category
Armenia	Capacity building for optimization of information and monitoring systems	A
Belize	Strengthening institutional capacities for coordinating multi-sectoral environmental policies and programmes	A
Bhutan	Enhancing global environmental management in local governance systems	A
Bulgaria	Integrating global environmental issues into Bulgaria's regional development process	EM
Croatia	Using Common data flow system and indicators to enhance integrated management of global environmental issues	A
Egypt	Mainstreaming global environment in national plans and policies	EM
Gambia	Adoption of ecosystems approach for integrated implementation of MEAs at national and divisional levels	EM
Ghana	Establishing an effective and sustainable structure for implementing multilateral environment agreements	A
Jamaica	Piloting natural resource valuation within environmental impact assessments	FEI
Jordan	Bridging research and policy-making	PF
Kenya	Using enhanced regulatory and information systems for integrated implementation of MEAs	PF
Kyrgyzstan	Capacity building for improved national financing of global environment	FEI
Lao	Meeting the primary obligations of the Rio Conventions through strengthened capacity to implement natural resource legislation	PF
Morocco	Mainstreaming GE in Morocco's NHDI	EM
Moldova	Strengthening environmental fiscal reform for national and global environment management	FEI
Montenegro	Capacity building for integration of global environment commitments in investment/development decisions	EM
Namibia	Developing capacities to implement the MEAs	A
Nicaragua	Mainstreaming multilateral environmental agreements in environmental legislation	EM
Philippines	Strengthening coordination for effective environmental management	A
Romania	Strengthening capacity to integrate environment and natural resource management for global environmental benefits	EM
Seychelles	Implementing Capacity development for improved national and international environmental management	A
Tajikistan	Implementing Community learning and institutional capacity building for global environmental management	EM
Uzbekistan	Strengthening national capacity in Rio Convention implementation through targeted institutional strengthening and professional development	A

NCSA RESULTS

44. As described in paragraph 28, the objective of the NCSAs were to identify country level priorities and assess the capacities needed to address global environmental issues, in particular biological diversity, climate change, and land degradation, with the aim of catalyzing actions to meet those needs in a coordinated and planned manner. These actions include the search for synergies and linkages among the aforementioned focal areas, as well as the wider concerns of environmental management and sustainable development (such as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and biosafety).

45. The NCSAs were structured to assess the capacity development objectives of the Rio Conventions, in particular the cross-cutting analyses. Considering the guidance and obligations stated by each multilateral environmental agreement, the synthesis of NCSA results are based on an assessment of the five types of capacities identified in paragraph 25:

Table 3: **NCSA alignment with MEAs obligations**

Type of Capacity	FCCC	Montreal Protocol	CBD	CCD	POPs
Stakeholder Engagement	Article 4 Article 6	Article 9	Article 10 Article 13	Article 5 Article 9 Article 10 Article 19	Article 10
Information Management and Knowledge	Article 4 Article 5	Article 3 Article 7 Article 9	Article 12 Article 14 Article 17 Article 26	Article 9 Article 10 Article 16	Article 7 Article 9 Article 15
Organizational Capacities	Article 4	Article 10	Article 8 Article 9 Article 11 Article 16 Article 20 Article 21	Article 4 Article 5 Article 12 Article 13 Article 18 Article 20 Article 21	Article 5 Article 13
Environmental Governance	Article 4	Article 4	Article 6 Article 14 Article 19 Article 22	Article 4 Article 5 Article 8 Article 9 Article 10	Article 3 Article 5 Article 7
Monitoring and Evaluation		Article 6	Article 7		Article 4 Article 11 Article 16

46. The alignment between the NCSA objectives and the country commitments to the MEAs is intended to facilitate countries' first step towards developing the capacities for an effective environmental management framework. The relevance of the NCSAs is also strengthened by identifying achievable economies of scale in shared capacities to meet both national and global environmental priorities. The validity and usefulness of NCSA findings depend greatly on the ownership of these findings by the respective country stakeholders, particularly the environmental decision-makers. Greater collaboration with the Conventions, specifically the Joint Liaison Group created to explore synergies among the three Rio Conventions, may likely have provided a greater validation and usefulness of NCSA findings through the COP process of each Convention.

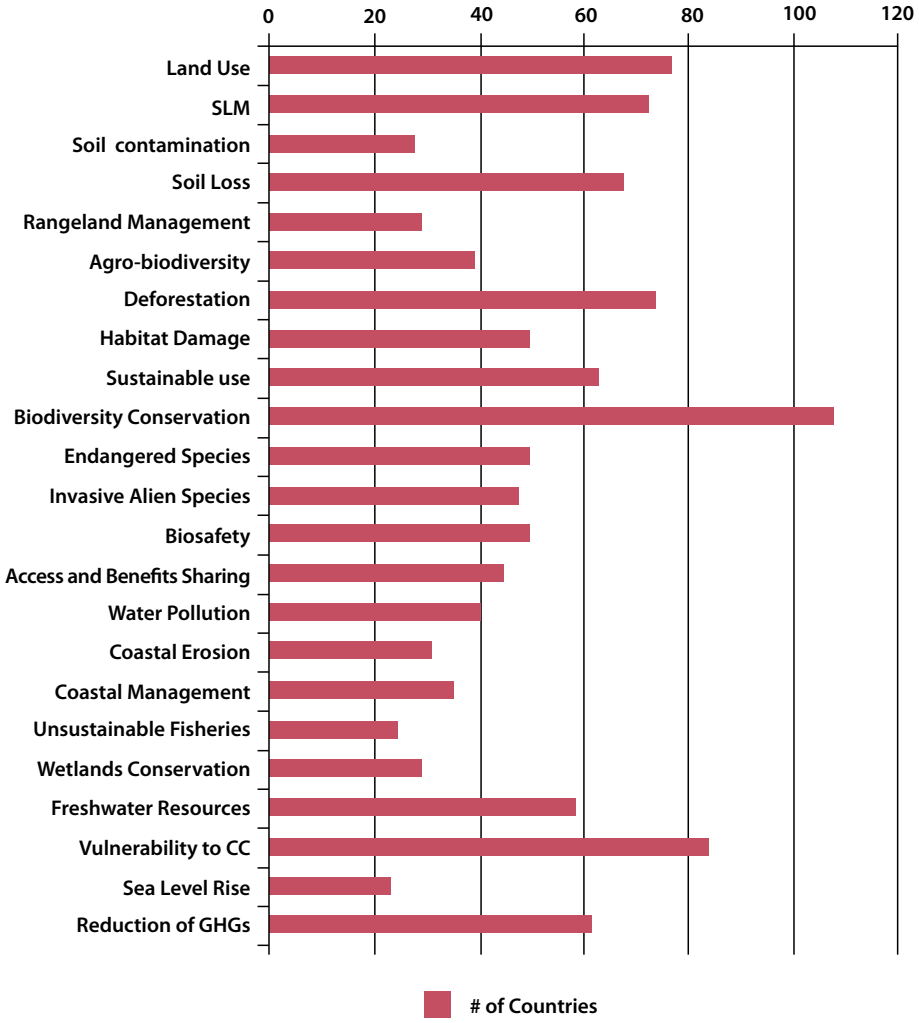
3.1 Assessments by Focal Areas

47. The NCSA methodology included a stocktaking exercise, which involved the identification of national activities relevant to Convention themes, as well as core national environmental priorities, including the review of related capacity assessments. This was followed by thematic assessments to analyze the countries' obligations and opportunities arising from each MEA, mirrored with the country's performance and achievements to date. The assessments looked at the strengths and constraints in implementing the Rio Conventions, as well as countries' priority capacity needs. Table 4 below summarizes the number of countries that identified priority environmental issues.

48. Countries identified other issues of priority concern, such as poverty and gender issues, which are summarized in Section 3.1.5.

The alignment between the NCSA objectives and the country commitments to the MEAs is intended to facilitate countries' first step towards developing the capacities for an effective environmental management framework.

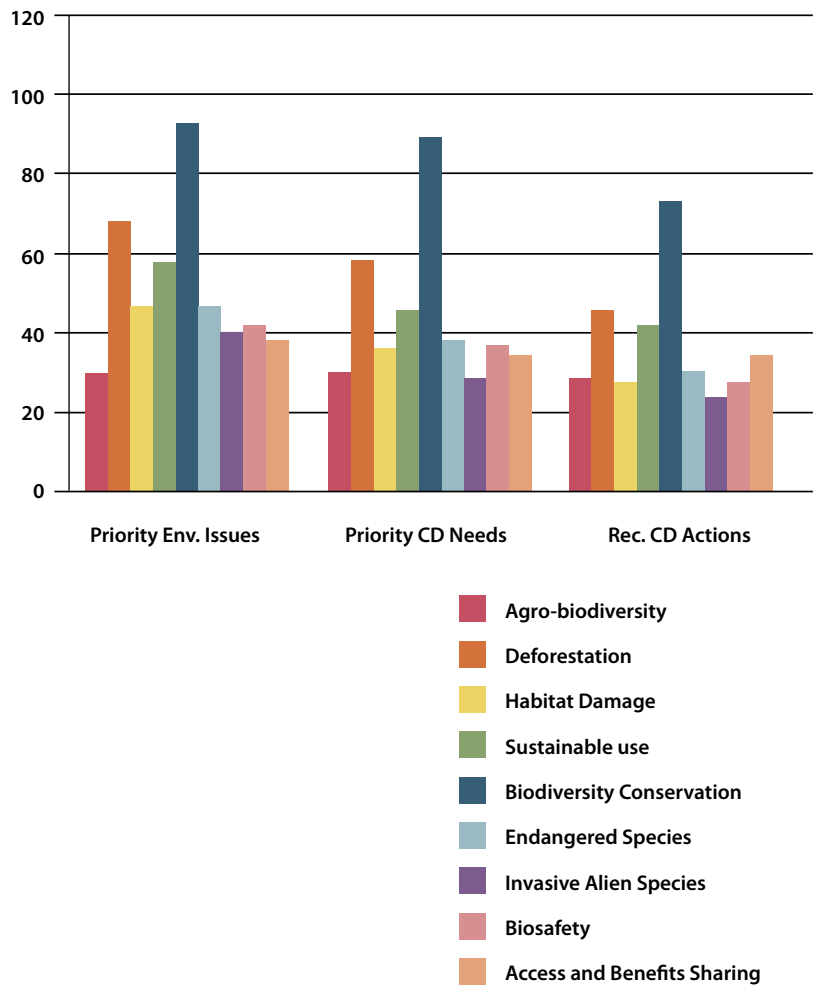
Figure 4: **Number of countries identifying their priority environmental concern (n=119)**



3.1.1 Biodiversity

49. The environmental issues related to biodiversity were organized into nine categories. Most biodiversity issues are related to biodiversity conservation, deforestation and sustainable use; only 19 countries (out of 119) did not state any biodiversity issues as priority environmental issues.

Figure 5: **Number of countries identifying priority biodiversity needs and actions (n=119)**



50. The NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans indicate that the biodiversity focal area is a priority environmental issue in most countries. Most biodiversity themes are high priority environmental issues, with agro-biodiversity having the lowest priority (26% of countries stating this theme as a priority environmental issue).

51. However, fewer countries ranked priority capacity development needs for biodiversity when compared to their ranking of priority environmental issues. An average of 44 countries identified each theme as needing some capacity development action, with the exception of invasive alien species, which accounted for only 28 countries. Overall, 75% of the countries recognized biodiversity conservation as a priority need for some capacity development action. The percentage of countries recommending action is less than half, with about 31% of countries stating at least one biodiversity theme as a recommended CCD action.

Mali:
- **Insufficient qualified technical staff**
- **Low public awareness of local communities**
- **Insufficient management capacities**

Sierra Leone:
- **Lack of a database to inventory species, habitats and ecosystems**
- **Inadequate protected are coverage**
- **Insufficient protection of wetland and marine ecosystems**

Benin:
- **Non-involvement of development stakeholders**
- **Marginalization of local communities**
- **Overall inadequate consultative process**

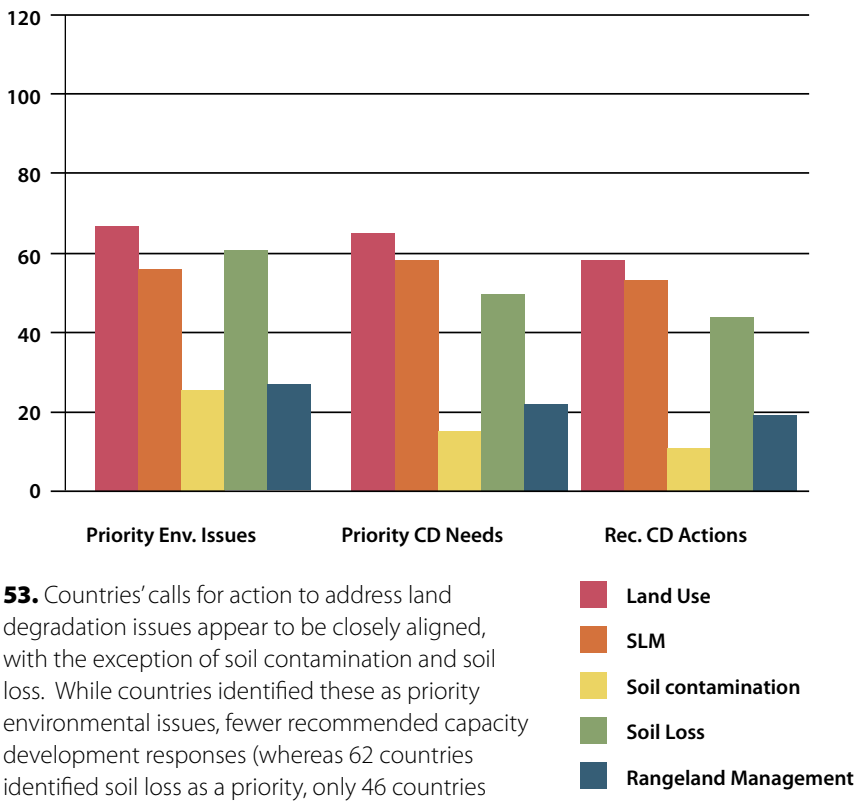
Cameroon:
- **Insuffucuent qualifies technical staff**
- **Insufficient research**
- **Low public awareness**
- **Inadequate understanding of biodivesity values and synergies**

3.1.2 Land Degradation

52. There were five categories of priority environmental issues surrounding land degradation. Fewer countries identified soil contamination and rangeland management as priority environmental issues; whereas poor land use practices and soil loss were issues of higher concern.

Land degradation is an important environmental issue in countries that have a large population intimately dependent on the land, such as Mongolia, where over-grazing is of major concern due to increased livestock numbers that surpass the carrying capacity of grazing land.

Figure 6: **Number of countries identifying priority land degradation needs and actions (n=119)**



53. Countries' calls for action to address land degradation issues appear to be closely aligned, with the exception of soil contamination and soil loss. While countries identified these as priority environmental issues, fewer recommended capacity development responses (whereas 62 countries identified soil loss as a priority, only 46 countries recommended some capacity development response).

54. Land degradation is an important environmental issue in countries that have a large population intimately dependent on the land, such as Mongolia, where over-grazing is of major concern due to increased livestock numbers that surpass the carrying capacity of grazing land. The land and the already limited water resources are further stressed due to the establishment of permanent settlements of the heretofore transhumant herders. Increasing pressure on grazing resources due to an increase of livestock is challenging the maximum carrying capacity of these resources.

55. In Tunisia, the capacity development priorities to meet CCD commitments lie in the need to identify indicators that measure the performance of various land degradation programmes and projects. Other priorities include the need to integrate land degradation programmes and projects into development plans, strengthen technical know-how among development practitioners, and improve coordination among the various organizations and agencies that have a stake in land management issues.

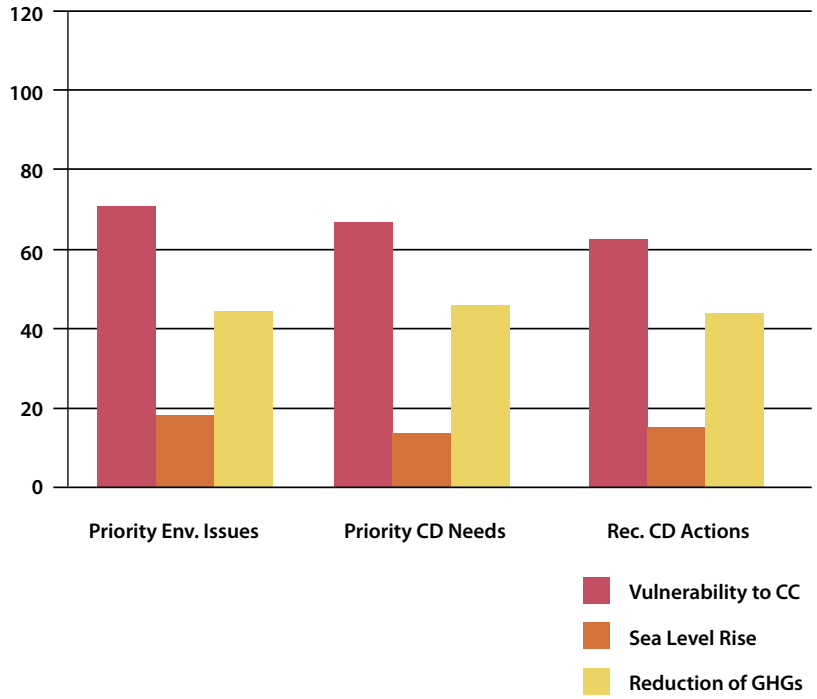
56. Belize faces similar challenges in terms of insufficiently trained civil servants to combat land degradation and meet CCD commitments. An important priority is to give greater attention to communities at risk and to include their representation in policy and programming consultations. Of high importance is the need to develop and maintain a comprehensive database for land water resources data storage, analysis, and dissemination.

3.1.3 Climate Change

57. The environmental issues related to climate change were organized in three categories, with most countries identifying vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and the need to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (60 to 70 countries out of 119). Forty out of 119 countries did not state any climate change as a priority environmental issue. Interestingly, of the 28 small island developing countries (SIDS) only nine identified sea-level rise as a priority climate change concern.

58. If a country identified climate change as a priority environmental issue, they also tended to recommend the need for some capacity development action. Not so in the case of sea-level rise. While countries might have identified sea-level rise as a priority environmental issue, fewer countries identified a need for priority development of appropriate capacities (18 countries said sea-level rise was of immediate concern, and yet only 15 called for some action).

Figure 7: **Number of countries identifying priority climate change needs and actions (n=119)**



59. As a non-annex 1 country, Sri Lanka is not bound to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. The country's focus is instead on assessing their vulnerability to climate change as well as the development and transfer of technologies for adapting to the impacts of climate change. Through a prioritization process, Sri Lanka identified 12 requirements to address their vulnerability and adaptation measures. These include the mapping of vulnerable areas to climate change, the assessment of sea-level rise and its impact on flora and fauna, the assessment of ground water supplies in drought affected areas, and the set-up of applied research to study the impact of environmental issues on human health.

60. India, on the other hand, determined a number of important climate change priorities: the need to improve the quality of national greenhouse gas inventories; to improve regional and sectoral assessments of vulnerabilities and adaptation responses; to communicate information on a continuous basis; to integrate the diverse scientific assessments and link them with policy-making; and to develop innovative technical and financial mechanisms through public-private partnerships for addressing the issue of climate change mitigation as well as adaptation.

61. For their part, Belarus' legislative framework is not adequate to enforce FCCC obligations. Belarus also needs to strengthen sectoral programmes that will result in reduced GHG emissions, as well as facilitate appropriate structural adaptations to the impacts of climate change. Much of these challenges are also the result of insufficient national expertise and lukewarm political will and incentives to meet FCCC commitments.

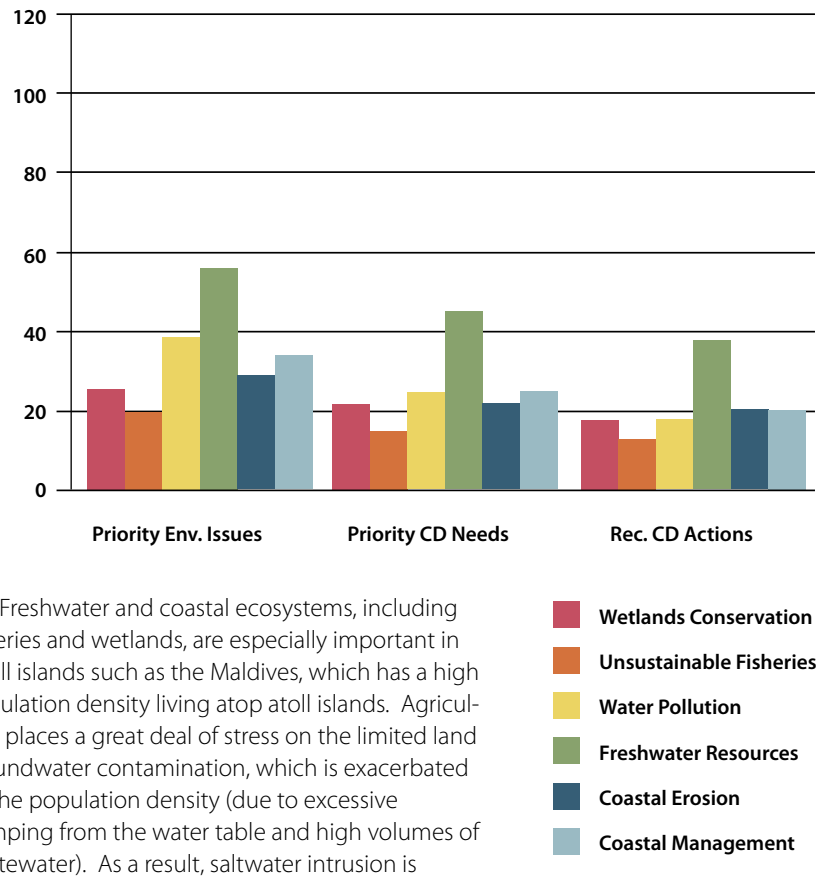
3.1.4 Freshwater and Coastal Ecosystems, including Fisheries and Wetlands

62. Among this group of water-related resources, freshwater resources was the most important environmental priority and need, with 56 out of 119 countries calling for capacity development action,

followed by water pollution with 39 out of 119 countries. Almost as many, 35 out of 119 countries did not identify any water-related resource management as a priority environmental issue.

63. Whereas countries appear to be consistent in prioritizing these environmental issues at the same rate as capacity development need and recommended action, the same does not appear to be so for water pollution. Whereas 39 countries identified water pollution as a top environmental priority, only half as many (18 countries) called for some capacity development action.

Figure 8: **Number of countries identifying priority water-related resource needs and actions (n=119)**



64. Freshwater and coastal ecosystems, including fisheries and wetlands, are especially important in small islands such as the Maldives, which has a high population density living atop atoll islands. Agriculture places a great deal of stress on the limited land groundwater contamination, which is exacerbated by the population density (due to excessive pumping from the water table and high volumes of wastewater). As a result, saltwater intrusion is further degrading the aquifers. Small Islands Developing States, because of their particular geographical configuration and location, are especially challenged to meet commitments under the MEAs, where many of the issues naturally interact and exacerbate each other.

Freshwater and coastal ecosystems, including fisheries and wetlands, are especially important in small islands such as the Maldives, which has a high population density living atop atoll islands.

65. In China, water issues include wetland pollution and reclamation, as well as over-exploitation of water resources. China's capacity development recommendations include carrying out wetland conservation and engineering projects to restore and protect critical habitats and ecosystems such as lakes, estuaries, bays, coastal wetlands, mangrove forests, coral reefs, and seaweed beds.

66. For Bangladesh, flooding was highlighted as a priority environmental issue, calling for strengthened flood control policies to minimize the impact of riverbank erosion and ease drainage congestion. A Least Developed Country (LDC), Bangladesh has a high population density, with a large portion living in marginal lands, including the extensive floodplains of the Ganges Delta and nearby Sundarbans. This may explain why so many of the issues identified in the Rio Conventions are of high priority to Bangladesh.

3.1.5 Other Environmental Priorities

67. The initial guidance material for conducting the NCSAs focused on a thematic assessment for each of the three ratified Rio Conventions (CBD, CCD, and FCCC). As the NCSA process evolved over the years, countries were also encouraged to look into other environmental focal areas, particularly those that are related to the global environmental agenda. Water-related issues were an additional focus that a number of countries opted to include as part of their analysis of capacity constraints, as well as persistent organic pollutants, among others. A

number of countries considered other environmental issues a national priority of equal (if not greater) importance as that of the countering global significance. In these cases, countries felt that global environmental commitments could not be met without addressing the more visible and near-term priorities of issues such as health and sanitation. Other key environmental priorities highlighted in the NCSAs include:

- Air pollution: urban air quality
- Pollution in the urban environment
- Toxic wastes and hazardous chemicals
- Food security
- Disaster preparedness

3.1.6 Synergies across Focal Areas

68. Although a considerable amount of capacities have been developed through focal area interventions, the NCSAs were unique in assessing the capacities that cut across, or are common to, the focal areas. The NCSAs were to identify ways to promote linkages among the various provisions of the Rio Conventions as part of the cross-cutting thematic assessment phase.

69. A review of the NCSAs showed that countries were able to identify a number of important synergies via the NCSA cross-cutting analysis, including requirements for reporting, research, training, public education, awareness, and the national exchange of information. The cross-cutting analyses were an important catalyst in helping decision-makers and other stakeholders to gain a better appreciation of the important linkages between and among the Conventions. They recognized the need to strengthen the coordination of environmental policy formulation and implementation among sectoral agencies at national and sub-national levels.

70. Not only did the NCSA process emphasize the search for synergies among MEAs, but also the linkages between global and national environmental issues and objectives. A number of these issues are not limited to a specific Convention, such as agro-biodiversity, invasive alien species, sustainable use of biodiversity, and deforestation.

71. These findings are in line with the findings from the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) that was formed in 2001 between the three Rio Conventions to explore opportunities for synergistic activities and increasing coordination. The COPs of the three Rio Conventions have been encouraging the JLG to facilitate cooperation at the national and international levels, to identify possible areas of joint activities, and to enhance coordination among these Conventions. At its fifth meeting in Bonn, Germany (January 2004), the JLG identified three issues as priorities for joint collaboration: adaptation, capacity building, and technology transfer.

72. However, there has been little cooperation or coordination between the NCSA Global Support Programme and the JLG. This could be considered as a limiting factor for the NCSAs. A group such as the JLG would be one possible custodian of the NCSA findings, particularly as a follow-up to the

Box 1: Searching for synergies was embedded into the NCSA process

The NCSA was an innovative way to assessing their various capacity constraints, given that responsibility for implementing the three Rio Conventions generally fell under different ministries and agencies. Such was the case for Latvia, where an understanding of the dynamic relationships among the multiple environmental themes was in of itself a capacity gap. The NCSA was specifically designed to uncover the cross-cutting aspects of capacities through the analyses and integrated discussions and deliberations among stakeholders and decision-makers. One outcome was to build a consensus on the strategic allocation of limited resources. Two main criteria were used: a) identifying overlapping tasks, and deciding on management activities common to the three Conventions; b) activities should be managed in an adaptive and collaborative manner, raising the likelihood of sustainability. The character of an integrated assessment of challenges under the Rio Conventions therefore necessitated a broader consideration of the institutional field of social actors and stakeholders in order to prioritize management responses.

Capacity Evaluation of Latvia in Fields of Biological Diversity, Climate Change and Land Degradation – Final NCSA Report, 2005

NCSA Action Plans, in collaboration with the GEF and its implementing agencies. A closer relationship may also have given the NCSAs a greater 'raison d'être' and guaranteed more follow-up activities.

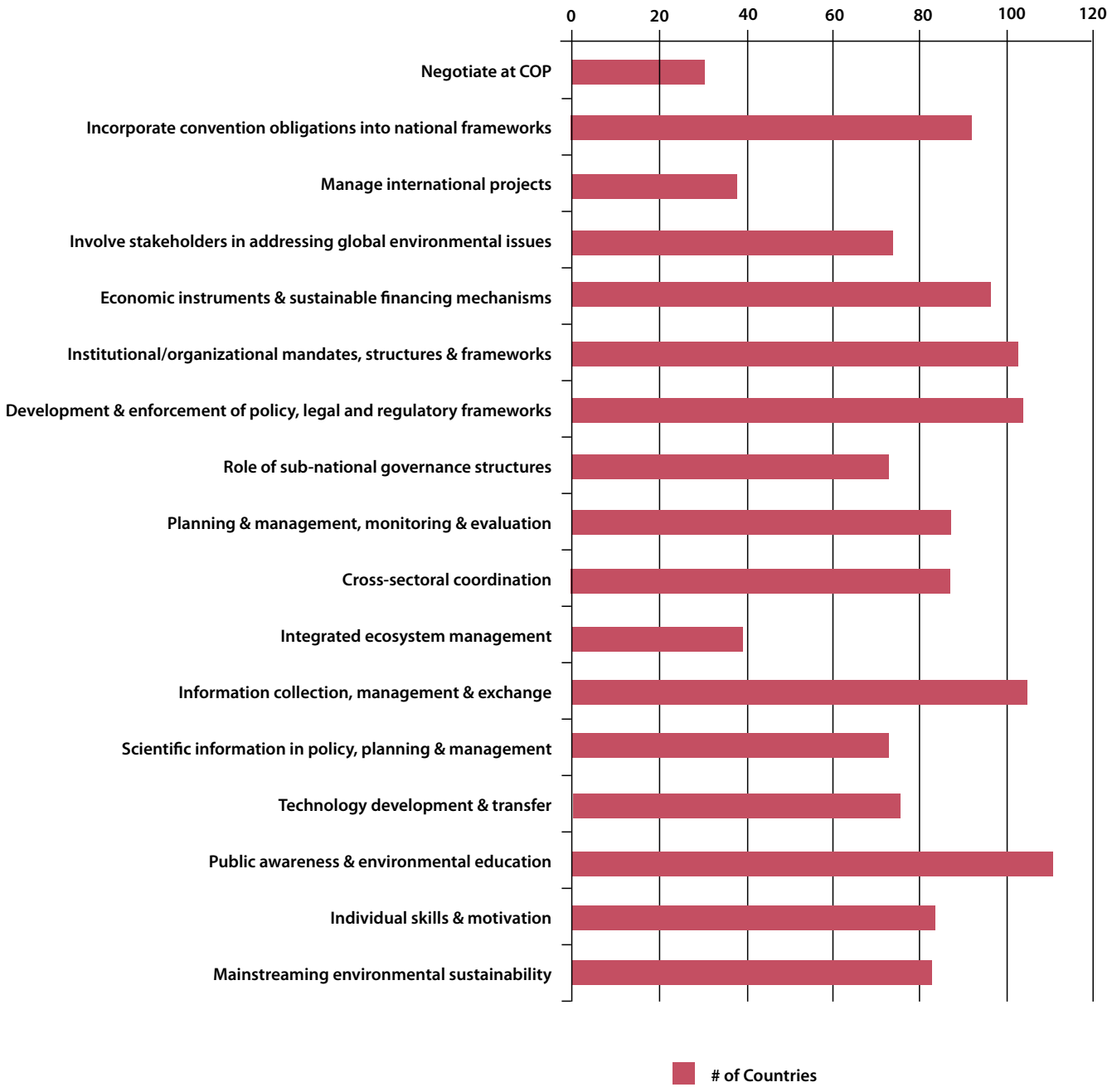
3.2 Cross-Cutting Assessments

73. Having undertaken both a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) and a gap analysis of the individual, organizational, and systemic capacities in meeting focal area objectives under the Rio Conventions, countries were to identify and assess the challenges that cut across the three Conventions. The priority cross-cutting capacity development needs and actions can be organized around 17 types of capacities (see Figure 9). The review of the 119 NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans determined that less than 45 countries (less than 40%) considered the following as a priority:

- Capacity to negotiate at the Conference of the Parties
- Capacity to manage international projects
- Integrated Ecosystem Management

Lake Phewa in Nepal holds important biodiversity and socio-economic values, which includes fishing and eco-tourism. Since the 1970s, the lake has changed from oligotrophic to eutrophic as a result of sedimentation and pollution, exacerbated by accelerated glacier melting and poor land management in its watershed. UN Photo by Ray Witlin.

Figure 9: **Types of capacities countries identified as either strong, a constraint, a need, or as a priority cross-cutting development action.**



74. The low priority given to building capacities to negotiate at the conventions' COP begs the question "why?" Countries are in fact receiving funding from a variety of donors and programmes, such as the GEF Country Support Programme and National Dialogue Initiative, and UNEP's core programme activity to train GEF OFPs' effective participation in the COP. In contrast, more than 95 countries (over 80%) identified the following cross-cutting capacities as a priority:

- Capacity to incorporate Convention obligations into national legislation, policy, and institutions
- Economic instruments and sustainable financing mechanisms
- Institutional/organizational mandates, structures, and frameworks
- Development and enforcement of policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks
- Information collection, management, and exchange
- Public awareness and environmental education

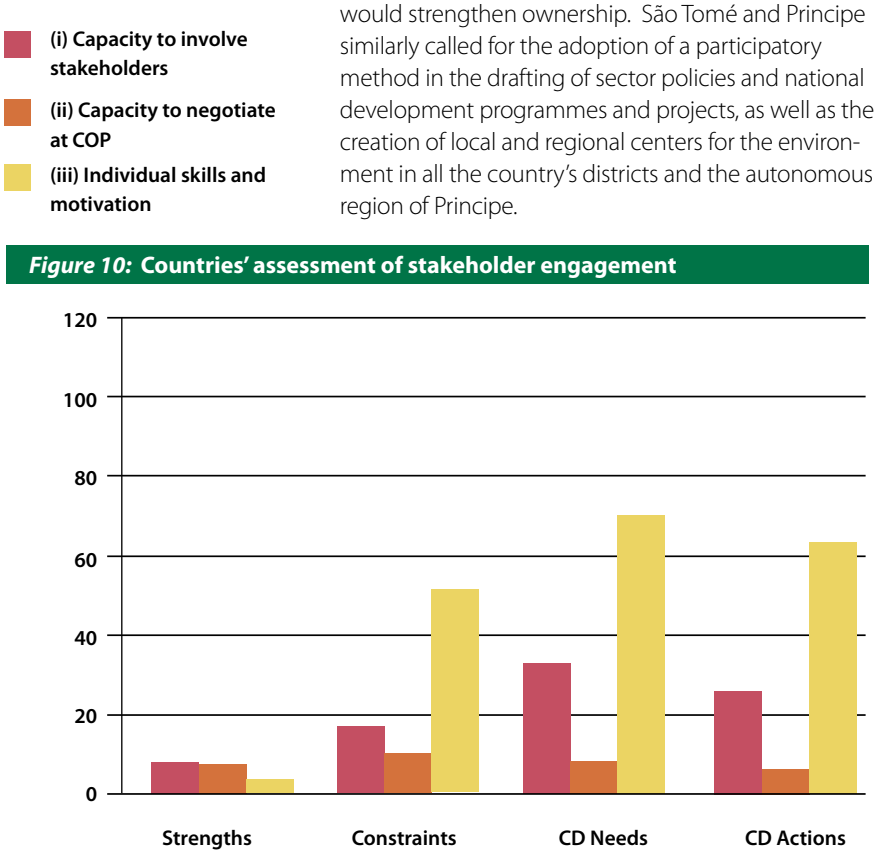
3.2.1 Stakeholder Engagement

75. The over-arching capacity to engage stakeholders was analyzed through the following three types of capacities: (i) capacity to involve stakeholders in addressing global environmental issues; (ii) capacity to negotiate at the Conference of the Parties (COP); and (iii) individual skills and motivation. The review of NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans found that 49 out of 119 countries did not state any capacity constraint in engaging stakeholders. For those who did identify a constraint, they are mostly directed at the capacity to involve stakeholders in policy and programme formulation and implementation, including the skills and motivation to engage stakeholders.

76. However, the number of countries identifying capacity development needs and recommendations are greater than the number of countries that stated these capacities as constraints. For example, 44 countries said that the capacity to involve stakeholders was a constraint, and yet 62 countries identified this type of capacity building as a need, with 58 specifically identifying some form of capacity development action to engage stakeholders. The same applies for related skills and knowledge, where 55 countries considered it a constraint, and yet 73 and 68 countries considered these as capacity needs and recommended related actions, respectively. Only 18 countries found that their capacity to negotiate at COPs is a constraint. Moreover, only 17 and 14 countries assessed this capacity element as either a need or recommended action respectively. However few countries considered stakeholder engagement as a strength.

77. Tanzania identified inadequate incentives for private sector participation in implementing the Conventions as a constraint and the need for strengthening the national capacity in Convention dialogue and implementation processes. Dominica identified multi-stakeholder participation as a requirement for the effective implementation of all Conventions, as well as to create synergies through participatory assessments and joint planning procedures that would strengthen ownership. São Tomé and Principe similarly called for the adoption of a participatory method in the drafting of sector policies and national development programmes and projects, as well as the creation of local and regional centers for the environment in all the country's districts and the autonomous region of Principe.

***Figure 10:* Countries' assessment of stakeholder engagement**



3.2.2 *Information Management and Knowledge*

78. The over-arching capacity to manage environmental information and knowledge were analyzed through three types of capacities: (i) the capacity to use scientific information in policy, planning and management, e.g., Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs); (ii) the capacity to collect, manage, and exchange information; and (iii) the capacity to raise public awareness and environmental education. The review found that 40 countries (out of 119) did not state any capacity constraint in information management and knowledge.

79. Information and knowledge management is a constraint for about two-thirds of the countries (79) that finalized their NCSA, with the capacity to collect, manage, and exchange information, along with the capacity to raise public awareness and environmental education, listed as their greatest constraints.

80. The capacity development needs are even greater than the constraints. These results indicate a strong need for greater capacity to manage environmental information and knowledge. The capacity to raise public awareness and environmental education is a capacity development need for 101 countries, followed by the capacity to collect, manage, and exchange environmental information (95 countries).

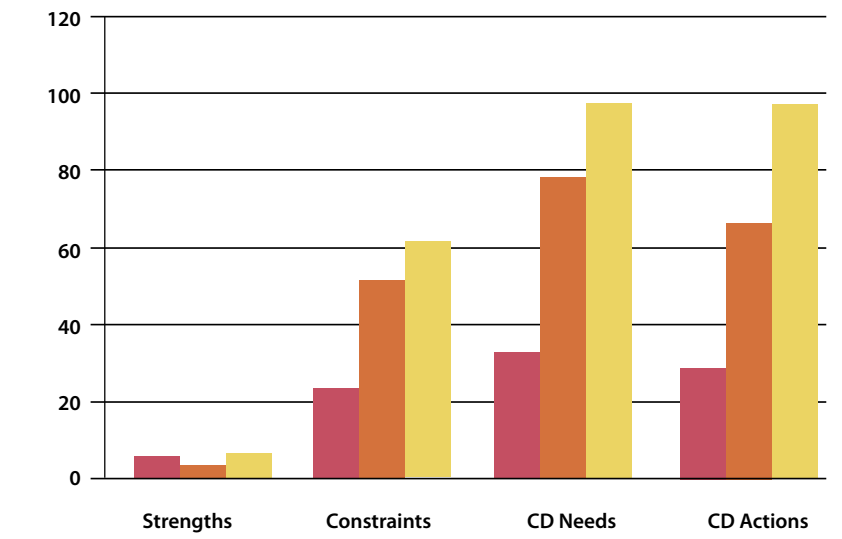
81. In the same vein, the capacity development actions identified in the NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans are also significant, with 99 countries recommending capacity development action to raise public awareness and environmental education, and 86 countries recommending actions to improve the collection, management, and exchange of environmental information.

82. Guyana identifies public awareness and stakeholder participation as a cross-cutting capacity development priority. The NCSA recommended the development of a detailed and integrated programme for public awareness, including strengthening environmental studies within school curricula, increasing youth environmental participation initiatives, and increased linkages with the private sector, NGOs, and media. Jordan's NCSA action plan includes priority programmes to strengthen knowledge management as well as to increase outreach and networking. Capacity development recommendations include the development of an integrated knowledge management system and a comprehensive outreach and networking programme for the three Rio Conventions (at both the national and regional levels), and the development of an integrated public awareness and education programme.

3.2.3 *Organizational Capacities*

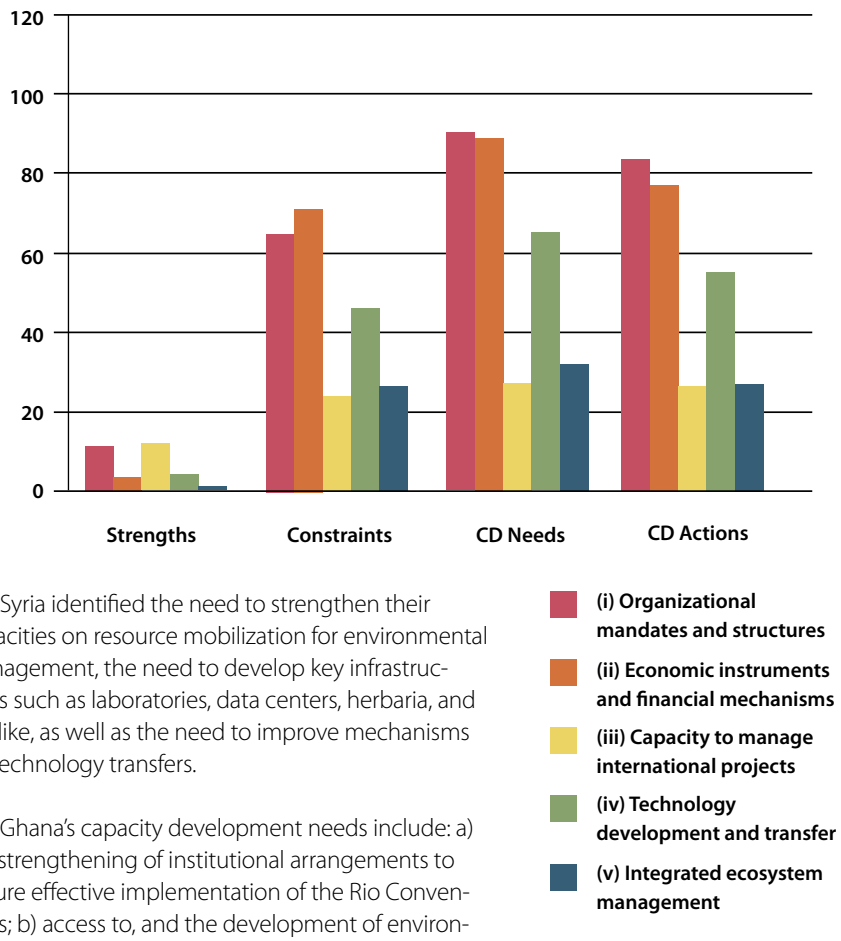
83. The capacity of organizations was analyzed through five specific types of capacities: (i) institutional/organizational mandates, structures, and frameworks; (ii) economic instruments and sustainable financing mechanisms; (iii) capacity to manage international projects; (iv) technology development and transfer; and (v) the capacity to undertake integrated ecosystem management. The review found that 37 out of 199 countries did not state any capacity constraint in organizational capacities.

***Figure 11:* Countries' assessment of information and knowledge management capacities**



84. The capacity of environmental organizations is a constraint for about 70% of countries (82) that finalized their NCSA. Economic instruments, sustainable financing mechanisms, and organizational mandates were among the top specific capacity constraints. Most countries identified the need to improve their institutional frameworks (90 countries) and increase the use of economic instruments and sustainable financing mechanisms (89 countries). The capacity for managing international projects was not identified as a major constraint (24 out of 199 countries).

***Figure 12:* Countries' organizational capacity priorities**



85. Syria identified the need to strengthen their capacities on resource mobilization for environmental management, the need to develop key infrastructures such as laboratories, data centers, herbaria, and the like, as well as the need to improve mechanisms for technology transfers.

86. Ghana's capacity development needs include: a) the strengthening of institutional arrangements to ensure effective implementation of the Rio Conventions; b) access to, and the development of environmentally sound technologies and know-how; and c) sustainable financing mechanisms. One of Kazakhstan's top cross-cutting capacity development priorities is the need to clarify and rationalize the mandates and allocation of responsibilities to meet Rio Convention objectives among government bodies.

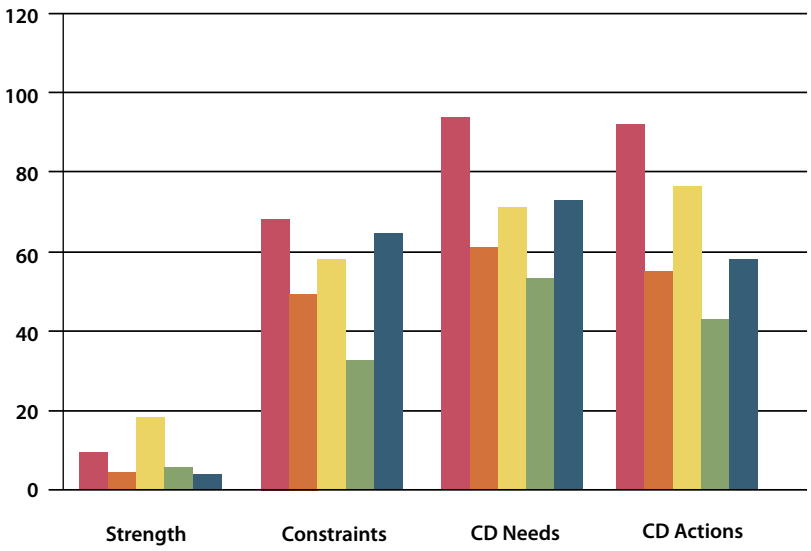
3.2.4 Environmental Governance

87. Capacities for environmental governance were analyzed through five specific types of capacities: (i) the capacity to develop and enforce policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks; (ii) the role of sub-national and local governance structures in environmental management; (iii) the capacity to incorporate Convention objectives into national policy, legislation, and institutions; (iv) the mainstreaming of environmental sustainability principles into the development sector; and (v) cross-sectoral coordination. The review found that 37 out of 119 countries did not state any capacity constraint in environmental governance.

88. Capacities for environmental governance were identified as a top priority by most countries, with the need to strengthen and enforce policy and legislative frameworks most identified by countries (94 out of 119). Even though capacities to mainstream environment were identified by the fewest number of countries, over 40 countries identified this as a priority action for capacity development. Another important cross-cutting capacity development recommendation found in half of the NCSA Action Plans reviewed (55 out of 119 countries) was to strengthen the roles of regional and local governance structures to meet global environmental commitments.

89. Ten percent of the NCSAs reviewed (18 out of 119 countries) felt that they had strong capacities to incorporate Convention obligations into national legislation, policy, and institutions. However, this must be seen in connection with countries' abilities to implement and enforce policies. For example, Botswana's policy framework on biodiversity conservation is considered to be fairly reflective of CBD objectives, but the government's absorptive capacity to effectively manage their extensive protected areas is inadequate.

Figure 13: Countries' environmental governance capacities



(i) Policy development and enforcement

(ii) Sub-national governance structures

(iii) Incorporating convention obligations into national frameworks

(iv) Mainstreaming environmental sustainability

(v) Cross-sectoral coordination

90. Montenegro, for example, identified inter-institutional cooperation as a constraint, as well as the need to revise their legal framework, and an inefficient enforcement of existing Convention-related laws and plans. As a relatively new country, Montenegro has much work ahead to develop their broader governance structures.

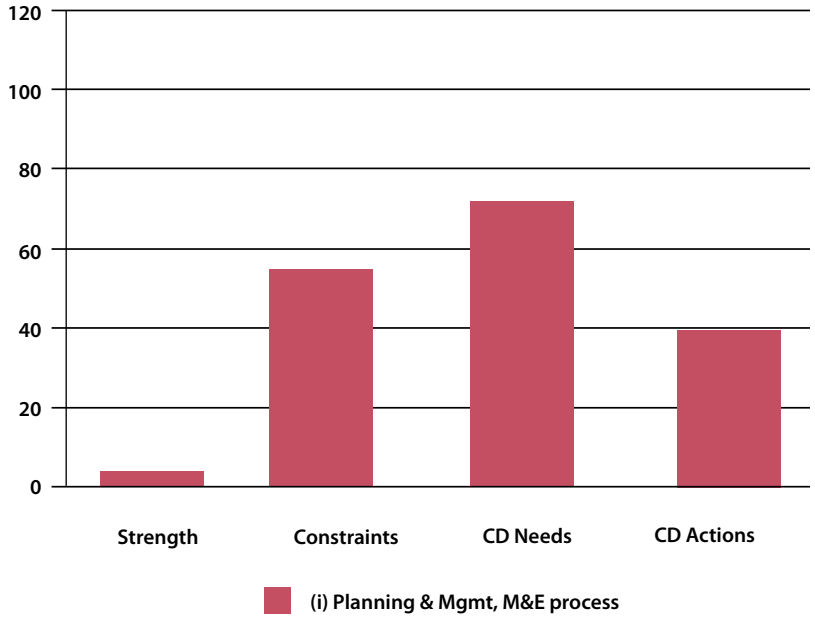
91. For Mauritius, a capacity development need of priority is to further decentralize activities already underway in Rodrigues in the context of its autonomy status. This is an opportunity to integrate global environmental objectives within parallel national reform programmes and projects.

3.2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

92. The capacity to monitor and evaluate performance to meet global environmental objectives falls under the following category: the capacity to plan, manage, monitoring and evaluation processes. Although 55 out of 119 countries identified monitoring and evaluation as a capacity constraint, about 70 countries identified this as an important need for capacity development. Only four countries considered their monitoring and evaluation frameworks as strong.

93. India and Jamaica are two countries that called for the development of methodologies, tools, and mechanisms to monitor progress in implementing the Rio Conventions. These examples should help in the analysis of the trade-offs when making important decisions affecting global environmental objectives. Similarly, the Philippines identified the need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation capacities in order to track progress via local, regional, and national actions. Their monitoring and evaluation framework would be based on four

Figure 14: **Countries' capacity development priorities on monitoring and evaluation**



criteria of viability and validity: a) legal tenability; b) simplicity and ease of use; c) promoting good governance; and c) fostering national ownership of capacities.

3.2.6 Other Targets of Capacity Development

94. In addition to the above environmental targets of capacity development, the NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans identified other development objectives for which capacities need to be strengthened that countries considered were closely linked. The four main targets identified in this review were gender, traditional and indigenous knowledge, poverty, and natural disasters.

95. In Bangladesh and Burkina Faso, promoting and improving the economic and social status of women and youth in rural areas is a key component of actions geared towards the development of technical and managerial capacities to implement the MEAs.

96. In Cambodia, indigenous knowledge is highly valued. Deploying science and indigenous knowledge in environmental management and agro-industrial production were identified as important cross-cutting capacity needs. Malawi's Final Report stated that there is much untapped indigenous knowledge that could help meet FCCC and CBD objectives, particularly in forecasting environmental risks and the planting of indigenous species.

97. Ethiopia and Fiji are among the countries that identified the need to link environment, poverty, and sustainable development. Integrating environmental concerns in poverty alleviation strategies and national planning processes are a top priority.

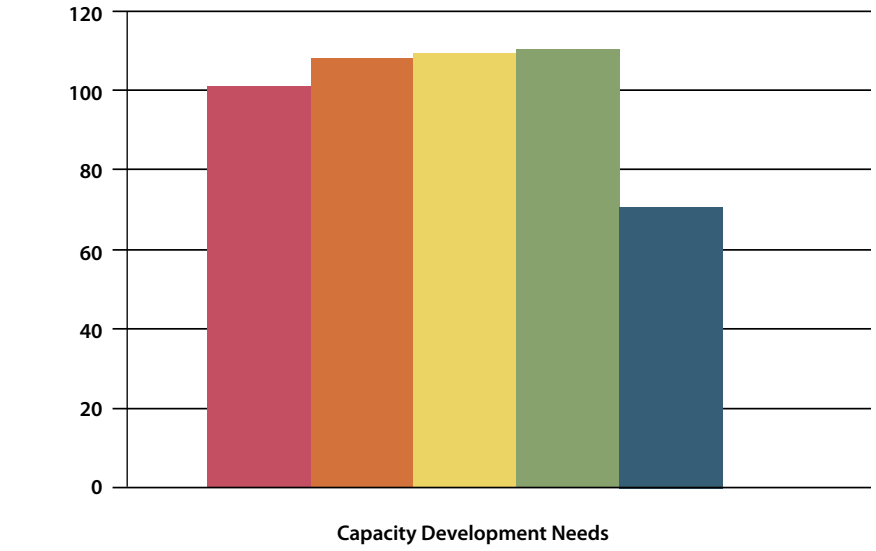
98. Natural disasters are of particular concern for small islands such as the Seychelles, which identified the need to create a disaster management strategy. Like the Seychelles, Tajikistan identified the need to develop capacities to minimize the impacts of natural disasters, including preparedness among the general population, and improved forecasting and modeling capabilities.

3.2.7 Global Environmental Priorities

99. The priority capacity development actions identified in each country's NCSA Action Plan should be viewed as that country's particular set of requirements necessary for them to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives. This includes both the focal area capacity development actions as well as the cross-cutting recommendations. However, the results from the cross-cutting assessments indicate that countries generally felt that all five types of capacities were needed, although only two out of three countries identified capacities for monitoring and evaluation as a priority. The NCSA findings generally reinforce the need to develop these cross-cutting capacities:

100. ***Stakeholder Engagement:*** The main priority for stakeholder engagement is the need to develop the individual capacities of key environmental managers as social facilitators. Countries need more

Figure 15: **Summary of countries' cross-cutting capacity constraints**



The NCSA results indicate that 90% of countries felt that all five types of cross-cutting capacities were a top priority, although only two out of three countries identified capacities for monitoring and evaluation as a priority

managers with skills and knowledge, supported by better methodologies to engage stakeholder representatives.

101. *Information Management and Knowledge:* This review indicates that two-thirds of NCSAs reviewed identified information and knowledge as a capacity constraint, with even more countries (over 90%) identifying this type of capacity as a need. The capacity development needs are mostly concentrated in the management of environmental information, which includes the development and appropriate application of standards, integrated technologies, communications, as well as the coordination of the organizations and networks involved. These needs also include a greater level of public awareness activities and environmental education.

102. *Organizational Capacities:* The same descriptive statistics for information management and knowledge apply to organizational capacities, where two-thirds of the NCSAs reviewed identified this as a capacity development need, and even more (92%) call for some action to develop organizational capacities. The greatest need in this area is for clearer mandates and structures for organizations involved in environmental management, including the integration of MEA obligations into national systems. Countries also called for the development of economic instruments and sustainable financial mechanisms for long-term environmental management.

103. *Environmental Governance:* As with organizational, information management, and knowledge capacities, the same relative percentages of countries identified environmental governance as a constraint needing attention. The main governance need lies in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental policies, legislation, and regulation, including the mainstreaming of MEAs into national environmental management and development frameworks. Another important need is the capacity for cross-sectoral coordination (which can be considered an organizational capacity).

104. *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):* The capacity to monitor and evaluate global environmental objectives was stated as a constraint by less than half of the NCSAs reviewed and as a capacity development need by less than 60%. Even though countries considered this as the lowest priority for capacity development when compared to the four other types of capacity outlined above, 71 of 119 countries still considered M&E as a capacity to be strengthened, particularly to provide accurate and timely information to the decision-makers.

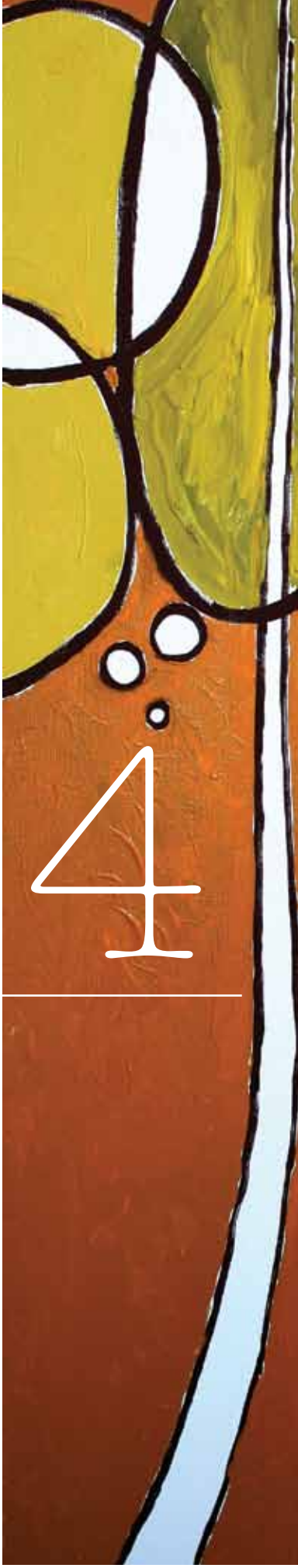
Rice fields in the district of Ambatondrazaka, Madagascar. Rice is the most important crop in Madagascar, however, a rise in cyclones has devastated crops and livelihoods in the last decade. UN Photo by Lucien Rajaonina.

LESSONS LEARNED

105. A well-functioning management system necessitates the development of a set of important capacities. This chapter provides an overview of the main lessons learned to assess and develop capacities to meet and sustain global environmental objectives, as captured in the NCSA Final Report and Action Plans. Many of the lessons learned from the NCSAs are in fact not new. For the past 20 years, practitioners and scholars have studied the challenges of environmental protection and conservation, and debated the political and institutional responses. These challenges have largely served to frame and rationalize capacity building activities targeted to focal issues, such as biodiversity conservation, climate change, and land degradation. With the support of GEF and its implementing agencies (among other donors), countries have received support to develop focal area strategies and action plans, and followed-up with priority implementation of the recommended actions. The preparation of national strategies and action plans is an on-going process of stakeholder consultations, expert analyses and reporting that benefits from regularly updated and enhanced guidance from the Rio Convention secretariats. As a process, the enabling activities therefore help strengthen the legitimacy and sustainability of policy interventions in the name of the global environment, and thus represent an important process of capacity development.

106. Notwithstanding the positive outcomes of past enabling activities and focal area projects, many have not been sustainable, warranting a new strategy to assess and build institutional sustainability. Thus, the NCSA was a systematic approach legitimized as an endeavour undertaken by national stakeholders, to verify and validate the root causes of unsustainable environmental outcomes. Given its focus on cross-cutting capacities, the NCSA Final Report and Action Plan targets an assessment of the underlying capacities needed to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives[14]. The NCSA Final Report and Action Plan should therefore be seen as an update of the cross-cutting challenges that are country-specific, as well as an important baseline to assess future achievements towards environmental sustainability[15].

107. In 2008, the Global Support Programme developed a Capacity Development Scorecard that built upon the lessons learned and best practices to monitor and evaluate the sustainability of policy interventions and other projects (GSP, 2010). This scorecard was designed as a three-point time series outcome evaluation, beginning with an assessment of core capacities at the beginning of a policy intervention (i.e., project), followed by a mid-term project assessment of the same core capacities, and finally an end-of-project assessment. A most desirable fourth survey point is an ex post evaluation undertaken at least two years after the project has been completed. However, the nature of donor funding seriously constrains this option. The Capacity Development Scorecard, when it becomes widely applied to focal area and cross-cutting projects, will theoretically provide valuable data to make an overall assessment of the contribution being made by GEF interventions towards the goal of environmental sustainability.



[14] The term "institutional sustainability" refers to the set of values, norms, rules and decision-making procedures that are embedded within social structures and mechanisms (at the individual, organizational, and systemic levels) directed to maintain shared goals. Environmental sustainability on the other hand is used to connote the institutional sustainability of environmental outcomes.

[15] Environmental sustainability comprises both national and global environmental objectives.

Stakeholders in Belize exchange their views and expectations during a workshop to strengthen the policy decisions and interventions for global environmental management. Photo by Kevin Hill.

4.1 Stakeholder Engagement

108. As mentioned earlier, stakeholder engagement is the capacity of individuals with particular roles and responsibilities that represent divergent set of attitudes affecting or affected by the issue at hand, including those that can mobilize some form of resource to redress some portion of capacity deficiencies[16].

A sense of readiness is necessary from all parties involved, including at the political level, in order to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives.

109. Stakeholders may be engaged, but if there is inadequate political will to participate, environmental sustainability will not be achieved. This is particularly true in countries with high political uncertainty. The same logic would apply if government institutions were engaged toward environmental sustainability but stakeholders from other sectors such as civil society or the private sector were not engaged. Environmental sustainability thus requires a state of readiness by all parties in society, and any capacity development programme should be flexible enough to adapt its activities toward the bottlenecks hampering this state of readiness.

Achieving environmental sustainability necessitates the engagement of stakeholders; however, this engagement is conditioned by greater environmental awareness and education, so as to raise their environmental skills and knowledge.

110. Stakeholders will engage if they understand the concept of environmental sustainability. As programmes and projects are focusing on the engagement of stakeholders, the need for environmental awareness and environmental education is increasing. Through the NCSA process, a small number of countries found that the main barrier for stakeholder engagement was their lack of understanding of the environmental issues and what needs to be done about them. The NCSAs also mentioned the need for a better integration of environmental sustainability into the national education systems. This lack of environmental awareness is especially true for matters related to the global environment, hampering national action to meet the global environmental agenda.

Not only is it critical to engage NGOs, but also Community-Based-Organizations (CBOs) that are often the best able to reach out to communities and traditionally marginalized civil society stakeholders.

111. Two mechanisms should be distinctly considered when engaging civil society stakeholders: NGOs and CBOs. Traditionally, programmes and projects to engage civil society stakeholders focus more on NGOs and less on CBOs. The NCSA experience demonstrates the need for this dual approach; including the need to adapt to local cultures and traditions to engage communities.

There is a need for more adaptive methodologies to engage stakeholders.

[16] The ensuing qualitative analysis serves to contextualize the descriptive statistics of Section 3, and based on the findings of the 119 NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans reviewed.

112. Engaging stakeholders was an important methodological element of the NCSA process. The project implementation teams were asked to engage stakeholders throughout the process. An important aspect of the NCSA process, stakeholder engagement contributed greatly to legitimizing the NCSA findings. However, more methodologies are needed to help countries engage stakeholders. This is the case when engaging stakeholders in pre- and post-COP activities: Who should be involved? How? Experiences varied from country to country. A number of countries faced important difficulties to engage the private sector: there appears to be a general lack of trust from the private sector, among other segments of civil society. A number of other countries found the participation mechanisms inefficient to engage indigenous communities.

The NCSA process was innovative. The broad and interactive participation of stakeholders made the assessments highly relevant.

113. Many countries recognized that the NCSAs' participatory and inclusive procedures contributed to the relevance of the process and legitimized the findings, including the Action Plans. This participation also included coordination mechanisms that were translated into steering committees and working groups to facilitate communication among stakeholders. In a few cases, the NCSA findings and its coordination mechanisms were used to carry out national environmental programmes.

4.2 Information Management and Knowledge

114. Information management and knowledge is the capacity to access and use data and information for learning and decision-making. Data, information, and knowledge are the central to the diagnosis and understanding of the problem at hand, as well as identifying and building solutions.

Assessments conducted under the NCSA initiative indicate that, though not complete, environmental information exists. However, the capacities to access and manage this information are generally weak, as is the coordination of organizations involved its management.

115. In most countries the procedures for gathering environmental data and information may be relatively straightforward. The set of environmental indicators are identified and pre-selected, followed by measurements to make some statements about environmental conditions. However, the main issue remains with the *management* of this information and the coordination of the organizations involved, including research institutions and programmes. National environmental management information systems need to be strengthened, as well as the skill sets of the associated staffs and technicians.

There is a need to incorporate traditional/indigenous knowledge into the overall environmental management information system.

116. Many stakeholders recognized the value of traditional knowledge for environmental management. However, a few countries noted that this knowledge is not well captured well (if at all) by their national management information systems. Traditional knowledge is often not part of the knowledge base used by environmental organizations to develop and implement environmental policies and programmes.

4.3 Organizational Capacities

117. Organizational capacities focus on the structures and mechanisms within organizations to direct and undertake management actions. In any one country, there are a number of organizations that have some role in environmental management for better or worse[17]. The abilities of organizations to prevent or solve the impacts of environmental degradation represent the set of organizational capacities for achieving and sustaining global environmental objectives.

Many countries lack clarity in their organizational set-up for managing the environment and allocating adequate levels of human and financial resources to meet management objectives.

118. In their NCSA Final Reports, many countries mentioned organizational issues as a major constraint to having a well-functioning environmental management system. Issues include limited organizational infrastructure, unclear organizational mandates, poor coordination among institutions, insufficient staff numbers or high staff turnover, limited skill-sets and knowledge, unclear job descriptions, and low budgets allocated to environmental management. Although organizational capacity is but one type of capacity, it is a crucial part of an overall set of capacities necessary for a well-functioning system. If these capacities are not addressed properly, they can cause other capacity development initiatives to achieve little progress.

119. The general state of environmental capacities in many countries is a key factor limiting their ability to meet and sustain global environmental objectives. As one NCSA report stated, "there is a general lack of knowledge, experts, equipment, as well as weak law enforcement". When assessing the negative factors influencing the organizational capacity of each country, there is also the need to consider uncertainty and willingness in the political sphere as this can affect staff retention.

4.4 Environmental Governance

120. Environmental governance is the capacity to prepare, agree, and control the implementation of management strategies. This includes the structuring and enforcement of rules and decision-making procedures to operationalize behaviour and policy responses. As it specifically relates to the GEF, environmental governance seeks to structure and enforce rules and decision-making procedures that catalyze the integration and mainstreaming of global environmental priorities and objectives into the broader framework on national socio-economic development.

The NCSA assessments indicate that there is still a lack of comprehensive environmental policies and legal frameworks in some countries.

121. Despite numerous programmes and projects aimed at developing comprehensive national policy and legislative frameworks, including those supported by external donors, a significant number of countries stated weak policy and legislative frameworks and regulatory instruments. Many of these are hampered by political instability, while a few countries acknowledged that the necessary environmental legislation is simply lacking. In other countries, the policy and legislative frameworks suffered from having been developed in a piece-meal fashion, resulting in overlap and unnecessary redundancies, mutual exclusivity of directives, and gaps.

The implementation of these environmental policies and legislative instruments is weak.

[17] This is known as an institutional field. In order to achieve environmental sustainability, as full an understanding as possible of the complex dynamics operating within this field is necessary in order to develop policy and programme responses.

122. The review of the NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans indicates a broad range of quality and implementation issues as regards countries' environmental policy and legislative frameworks. In some cases, adequate frameworks are in place, but weak institutional and individual capacities limit their effective implementation; in other cases the limiting factors for quality implementation are political instability, insufficient political commitment, or the fact that some laws and policies are drafted but never formally approved by the government in power. The lack of regulations, by-laws, guidelines, standards secondary legislation is also mentioned in a few NCSA reports as a constraint to Rio Convention implementation. Finally, a few countries recognized the difficulties in implementing their national environmental policy and legislative frameworks in the context of their decentralization programmes, which includes a further stretching of limited human and financial resources.

123. Worth mentioning here are the countries that joined the European Union (EU), as well as countries benefiting from the "EU-Neighborhood policy". In addition to having access to resources linked with the implementation of MEAs, such as GEF funds, they also benefit from EU resources in the form of technical and financial assistance. The EU funds are intended to facilitate the alignment of recipient countries' environmental governance with EU environmental directives, which are also closely aligned with the MEAs.

Environmental mainstreaming is happening, but there is a long road ahead!

124. A number of countries were able to integrate their environmental strategies into their sustainable development strategy; others were able to integrate environmental management strategies into their strategies for poverty reduction and food security. Overall, there are many attempts to integrate the environmental management agenda and the development agenda. However, as one NCSA Final Report stated, *"the integration of environmental policy considerations into core institutional thinking with other policies is difficult"*. Most assessments recognized the need to integrate environmental sustainability into sectoral policies, and for many countries this will be a long process. While there is no magic solution, countries must develop their own approach. A number of countries have already begun their particular approach to environmental mainstreaming (see Section 5 and CB-2 profiles in the Annex).

Countries have to overcome many barriers for mainstreaming environmental sustainability.

125. One critical barrier to mainstreaming seems to be the necessity to think differently, to abandon old ways of thinking and adopt new approaches for integrating environmental sustainability into the development agenda. As one report stated, *"Most view development with priority over environmental issues as opposed to the two paired together to improve overall conditions in our country"*; another stated *"that sometimes sustainability policy actions may run counter to economic development needs"*. Countries also face other difficulties, such as lack of institutional clarity (who is doing what) or coordination issues among sector-based institutions. Other countries have higher priorities such as combating poverty, burgeoning health issues, and education reform, while at the same time trying to apply economic instruments to biodiversity conservation.

4.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

126. Monitoring and evaluation encompasses the capacities employed in the directed surveying and appraisal of the performance, outputs, outcomes and impacts achieved by a strategy, policy, programme, or project in order to provide the necessary feedback for organic learning and adaptive collaborative management.

Monitoring and evaluation is recognized as an important step for an effective environmental management system.

127. Despite attempts to improve the capacities of countries to monitor and evaluate the implementation of management plans, programmes, and projects, a number of countries mentioned inadequate surveying and analytical skills and resources. This type of capacity is also closely related to the capacity for managing environmental information and knowledge: an effective monitoring system requires superior performance indicators coupled with scientifically robust methodologies for data gathering and analysis. As stated above, this capacity is also weak in many countries. Equally important if not more, the purpose of monitoring and evaluation is about providing information for good decision-making, which was not lost on the countries as reflected in their NCSAs. A number of countries called for improving these systems to strengthen both the preparation of their EIAs, as well as to use these improved tools for better decision-making in terms of meeting global environmental commitments.

CROSS-CUTTING CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN GEF-5

128. Since the beginning of the Global Support Programme, on-going assessments of NCSA findings have been collected and analyzed, beginning with the preliminary analyses that were undertaken in 2006-7, as well as through the various regional and sub-regional workshops. These findings complemented the *Strategic Approach's* policy and programming of targeted cross-cutting capacity development (otherwise known as CB-2) in GEF-4, and now for programming in GEF-5. The four programming frameworks outlined in paragraphs 41 to 43 were updated to reflect the overall corporate strategy of the GEF on Capacity Development for 2010 - 2014.

129. In May 2010, a side event was convened during the GEF Assembly, structured as a panel of GEF Operational Focal Points to present and discuss the challenges, lessons learned, and priorities for capacity development. Attended by over 40 participants, the discussions highlighted the important distinction that countries need to build their capacities to better manage global environmental issues based on their particular priorities and needs, and not only on the global priorities as stated by the GEF. This was indeed the main rationale behind the NCSA process, in that countries would undertake their own assessments of the priority capacity development needs, rather than these priorities being set by donors. In this respect, countries see the results of the NCSA Synthesis Report as summarizing country-specific priorities, which in turn would play an important role in how the GEF shifts priority funding.

130. Another issue discussed during the side event was the need to increase and improve stakeholder engagement in the process of designing, implementing, and following-up on GEF-funded interventions. In particular, the extent to which local stakeholders and politicians are engaged remains an under-developed capacity, particularly given that these stakeholders are at the forefront of both the problem and the solution. In response to this priority, a few countries are pursuing the development of capacities to reflect this priority need, such as Bhutan's CB-2 project, "Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Local Governance Systems" (See Annex).

131. An important challenge in meeting global environmental objectives through GEF interventions arises from the bottlenecks faced in attempting to secure the required level of co-financing. This was an area that the panelists and participants felt the implementing agencies needed to improve their supporting role. Given the pre-conditions set by donors and development agencies, the capacities needed to develop and implement international development projects extend beyond countries' absorptive capacities, and must also include the capacities of the partner development agencies.

132. The panelists also discussed the need to improve the strategic nature of the GEF's approach to capacity development by linking it with relevant regional initiatives such as UNEP's Bali Strategic Plan on Technology Transfer and Capacity Building. In as much as strengthening regional links will help strengthen country ownership of GEF interventions, panelists and participants felt that accessing GEF funding was being undermined by the inadequate capacity of national institutions to develop GEF proposals, thus requiring the use of international consultants.

133. In GEF-5, the objectives and focus of targeted cross-cutting capacity development have effectively remain the same: to address those urgent capacity needs that will enhance a country's ability through the creation of synergies to meet its obligations under the Conventions, while at the same time catalyzing the mainstreaming of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) into national policy frameworks. However, greater efforts will be given to targeting specific components of a country's overall environmental governance system in such a way that allows for a more practicable approach towards meeting Rio Convention objectives and achieving environmental sustainability. CB-2 projects are not intended to be enabling activity projects, but rather interventions that raise the sustainable development baseline of country capacities to

implement action towards meeting Rio Convention objectives in precisely defined areas.

134. In GEF-5, cross-cutting capacity development projects will provide resources for reducing, if not eliminating, the institutional bottlenecks (e.g., barriers to data gathering) to the synergistic implementation of the Rio Conventions. The expected outcomes of these projects are therefore to strengthen multi-sectoral processes that promote policy harmonization, realize cost-efficiency, and enhance operational effectiveness under Convention obligations. To this end, GEF-funded cross-cutting capacity development projects would focus on strengthening the environmental governance system and mainstreaming global environmental issues into national development programmes through four programmatic frameworks.

5.1 Cross-cutting Capacity Development Framework

135. The elaboration of programming frameworks that structure the design of cross-cutting capacity development projects is on-going. As part of GEF's programming document for GEF-5, these frameworks for capacity development fall under five main objectives, with the first to be implemented as part of the GEF's Country Support Programme and the National Dialogue Initiative[18]. Objectives B through E form the basis of the four cross-cutting capacity development frameworks:

A. To enhance the capacities of stakeholders to engage throughout the consultative process
B. To generate, access, and use information and knowledge
C. To strengthen capacities for developing policy and legislative frameworks
D. To strengthen capacities for implementing and managing global Convention guidelines
E. To enhance capacities for monitoring and evaluating environmental impacts and trends

A. Enhancing the Capacities of Stakeholders to Engage throughout the Consultative Process

136. Capacity development under this framework will be implemented through the GEF Country Support Programme (CSP) and National Dialogue Initiative (NDI). Through these two programmes, seminars, national consultations, and dialogues will take place to enable all key stakeholders to participate in consultative processes to deliver global environmental benefits. The aim is to establish or strengthen consultative mechanisms for proactive and constructive engagement of all stakeholders. This consultative mechanism will be used by countries to coordinate in-country GEF investments, including the following activities:

- GEF constituency-level workshops and meetings
- Country dialogue workshops and seminars
- Constituency meetings organized through the Small Grants Programme's National Steering Committee
- National Focal Groups actively participating in GEF national coordination mechanisms

137. While this framework is not eligible as a separate medium-size project, countries wishing to strengthen their consultative process to meet global environmental commitments may develop a targeted cross-cutting capacity development project under Framework D, *Strengthening Capacities to Implement and Manage Global Convention Guidelines.*

B. Generating, Accessing, and Using Information and Knowledge

138. These types of cross-cutting capacity development projects target the need for the improvement of management information and decision support systems for the global environment. This had been identified as a serious capacity constraint and need from 90% of the NCSAs reviewed. The outcome of a cross-cutting capacity

[18] See Table 7, page 77 in "Summary of Negotiations: Fifth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund", GEF/C.37/3, GEF Council Meeting, 24 May 2010, Punta del Este, Uruguay, 141 pp. http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/3046

development project under this framework would seek to improve decision-making for the global environment through the improved use of information and knowledge.

139. *B.1: A cross-cutting capacity development project under this framework would harmonize existing information systems, integrating internationally accepted measurement standards and methodologies, as well as producing consistent reporting on the global environment.* These projects, which include a CB-2 project in Jordan, would help countries to create valid baseline studies against which to measure achievements towards global environmental objectives. This framework is targeted to the development of capacities at the individual and organizational level, while strengthening technical skills to collect data and transform information into knowledge. This framework should be implemented as one of two components that include Framework E.

140. *B.2: Alternatively, a country could target the development or piloting of innovative tools for decision-making, such as an economic valuation of the global environment increment of natural resources and services.* The commodification of natural resources would, theoretically, help create greater incentives for environmentally sound and sustainable development, resulting in global environmental benefits under the three Rio Conventions. Jamaica, for example, is undertaking a project to develop and pilot the use of natural resource valuation tools as part of the EIA process and planning decision processes that are intended to generate increased global environmental benefits.

C. Strengthening Capacities to Develop Policy and Legislative Frameworks

141. These types of projects would target the policy, legislative, or regulative frameworks for improving the management of the global environment. Whereas Framework A targets the capacities at the individual level, this framework focuses on strengthening organizational and systemic level capacities. These cross-cutting capacity development projects would seek to eliminate the unintended consequences of policy implementation, as applied within the broader framework of environmental governance. They would seek to maximize synergies among the policies, rules, and decision-making procedures governing the management of biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation, among other environmental issues. This framework is thus about environmental mainstreaming, with the cross-cutting capacity development projects seeking to integrate global environmental priorities into national policies, plans, and programmes, particularly macro-economic and poverty reduction strategies/programmes.

142. *C.1: At the systemic level, a cross-cutting capacity development project would focus on formalizing the institutional linkages between heretofore separate and distinct programme activities with the on-going core activities of existing organizations.* The rationale of such a project is that global environmental benefits can be more efficiently delivered by integrating relevant activities into those that set out to meet other national environmental and development goals. For example, projects could harmonize natural resource management policies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of MEA implementation at the national level. Bulgaria's CB-2 project, for example, is targeting systemic capacity building at the regional level, integrating global environmental priorities for decentralized decision-making and action.

143. *C.2: At the organizational level, a cross-cutting capacity development project could focus on improved management and compliance with multilateral environmental agreements.* Such a project would strengthen relevant organizational capacities to create economies of scale, and eliminate inefficiencies in enforcement structures and mechanisms. For example, the current implementation of separate protected area management systems for forest ecosystems, archaeological sites, and marine ecosystems may in fact result in conflicting or mutually exclusive management policies and procedures. This

framework focuses on harmonizing and reconciling overlapping management approaches, which would then be complemented by a sufficient baseline of capacities to monitor and evaluate implementation and compliance (Frameworks B.1 and E).

D. Strengthening Capacities to Implement and Manage Global Convention Guidelines

144. This type of cross-cutting capacity development project would focus on improving the synergistic implementation of the three Rio Conventions. Project activities would focus on one of the following: a) improving cross-institutional coordination and strengthening capacities to employ an integrated approach to implementing shared provisions of the three Rio Conventions; b) developing standards of good environmental management; or c) strengthening sustainable financing mechanisms in support of the global environment.

145. *D.1: Activities of a cross-cutting capacity development would be directed to improving organizational structures and mechanisms that catalyze coordination of multi-sectoral environmental policies and programmes, and improve their associated governance structures.* For example, government departments responsible for reporting to the Rio Conventions are often limited by the number of trained staffs, and are undertaking their responsibilities in an uncoordinated manner. By re-structuring organizational relationships and forging stronger relationships, partnerships and commitments, the resulting improved coordination and collaboration should help reduce the overlap and duplication of activities, catalyze the effective and efficient exchange of information, and improve the country's implementation of the three Rio Conventions.

146. Many of the CB-2 projects currently underway are developing some key aspect of their organizational capacity, which as mentioned above, was widely cited as a major capacity development

Drought is ravaging the continent of Africa. Famine is a harsh reality for millions of people living there and animals are also suffering greatly - dry lands are abandoned as man and wildlife seek refuge elsewhere. UN Photo E. Darroch.

constraint/need. Ghana, for example, is targeting their CB-2 to strengthen the set of organizational structures and mechanisms necessary to sustain concerted action to implement the MEAs. In this instance, as with many other countries, the paucity of government funding requires that all opportunities be sought to reduce redundancies and raise efficiencies.

147. *D.2: A cross-cutting capacity development project may wish to target the improvement of sound standards for good environmental management.* Whereas Framework B.1 looks at measurement standards, these types of projects would focus on strengthening the adaptive collaborative management of the environment. These standards would be built upon process criteria for the design and implementation of management responses to global environmental objectives, with a view to supporting the long-term development of programme indicators of delivered global environmental benefits. These types of projects must therefore be constructed and implemented in a manner consistent with an acceptable baseline of capacities that satisfy Frameworks B.1 and E.

148. *D.3: This type of project would focus on critical financial, fiscal or economic aspects of countries' capacities to meet their obligations under the three Rio Conventions.* Projects would target particular institutional structures and mechanisms that will produce cost-effective and long-term sustainability of environmental programmes, and plans that serve to meet national and global environmental

priorities. For example, projects could identify and develop innovative financial strategies for the joint implementation of key provisions of the three Rio Conventions. Projects could also seek to explore undertaking environmental fiscal reform measures to further the global environmental goals. In the case of Kyrgyzstan, their CB-2 project seeks to do precisely that, focusing on reforming the incentives and modalities by which environmental fees and fines are collected for regional environmental projects that have a global environmental increment.

E. Enhancing Capacities to Monitor and Evaluate Environmental Impacts and Trends

149. Whereas Framework B.1 targets the strengthening of individual and organizational capacities for improved management information and decision support systems for the global environment, Framework E targets a more holistic construct of monitoring and evaluation systems. Building upon a sufficient level of capacities under B.1, activities under this framework would strengthen the institutionalization of these systems as a means to incorporate lessons learned and best practices from projects and interventions under the Frameworks A through D.

150. A number of countries are design their CB-2 project under this framework. Egypt is focusing on their monitoring and reporting structures and mechanisms to catalyze the mainstreaming of the global environment into national environmental policy frameworks. A variation under this framework is a focus on indicators. Morocco, for example, is seeking to incorporate global environmental indicators into the monitoring system of their National Human Development Index. Montenegro will be developing a similar project.

5.2 Cross-cutting Capacity Development Project Guidelines

151. Early in the formulation of the cross-cutting capacity development project, a review of the NCSA Final Report and Action Plan is to be undertaken alongside a review of international, regional, and national policy frameworks. In order to meet GEF eligibility requirements, the project objectives must be strongly correlated with the following international environmental agreements:

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (CCD)
- Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCC)
- Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

152. The CB-2 project should specifically identify the articles of the three Conventions to which the project objectives help implement, as well as the relevant guidance from the respective Conferences of the Parties. The relevant Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should be identified in the same manner. The Project Identification Form (PIF) should also reference the extent to which the project will help implement the recommendations of the national reports to the three Rio Conventions and their respective action plans.

153. Regional environmental agreements, such as the Barbados Programme of Action and the 2003 Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, should also be identified and tied to the project. Particular attention should be given to how the proposed project builds upon the lessons learned and best practices by similar types of activities by countries in the same region. The project should also identify and pursue opportunities for regional cooperation in the same vein.

154. Programme linkages are also to be explored and developed within UNDP, as well as with other UN and international organizations. Two key programmes include the ***Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI)*** and the ***UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD).*** These are but two programmes of potentially strong relevance to the achievement of the proposed CCD MSP objectives.

DISCUSSION

155. The NCSA initiative is part of a GEF four-pronged strategy to support countries in enhancing their capacity to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives (GEF, 2003). In addition to the NCSAs, it includes the strengthening of capacities within the context of GEF projects, the implementation of targeted capacity building projects within and across focal areas, and country-based capacity development programmes for LDCs and SIDS. Based on the NCSA Final Reports and Action Plans, national stakeholders recognized that the emphasis on the search for synergies among MEAs and linkages between the global environmental agenda and national environmental agendas are valuable processes. Once understood, they would contribute to better decisions for managing the environment. However, despite positive feedback from stakeholders on the NCSA process, the validity and usefulness of the NCSA would be greater if the initiative were more closely connected with the other development strategies being implemented such as poverty reduction programmes and other national sustainable development processes underway.

156. Nevertheless, the approach proposed by this initiative was well aligned with the Paris Declaration principles, in particular the principles of ownership, alignment, and mutual accountability. The NCSA approach contributed to the strengthening of effective environmental leadership in participating countries, including a greater coordination of environmental actions. By its nature, the NCSA strategy was also very much aligned with the respective country's policies, strategies and programmes, as well as a mutual accountability of the NCSA partners (country governments, GEF, and implementing agencies), all of which were built into the design of the NCSA process. The NCSA process also demonstrated the feasibility of nationally centered processes that emphasized the environmentally sound use of natural resources by linking the global environmental agenda to national environmental and development agendae.

157. Despite some positive achievements, the NCSA initiative remains mostly an initial step toward the development of better capacities to manage the environment. As policy-makers and practitioners agree more and more on the overall set of capacities necessary to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives, countries are still faced with many environmental challenges. The NCSA findings provide decision-makers with initial national sets of recommendations for the way forward. Even before the first NCSA follow-up projects began, the NCSAs catalyzed a number of the cross-cutting capacity development projects under implementation. This includes UNEP's regional project to pilot integrated processes and approaches to facilitate national reporting to the Rio Conventions[19].

158. When the data is disaggregated by category of countries (i.e., SIDS and LDCs), some differences can be observed when analyzing the capacity constraints. Overall, 62% of countries stated at least one capacity constraint. However, when the data is analyzed for SIDS countries, this falls to 56%, but rises to 81% for LDCs[14]. That is, LDCs appear to have more capacity constraints than the overall average, whereas SIDS countries appear to have fewer capacity constraints than the entire group of countries studied. Similar results, though not statistically different, are observed when looking at countries' identified capacity needs: 84% for all countries; 86% for LDC countries, and 74% for SIDS countries.

159. Nevertheless, the NCSAs highlight the many challenges countries face to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives. Although stakeholders may be engaged in addressing global environmental issues, more awareness and

[19] For more information, see http://rioconventionsreporting.net/unep-wcmc-and-harmonization-of-national-reporting/
[20] The percentages are based on a review of 119 NCSAs, out of the total 146 NCSAs that were undertaken.

education is needed for greater stakeholder involvement. While some environmental information exists, more coordination and a greater capacity of organizations involved in environmental information are necessary. Most countries benefit from a relatively good set of environmental policies and legislation exist, and yet they are not as comprehensive as needed to meet and sustain global environmental benefits, particularly in the absence of effective enforcement. This is not to day that there is no monitoring and evaluation. Certainly, most countries are such systems in place. However, they are wholly inadequate in terms of meeting global environmental needs, and the complexity of environmental issues often overwhelms the relatively small staffs tracking limited performance and output indicators.

160. The programming framework for capacity development under GEF-5 will provide resources to address many of these barriers. The expected outcomes of these CB-2 projects are therefore to strengthen multi-sectoral processes that promote policy harmonization, realize cost-efficiency, and enhance operational effectiveness in Convention obligations. To this end, cross-cutting capacity development projects will focus on the environmental governance system and mainstreaming global environmental issues into national development programmes.

161. For their part, implementing agencies are pushing the envelope in terms of identifying strategic approaches to addressing countries' capacity development needs. One such example is UNDP's global event in March 2010 in Morocco on "Capacity is Development". Organized by UNDP's Capacity Development Group (CDG), this conference discussed the critical linkages between policy choices and investment decisions that underpin institutional transformation and the realization of development objectives. This event reiterated many of the lessons learned from the NCSAs, including the need to mobilize people. Ultimately, capacity development is about the change people can and are willing to make to

Abject poverty in Haiti has led to extensive deforestation, exacerbating land degradation and more poverty. Photo by Kevin Hill

improve their local environment. This action reverberates from the local to the global. Achieving and sustaining development outcomes also requires leadership, and in many cases, innovative institutional arrangements in order to address countries' unique complex and cross-sectoral priorities. This in turn requires a more intellectual and political understanding of a country's institutional history and evolution that impart important national and international realities, with very practical implications on the institutional reforms needed to achieve development goals.

162. On the heels of this conference, CDG finalized and recently published Measuring Capacity (July 2010), which updates their framework to measure capacity based on lessons learned and best practices. Based on this framework, the report also provides details on how to measure change that contributes to institutional sustainability of development goals, along with examples of outcomes and indicators, illustrative cases, and discusses implications for programme formulation.

Together with UNDP's Practice Notes on Capacity Assessment and Capacity Development, this publication adds to set of resources for practitioners and decision-makers.

163. Complementing the various sets of guidance material, this Synthesis Report represents a unique look of the underlying challenges and priorities countries face to achieve institutional sustainability of global environmental outcomes. That is, the Synthesis Report summarizes the "capacity for what", whereas the knowledge materials are valuable in helping us understand the why, when and how. This Report also raises a number of important questions about countries' challenges and needs that were not possible due to the limitations of this study. Although this study complements the GEF's Overall Performance Studies, further research is needed to evaluate the impacts of targeted capacity development interventions, such as an in-depth study on stakeholder engagement to meet and sustain global environmental objectives. UNDP/GDG's Measuring Capacity is the newest resource to add to any practitioner's set of toolkits.

164. Donors and countries must recognize that achieving global environmental objectives can not be easily defined or narrowed by a limited set of institutional structures and arrangements. Instead, there is an inextricable relationship between environment and development, with the case having been made over 20 years ago and reaffirmed by numerous multilateral fora. One can not address the global challenges and priorities without understanding and framing them from a national perspective.

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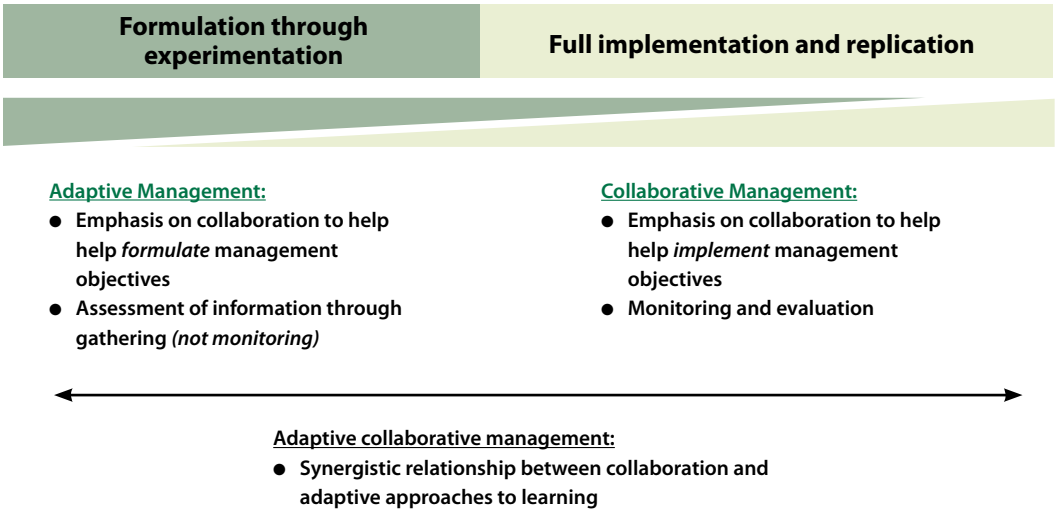
ANNEX 1: OVERVIEW OF ADAPTIVE COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT

Kevin Hill

Adaptive collaborative management (ACM) is the process of multi-disciplinary group work that stimulates holistic processes and makes deeper connections and relationships (Borrini-Feyerabend 1996:6; Gillingham and Lee 1999:15; Blumenthal and Jannink 2000:4; Sterman 2000:21; Fals Borda 2001:33; Brechin, Wilshusen et al. 2002:49-50). ACM builds on the comparative strengths of adaptive and collaborative management approaches, each of which serves to mitigate the other's deficiencies to some degree as well as to fill in certain gaps. The following diagram serves to make these distinctions more clear.

There is some degree of overlap between adaptive management and collaborative management. Adaptive management includes the early implementation of management objectives with a view to their modification, based on early lessons learned. Collaborative management on the other hand focuses on mobilizing key social actors to implement management objectives. With a heightened the emphasis on the participatory processes, collaboration is increasingly seen as invaluable to the decision-making process, as opposed to limited to assigned responsibilities or raising expectations. An essential emphasis of collaboration is the strengthening of local resident participation to redress their traditional marginalization to planning processes (Borrini-Feyerabend 1996:8; Fisher 2001:83-4). Adaptive collaborative management combines these two separate

Figure 1.1: **Adaptive Collaborative Management: A Synergy of Adaptive Management and Collaborative Management**



approaches, emphasizing that the formulation of management objectives would be more sustainable (and legitimate) if stakeholders' (primarily local people) needs and objectives were fully taken into account at a very early stage (Fisher 2001:88). Adaptive collaborative management also strengthens the methodology during the stage of full implementation, while fully realizing the dynamic nature of complex systems.

Although adaptive management itself was not initially seen as a blueprint, its approach has been increasingly treated as such, with the result being that the subsequent implementation of management objectives was not as flexible. The reason for this is that adaptive management had led to agreed revisions of management objectives that should no longer be modified in the interest of their fulfillment. Although as a framework adaptive management has been useful, it does not fully help define local management needs (Sayer 2001:75). The learning that took place through adaptive management served the restricted nature of fixed management objectives and urgent timeframes (largely due to the accountability systems employed by donor agencies) (Sayer 2001:70). What adaptive collaborative management suggests is that management objectives can continue to be modified beyond the time limits set by policy-makers. However, the only way to do this is through the approaches espoused by collaborative management.

Adaptive collaborative management is thus important when scaling up pilot conservation projects, temporally and spatially. One of the challenges of conservation activities arises when attempts are made to look more comprehensively beyond conservation areas, and to address the broader socio-economic and policy forces that will influence the sustainability of conservation efforts (Christiansen and Dinerstein 2001:51, 65). For this reason, monitoring and evaluation becomes a critical component of implementation. By strengthening collaboration mechanisms in the formulation phase, adaptive collaborative management strengthens the value of information in the formulation of management objectives. However, since this is likely to translate into heightened conflict, which may catalyze participation (Lee, 1993:88), conflict resolution and management skills are considered invaluable to conservation practitioners (Christiansen and Dinerstein 2001:55).

Adaptive collaboration management is an attempt to address the deficiencies inherent in many conservation projects that Brechin et al (2002) describe. They argue that biodiversity conservation should not be seen as a symbol of post-modern values and authoritarian protectionism, but as a more complex set of social and political interactions coupled with concerns of poverty, land tenure, and justice (Brechin, Wilshusen et al. 2002:42-4). In theory, ACM's greater emphasis on local active participation early in the formulation of management objectives should increase the legitimacy of the process for local stakeholders. Additionally, by bringing the adaptive approach to the process of scaling up and replication, through the institutionalization of monitoring and evaluation structures (as double-loop feedback mechanisms), learning is enhanced and incorporated into decisions concerning modifications to existing governance structures (Sterman 2000:18-9; Christiansen and Dinerstein 2001:54-5; Uphoff 2001:xx; Brechin, Wilshusen et al. 2002:50).

Adaptive collaborative management also focuses on the root mechanisms of decision-making in complex systems by correcting the information processing deficiencies inherent in adaptive management, emphasizing capacity building through a learning process (adaptive management). This is achieved by uncovering preferences through action, as opposed to relying on preferences alone (collaborative management). Kingdon (1984:89) concurs with Lindblom (1959) that people do not have well-defined preferences, and that the actions they take are helped by subjectively subordinating certain preferences and expectations. The nature of participation is therefore central to the decision-making process (Kingdon, 1984). Since different stakeholders will emphasize certain preferences

Adaptive collaborative management places greater emphasis on active participation of local stakeholders early in the formulation of management objectives, thereby increasing the legitimacy and sustainability of policy interventions.

over others, the role of performance evaluation as a mechanism is to ensure that behaviour, preferences, and expectations are taken into account in the transformation of organizational processes (Colebatch 1995:161-2).

The institutionalization of collaborative and adaptive mechanisms covering the full life-cycle of policy/programme formulation and implementation translates into the institutionalization of mechanisms that bode well for enhancing effectiveness, performance, and sustainability. ACM aims to do more than simply add to or strengthen structures of collaboration/monitoring/evaluation, but rather aims to take a more holistic and inter-connected approach to the dynamic placement and nature of these structures within a management setting (Margerum 2001:422-3). The challenge of ACM is in its ability to effect these (performance evaluation) institutional changes.

One way adaptive collaborative management could be operationalized is through community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) that Rappaport (1970:499) defines as "action research [that] aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework" (Brown and Tandon 1983:278). CBPAR also aims to emphasize the legitimacy of resource distribution and authority in order that the action research strategies are used appropriately, as well as for the stakeholders to accept the project management team as credible (Brown and Tandon 1983:290-1). CBPAR also requires "thoughtful planning, specific expertise, careful data collection and analysis, and clear reports and recommendations" (Chesler 1998:172).

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ANNEX 2: SELECT NCSA AND CB2 PROFILES

The NCSA profiles are based on information contained in the NCSA project document and NCSA Final Report and Action Plan. The CB2 profiles are based on information contained in the CB2 project documents. There are no CB2 profiles from the Pacific as none had been approved at the time of this report

NCSA Profiles
Costa Rica
Egypt
Papua New Guinea
Thailand

CB2 Profiles
Bhutan
Bulgaria
Croatia
Egypt
Ghana
Jamaica
Kyrgyzstan
Nicaragua
Philippines
Seychelles

View of the Arctic polar ice rim during Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's visit to witness firsthand the impact of climate change on icebergs and glaciers. UN Photo by Mark Garten.

Annex 2

Costa Rica

Costa Rica's National Capacity Self-Assessment

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 200,000**
Implementation period	**: December 2004 – September 2007**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP or UNEP**
Partners	**: Ministry of Environment and Energy**

The Challenge: Costa Rica has not explicitly integrated Rio Convention commitments into the country's set of national development and environmental strategies and plans.Notwithstanding, a few national legal instruments do translate certain international commitments into a selection of working programmes. In a number of cases, national agencies' mandates and functions as they relate to Rio Convention objectives either overlap, causing a duplication of efforts, or do not adequately ensure coverage, creating substantial policy gaps. This situation posed formidable challenges, and was due to the lack of both inter-agency coordination and a national legal environmental framework that defined the distributive responsibilities among governmental organizations. Moreover, there are discrepancies between national and international environmental priorities.

Expected Outcomes:

The main outcomes expected from this project were:

1. Improved awareness and political commitment among ministers with environmental management responsibilities, specifically about the importance of meeting Rio Convention commitments.
2. Inter-agency cooperation to improve planning for environmentally sound and sustainable development
3. Development of a manual to guide Costa Rica's participation at national and international fora related to the Rio Conventions.
4. Inventories of programmes and projects planned or underway that contribute to Rio Convention objectives.
5. Identification and institutionalization of sustainable financing mechanisms to meet Rio Convention commitments.
6. Resources made available to the mass media for publicity focused on Costa Rica's interventions as they relate to the global environment.

Project Objective: **To increase awareness of the capacity challenges and opportunities in Costa Rica, so as to tackle commitments Costa Rica has assumed that relate to the Rio Conventions.**

Project Strategy: To comply with the international commitments derived from the three Conventions, it was necessary to include actions directly related to them in Costa Rica's national development plans. This strategy was considered the most effective way to allocate human, financial, and technical resources to comply with the commitments. It required a socialization process to increase the awareness of public officials about national responsibilities associated with the Conventions. Also critical was the creation of institutional capacities to address sustainable development policies beyond the environmental sector.

Key Activities:

1. Provided information to parliamentarians and government officials concerning the challenges and barriers to addressing international commitments
2. Engaged representatives from academia to share their contributions, in order to develop human capital for international environmental law
3. Identified the human and financial resources needed to ensure Costa Rica's participation in the activities related to the Rio Conventions
4. Identified and shared public information, including published work by a variety of media and fora relating Costa Rica's activities in support of the Rio Conventions
5. Collected and maintained updated inventories of the resources necessary to address international environmental commitments

Egypt

EGYPT's National Capacity Self-Assessment

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 200,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 35,000**
Implementation period	**: June 2005 – December 2008**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency**

The Challenge: Egypt experiences capacity deficiencies at all levels, including over-burdened staff, under-utilized strengths, and high staff turn-over, leading to a loss of institutional memory and investments in trained staff. Moreover, the synergies between the three thematic areas of the Rio Conventions have not yet been properly addressed, as called for by the Conventions. An assessment exercise needed to take place to assess capacities at the individual, organizational, and systemic levels in order to meet global environmental commitments.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Stocktaking and identification of capacity development challenges, barriers, and gaps to meet global environmental objectives
2. Prioritization of capacity development needs
3. In-depth analysis of the institutional framework surrounding action to meet global environmental objectives.
4. Development and launching of a capacity development strategy and action plan.
5. Increased awareness of the complex linkages among Rio Convention objectives and national development priorities.

During the focal area and cross-cutting assessment phase, the project steering committee identified the main constraints to the development and implementation of national and international action plans: public participation; legislation and enforcement; technology transfer; financing; and monitoring and evaluation.

During the two years of NCSA implementation, the project supported the integration of the Millennium Development Goal 7 into national planning processes, using an agreed-upon set of progress indicators from different sectors. One key outcome of the NCSA was the formulation of a GEF national steering committee with representatives from relevant line ministries, thematic experts, and NGOs to oversee the implementation of the GEF portfolio at the national level through a more consultative process.

Project Strategy: The project built upon the various national institutional structures and mechanisms related to the Rio Conventions. Although these structures differ in their institutional hierarchy, the project sought to identify the management capacities necessary to tackle the challenges to meet national and global environmental objectives. The NCSA was successful in catalyzing responses in three areas critical to achieving environmental sustainability: stakeholder engagement and commitment; information management; and the integration within national planning frameworks.

Project Objective: **To assess constraints, measure national capacities, and define priorities with regard to meeting national environmental priorities and Rio Convention objectives.**

Key Activities:

1. Reviewed the obligations of each Rio Convention, particularly the guidance related to capacity development.
2. Prepared a report assessing the synergies between the three thematic areas, identifying priorities for building capacities.
3. Produced in-depth studies focusing on the priority environmental issues.
4. Produced a detailed report for each of the identified priorities, analyzing its nature, contributing factors, and linkages.
5. Identified a methodology to catalyze the full and active engagement of stakeholders.
6. Prepared a National Capacity Development Strategy and Action Plan as an action-oriented response to the key capacity constraints.
7. Produced educational and promotional materials specific to the Egyptian environmental context.

Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea's National Capacity Self-Assessment

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 200,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 32,000**
Implementation period	**: February 2005 – October 2006**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC)** **: Department of National Planning and Rural Development** **: Department of Environment and Heritage, Government of Australia**

The Challenge: While Papua New Guinea has well-established institutional structures for environmental management, very little coordination and cooperation occurs through these formal bodies. A study endorsed by the Government of PNG recommended that a comprehensive assessment of national capacities to meet global environmental objectives would help identify those capacity constraints and opportunities also related to national environmental management.

The main capacity development challenges and barriers in Papua New Guinea are:

1. An inadequate partnership between the government and the NGOs on environmental management
2. Limited knowledge of the MEAs, as well as insufficient levels of education and awareness on environmental issues and challenges
3. An absence of integrated and appropriate environmental policies that guide the agencies implementing the MEAs
4. Insufficient financial and human resources to undertake key monitoring and compliance activities related to the MEAs
5. Limited political will and support. Emphasis is mainly on economic development priorities rather than on environmental priorities

Expected outcomes: The NCSA produced a policy document and associated action plan that outlined the priority environmental issues, constraints and opportunities for building the capacities necessary for the effective and sustainable implementation of the Rio Conventions, including other MEAs.

Project Objective: **To assist PNG in assessing its effectiveness in meeting its commitments under the three Rio Conventions.**

Project Strategy: The NCSA project builds upon current government policies and strategies, identifying both the limits of national capacities as well as the opportunities to improve capacities. This includes identifying opportunities to strengthen policy and programme coordination and cooperation among key stakeholder agencies.

A thorough assessment of capacities to manage priority environmental challenges builds upon the government's environmentally related policies, e.g., fisheries and mining. The assessment exercise generated valuable knowledge that could be used to strengthen capacities throughout the government, and which could lead to better environmental outcomes.

Key Activities:

1. Establishment of a Project Management Office and Coordinator within the DEC
2. An Inception Workshop was held in 2006.
3. Key institutional reforms to enhance Papua New Guinea's capacity to pursue an agenda of environmental sustainability and economic growth were the basis of decisions to delay project implementation between 2006 and 2009.
4. NCSA activities resumed in September 2009 with a Stocktaking and Thematic Assessment Workshop, with support from the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP)
5. A workshop took place in February 2010 to validate the results and recommendations of the NCSA
6. The NCSA Final Report and Capacity Development Action Plan were finalized in June 2010.

Thailand

Thailand's National Capacity Self-Assessment

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 200,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 36,800**
Implementation period	**: October 2008 - November 2009**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning Land Development Department**

The Challenge: National focal points for the Rio Conventions were found to be without adequate levels financial and human resources. An important obstacle in securing sufficient financial resources through government budgetary processes can be attributed to a relatively low level of political commitment.

Enforcement of relevant laws to implement the Rio Conventions, particularly the CCD, had not been adequately evaluated and no assessment had been undertaken on legislative bills that could potentially complement the existing legislative framework relevant to the Rio Conventions.

Similarly, most awareness building efforts related to the Rio Conventions were not adequately evaluated, effectively preventing the necessary follow-up to complement past efforts and avoid duplication of effort. Most stakeholders without background knowledge on international laws were also found to be indifferent to the Conventions. On the other hand, the national focal points continued to exercise authority on how their respective Conventions were interpreted and often pre-determined the roles of the stakeholders in the implementation, as opposed to employing more participatory-oriented approaches.

Implementation of the Rio Conventions continued to suffer from the paucity of multi-disciplinary researchers and mechanisms to facilitate these scientific works. This includes, for example, the inadequacy of applicable models on the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and land resources.

Regular consultations among the focal points were established under the NCSA. This could be potentially expanded to enhance coordination and collaboration pertaining to Convention implementation. The NCSA also introduced new approaches to assessing and developing capacities to wider audiences, providing avenues for better engagement and participation, as well as proposed actions.

Project Strategy and Outcomes: Thailand's NCSA facilitated regular consultations among Rio Convention focal points and invoked relevant authorities to enhance coordination among programme activities. The project also enhanced stakeholder participation in implementation activities. The project also strengthened stakeholders' awareness of the inter-connectedness among the three environmental focal areas. This reaffirmed the need for more multi-disciplinary research and the role that stakeholders play in contributing to a more holistic conception of the challenge and alternative solutions.

Project Objective: **To identify gaps in capacities to meet Rio Convention commitments, and develop an action plan to strengthen the existing and needed individual, organizational and systemic capacities to meet Rio Convention objectives.**

Key Activities:

1. Collected stakeholder input on implementation challenges and needs for each of the Rio Conventions and recommendations to catalyze synergies.
2. Organized additional stakeholder consultations to review synthesis of the assessments.
3. Developed an action plan based on areas of common interested among the Conventions
4. Introduced the action plan to stakeholders and conducted revision accordingly

Bhutan

Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance System

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 500,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 227,192**
Implementation period	**: September 2007 – August 2010**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: DANIDA** **: National Environment Commission Secretariat (NECS)**

The Challenge: Over the last decade, Bhutan has increasingly become an active player in the global environmental arena, becoming a party to all three Rio Conventions and undertaking various projects to better understand the context of threats to environmental sustainability.

Bhutan's NCSA identified 22 capacity development needs that were common to the three Rio Conventions. An in-depth analysis and broad stakeholder consultation process identified the need to mainstream global environmental priorities and decentralize decision-making as a top priority for targeted cross-cutting capacity development. The decentralization process in Bhutan is a notable challenge due to the lack of local individual capacities in terms of knowledge, skills, experience and institutional support.

The NCSA stressed the importance of the on-going decentralization process and the significant and unique opportunities that it offers for mainstreaming cross-cutting environmental management priorities into on-going planning and capacity development initiatives.

Project Objective: **To enhance global environmental management by mainstreaming the provisions of the Rio Conventions into enhanced decentralized environmental management.**

Project Strategy: This project was designed to complement on-going and planned activities, in particular the DANIDA-supported Environment and Urban Sector Programme. The CB2 project would fill remaining gaps in the much-needed organizational and individual capacities to meet global environmental objectives within the construct of local governance structures for decentralized decision-making on the environment. Thus, the project would enhance the enforcement of environmental legislative mandates that meet district, national and global environmental objectives.

Expected Outcomes:

1. A national framework to enhance decentralized capacity for environmental management and implementation of the provisions of the three Rio Conventions
2. Decentralized institutional framework and personnel to enhance local environmental management, which include implementation of the Rio Conventions' provisions.
3. Enhanced Environmental Information Management System to backstop national policy and decision making in response to global environmental management needs as per the provisions of the Rio Conventions

Key Activities:

1. Establish a functional and sustainable Dzongkhag (District) Environmental Committee (DEC) Focal Point Secretariat within the National Environmental Commission Secretariat with the capacity to manage and coordinator the DEC environmental management tasks and responsibilities.
2. Develop a training curriculum and related action plan for the DEC.
3. Create Training-of-Trainers learning material on environmental management awareness as well as developing and conducting training workshops.
4. Further develop existing Environmental Information Management Systems to enhance backstopping capability.
5. Development of uniform indicators and guidance for M&E.

Bulgaria

Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Bulgaria's Regional Development Process

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 499,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 1,029,000**
Implementation period	**: June 2006 – September 2010**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of Bulgaria (MRDPW)** **: Ministry of Environment and Waters of Bulgaria (MoEW)**

The Challenge: Bulgaria's NCSA determined that global environmental issues were conspicuously absent from the process of regional and local planning, despite the recognition of their close relationship. This absence is due in part to the insufficiency of knowledge, expertise, and experienced technical staff, especially at the lower planning levels, to integrate Rio Conventions objectives in their strategic planning documents. A contributing factor is the lack of uniform data necessary to satisfy the information demands of decision-makers so as to enable their monitoring and reporting on progress towards meeting global environmental objectives. Neither are there models or blueprints as to the practical integration of global environmental priorities into local, regional and national planning frameworks.

Project Objective: **To embed global environmental concerns into the processes of regional and local development, as well as into spatial planning.**

Project Strategy: This project will begin by strengthening the active involvement and ownership of a broader set of stakeholders associated with local, regional and global environmental planning and development processes. This will include municipal leaders, local NGOs and representatives from the private sector. With training on methodologies and approaches to improve spatial planning, pilot projects will involve planners and decision-makers in the use of real cases to apply new integrated municipal-regional-global environmental development and planning guidelines and indicators.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Development of adequate skills of key officials at all planning levels for their effective role in mainstreaming global environmental issues into regional development policies.
2. Development of appropriate systems of training and learning to maintain a continuous skills upgrade of existing and new staff at the two target ministries.
3. Development of a set of strategic indicators and a pilot geographic information system that can be used to assess the impact of development and spatial planning at the regional, district and municipal levels on the achievement of the three Conventions' objectives.
4. Development of model strategic planning documents.

Key Activities:

1. Development of a package of training programmes on the integration of global environmental objectives into strategic planning processes (330 experts from MRDPW, MoEW, municipalities and district administrations attended the training courses).
2. Seven strategic indicators for monitoring integrated local and regional strategic planning/global environmental objectives were developed and incorporated into the MRDPW's official methodological and planning guidelines.
3. Development of a prototype geographic information system application based on the seven indicators to improve the monitoring of integrated local-regional-global environmental and development concerns at the MRDPW.
4. One district development strategy based on the seven indicators was modeled.
5. A study tour to Cornwall, UK for experts from MRDPW and MoEW and involvement of MRDPW in three follow-up projects with UK partners would capitalize on project achievements and ensure the sustainability of project results beyond its official end.

Croatia

Data Flow System and Indicators to Enhance Integrated Management of Global Environmental Issues

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 477,000**
Co-financing	**:**
Implementation period	**: November 2008 – September 2011**
GEF Agency	**: UNEP**
Partners	**: Croatian Environment Agency**

The Challenge: In the past decade since Croatia became a signatory to the Rio Conventions, considerable efforts have been undertaken, particularly on strengthening the legislative framework, reporting, as well as building organizational capacities for environmental management.

Although each of the three Conventions demands some specific data, a significant portion of the programmes and data is shared by all three. The programmes are also implemented, and data frequently collected and processed by the same scientific and specialized institutions. However, the same data needed for all three conventions are frequently researched and processed within separate research projects and procedures. Thus, there is much unnecessary duplication of effort and inefficient use of limited financial resources. Also, in some cases, the data being collected does not meet consistent and uniform measurement standards.

The organization of a research system that results in coordinated staff activities and joint programmes (including research, collecting, processing and monitoring of the same data) would considerably contribute to the uniformity of such data and probably result in lower costs. It is particularly important considering capacity constraints and logistics to scientific and professional work in Croatia. The initial effect of such pooling could be gained by the already initiated projects setting up the national network of monitoring stations, and the national biological diversity monitoring system.

Project Objective: **To develop a comprehensive data flow system (DFS) and model indicators model for the sustained collection and management of data needs common to the CBD, CCD, and FCCC.**

Project Strategy: This project will negotiate the integration of the relevant databases and management information systems into a common data flow system (DFS) and model indicators, and test their application on a small-scale pilot project within an endangered coastal habitat exhibiting karst topography. The selected site is affected by fires that destroy globally significant biodiversity, exacerbates erosion, and adds greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. The pilot project will contribute to the refinement of a full-scale DFS to be implemented at the national level.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Enhanced CEIS through improved indicators covering global environmental priorities
2. A more cost-effective and efficient, cooperative institutional framework for a common data flow system
3. The common DFS and model indicators are piloted, with organizational and individual capacities built through learning-by-doing
4. A sustainable national capacity building programme for the management of common data requirements for the Rio Conventions developed

Key Activities:

1. Identification of data and indicators common to the three Rio Conventions, including their institutional sources
2. Institutional analysis of current databases and recommendations for an improved, integrated common data flow system
3. Development of a common DFS and interactive web-site and model indicators
4. Pilot testing of DFS through the cooperation with local stakeholders and public in a pilot site
5. Analysis of pilot project results and improvement of DFS
6. Development of a national capacity building programme for wider application of a common DFS for improved decision-making.

Egypt

Mainstreaming global environmental issues in national plans and policies by strengthening the monitoring and reporting systems of MEAs

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 475,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 812,000**
Implementation period	**: January 2009 - present**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency** **: Desert Research Center** **: Ministry of Agriculture** **: Ministry of International Cooperation** **: Ministry of Economic Development** **: National competiveness council**

The Challenge: Egypt's policy and planning framework that guide socio-economic development is very sectoral, within which important environmental considerations and priorities are not integrated. This includes national environmental priorities as well as those of a global nature. Achieving sustainable development and environmental sustainability requires a holistic set of enabling conditions at the systemic level.

The challenges at the organizational level overlap with those at the individual level, where there is an ambiguity and absence of job responsibilities concerning monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Egypt is also challenged in being able to secure and retain the necessary capacities for monitoring (including data collection and management) and reporting (ability to develop the State of Environment Report through consultative process and based on clear set of national indicators).

Project Objective: To strengthen Egypt's monitoring capabilities and reporting requirements of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

Project Strategy: Building upon the NCSA results, this project seeks to develop the government's capacities to undertake improved monitoring, evaluation, and reporting in order to meet global environmental objectives. This project takes a two-pronged approach to environmental sustainability: First, to strengthen the importance of global environmental issues in the National Sustainable Development Committee; and second to support the preparation of the Annual State of Environment report that more accurately reflects Egypt's fulfillment of their MEA commitments.

Expected outcomes:

1. An enhanced operational monitoring and management information system for MEAs at the policy, organizational and individual levels.
2. Established coordination mechanisms that comply with the reporting obligations under the global environmental conventions.
3. Secured long-term financing to undertake monitoring, evaluation, and reporting practices on a sustainable and consistent basis.

Key Activities:

1.1: A database and management information system developed to include all data categories for global environmental management.

1.2: Necessary legislative and regulatory changes developed for streamlining integrated monitoring and evaluation for global environmental management.

1.3: Capacity of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and other institutions strengthened through necessary technical assistance and targeted training for improved monitoring and evaluation.

2.1: Necessary legislative and regulatory changes developed for involving sectoral agencies in national reporting to the global environmental conventions in a consistent manner.

2.2: Communication and feedback mechanisms established for the reporting process to contribute to national policy development and decision-making.

3.1: Funding scenarios developed for monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

3.2: Necessary legislative and procedural changes developed for implementing funding mechanisms for sustainable monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

Ghana

Establishing an Effective and Sustainable Structure for Implementing Multilateral Environmental Agreements

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 475,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 284,300**
Implementation period	**: June 2008 – June 2011**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment**

The Challenge: Ghanaian stakeholders undertook a comprehensive, participatory assessment of the capacities needed to implement the Rio Conventions. Through this process, they recognized that they have common functions and tasks, have shared resources, and face common challenges and constraints. It quickly became obvious that they should work more closely together, to pool resources and to fuse much of their work programmes.

A priority recommendation of the thematic assessments was to strengthen coordination in order to more effectively address the needs of improved reporting, participation, knowledge management, resource mobilization and mainstreaming. The cross-cutting assessment also noted that this applies to all Conventions, not just the Rio Conventions.

The proposed project will help the Government to integrate existing management structures and mechanisms at the national level to create synergies, economies of scale, and achieve cost-effectiveness. The project will then enhance the operation of these structures and mechanism by building up their capacity to perform specific tasks. The project will pilot the improved arrangements in five pilot districts as a means to build overall national level capacity to support the districts. Given the intimate relationship between poverty and environmental degradation, and Ghana's commitment to poverty alleviation, the aim of this project is to strengthen the institutional arrangements in such a way that meeting global environmental objectives can be met while simultaneously meeting the goals of poverty alleviation.

Project Strategy: The project will bring the existing institutional structures for the three Conventions into one structure consisting of a single Ghana Environmental Conventions Coordinating Authority (GECCA) and a Secretariat. The project will strengthen coordination capacity by performing key tasks and directly implementing Convention related activities. Additionally, it will develop the capacity of the GECCA and the Secretariat to support, in a coordinated manner, the district level stakeholders.

Expected outcomes:

1. Functional national level structure and mechanisms for coordinating activities within and across the Rio Conventions
2. National stakeholders responsible for the Rio Conventions are coordinating to perform priority tasks
3. Stakeholders in five diverse and representative districts piloted the coordination of implementation of the Conventions at the district level

Project Objective: **To improve the institutional structures and mechanisms for implementing the Rio Conventions within a framework of poverty alleviation.**

Key Activities:

1. Raise awareness and develop a draft Law for this GECCA.
2. Develop, in a detailed manner, the business plan for the Secretariat.
3. Provide training and technical assistance to sectoral agencies, starting with the agriculture, water, forestry and energy sectors.
4. Undertake a review of existing data management systems and gaps.
5. Identify and assess sources of finance (international, national, private sector) to finance the transfer of climate change technology and strengthen the Clean Development Mechanism.
6. Work with district stakeholders and planners to modify the ongoing district planning process.
7. Develop a multi-Convention participation strategy.

Jamaica

Piloting Natural Resource Valuation within Environmental Impact Assessments

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 470,250**
Co-financing	**: US$ 82,000**
Implementation period	**: June 2008 – June 2011**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Ministry of Land and Environment** **: Ministry of Economic Development** **: National competiveness council**

The Challenge: Jamaica's NCSA identified the issue of governance as a key area that needed strengthening. Capacity constraints include an inadequate appreciation by decision-makers of the importance of environmental services in making sound and sustainable economic development decisions. This comes from decision-making processes that are heavily weighted in favour of economic metrics. This is also coupled with inadequate policy coordination and weak implementation, as well as an insufficient assessment and understanding of the impact of implementing and not implementing various environmental policies.

Ascribing and maintaining natural resource values are difficult given the national priority of socio-economic development and Jamaica's existing institutional framework governing natural resource use and environmental management, which is heavily biased against protection in favour of extraction and exploitation for short-term economic gains.

This project will strengthen the implementation of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), as well as contribute to the implementation of Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) through the development and application of natural resource valuation tools.

Project Objective: **To develop a set of natural resource valuation tools, and incorporate these into policies and procedures governing the preparation and use of EIAs.**

Project Strategy: The project will demonstrate the use of valuation tools and techniques to improve the decision-making process concerning economic development projects that may potentially affect the environment. The project will develop and apply natural resource valuation tools that are particular to the Jamaican context, provide training on the use of these tools, and negotiate policy and institutional changes to institutionalize the use of these tools.

Expected outcomes:

1. Tools to create a set of actuarial data that fully reflects the value of ecosystem goods and services, natural resource commodities, as well as the opportunity cost of environmental damage arising from land degradation
2. Incorporation of natural resource valuation tools into the EIA process
3. Strengthened capacity of Jamaica's National Environment and Planning Agency to use natural resource valuation within the EIA process in a cost-effective, transparent, and timely manner

Key Activities:

1. Develop methods and approaches to undertake natural resource valuation
2. Develop monitoring systems and validation tests
3. Integrate natural resource valuation tools and techniques within guidelines for the implementation of EIAs
4. Develop an implementation plan for undertaking an EIA with the use of natural resource valuation tools and techniques
5. Develop a training module on natural resource valuation
6. Provide training on the interpretation of natural resource valuation data and information to government agency staffs.
7. Hold sensitization workshops to raise the level of understanding and importance of the potential socio-economic costs of natural resource degradation that may arise from proposed developments

Kyrgyzstan

Capacity Building for Improved National Financing of Global Environmental Management

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 425,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 220,000**
Implementation period	**: October 2008 – December 2011**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry**

The Challenge: Kyrgyzstan's national sustainable development framework, both at the policy and institutional levels, represents an important positive opportunity to further the goal of environmental fiscal reform. In particular, recent reforms of budget and tax policies have helped reduce enabling conditions for corruption (such as the elimination of separate agency funds).

However, Kyrgyzstan has not developed a system that provides sufficient incentives for environmental conservation. Environmental fiscal reform is necessary for the creation of a system for collecting, managing, and allocating revenues from fines for environmental degradation.

Kyrgyzstan's current system of collecting fees and fines and government budgetary allocation to the local and regional governments is not adequate to offer sufficient funding for a range of services needed to meet national and global environmental objectives.

This project approaches environmental fiscal reform 'vertically', targeting capacity development at multiple levels of the decision-making chain for assessing, collecting and managing revenues from environmental fines.

Project Strategy: Taking an adaptive collaborative management approach, the project will ensure that key stakeholders, such as the private sector, local government, and civil society representatives, are involved early and throughout project execution as partners for development. This will greatly enhance the legitimacy of the negotiated fiscal governance reforms and also ensure that the capacity development activities continue to be relevant and appropriately targeted. The project expects that the benefits that will accrue to the region from this demonstration project will far outweigh the benefits that accrue to the few individuals and the state, allowing for these reforms to be institutionalized and sustained.

Expected outcomes:

1. Development of a tax instrument for controlling and managing industrial pollution
2. Development of a clear, transparent and manageable strategy and guidelines for sound fiscal management of natural resources
3. Strengthening the human and institutional capacities for assessing, calculating and collecting fines for industrial pollution

Key Activities:

1. Undertake a SWOT analysis on industrial pollution control
2. Identify and develop improvements to tax instrument for IPC
3. Develop operational programme and guidelines for resource mobilization
4. Develop operational arrangements for managing environmental fines
5. Prepare guidelines for managing industrial pollution control fines
6. Develop and publicize procedures for identifying corruption
7. Develop procedures for internal auditing of environmental revenues
8. Training workshops on the interpretation of environmental fiscal measures
9. Public awareness and policy dialogue sessions with industry representatives
10. Test and apply new and improved guidelines and procedures for environmental fiscal reform in one okmotu (region)

Project Objective: **To help allocate revenues for biodiversity conservation, create incentives for clean technologies, and adopt techniques and practices that minimize the risks of land degradation.**

Nicaragua

Mainstreaming the Multilateral Environmental Agreements into the Country's Environmental Legislation

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 465,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 133,700**
Implementation period	**: June 2008 – June 2011**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources**

The Challenge: Despite past and on-going efforts in Nicaragua, much remains to be done to effectively implement the Rio Conventions at the national level and mainstream environment into local and national policies. Enforcement of current environmental laws is lacking and there is a capacity deficiency in the ability to apply legal instruments to increase compliance levels.

Nicaragua faces insufficient institutional capacity and trained human resources with which to follow up on and promote compliance with the multilateral environmental agreements. The absence of institutional capacity, standardized methodologies, reliable indicators and appropriate and sustainable environmental information management systems have all contributed to a lack of effective and systematic monitoring and evaluation regarding compliance and observance of MEA commitments.

Project Objective: To strengthen the country's judicial systems in order to improve compliance with global environmental objectives.

Project Strategy: This project will review current legislation and subsequently adapt administrative practices to present day circumstances, with particular emphasis on integrating global environmental priorities. The project will increase local and national capacities to enforce environmental legislation, in particular the Special Law on Crimes against the Environment and Natural Resources in support of the Rio Conventions. The project will also contribute to the replicability of legislative reforms and enforcement to other countries in the region through sharing of lessons learned. This has already been facilitated by the signed agreements during the NCSA phase by the Central American Environment Commission (CCAD) and natural resources management agencies of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Panamá.

Expected outcomes:

1. Effective enforcement of environmental legislation related to MEAs, with emphasis on the recently passed Special Crimes against the Environment and Natural Resources Act
2. Organizational development and inter-institutional strengthening on environmental mainstreaming in line with the MEAs
3. Increased technical and methodological capacities in the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources to monitor the impact of a more effective enforcement of environmental legislation and the ability to act in compliance with MEAs.

Key Activities:

1. Awareness-raising workshops for high-level officials of the judicial system
2. Training workshops for the personnel of courts, ombudsman offices, among others having a direct role in enforcement procedures.
3. Production of court manuals on the application of environmental norms
4. Development of a compliance framework at the local level in selected areas
5. Provide equipment, connectivity and physical documentation banks for each MEA focal point
6. Improve information flow and inter-institutional coordination mechanisms to increase synergies in the compliance of MEAs
7. Define a set of parameters to create monitoring indicators on the effectiveness of MEA compliance.
8. Evaluate direct and indirect impact of enforced legislation on compliance levels.
9. Regional seminar co-sponsored by CCAD to share lessons learned and best practices.

Philippines

Strengthening Coordination for Effective Environmental Management

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 475,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 515,000**
Implementation period	**: June 2008 – June 2011**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**
Partners	**: Department of Environment and Natural Resources**

The Challenge: The government of the Philippines introduced innovative institutional and legal reforms for sustainable natural resources management. These included the strengthening of the natural resources function in government agencies, and a comprehensive decentralization process. The Philippines also quickly moved to ratify the Rio Conventions and establish an implementation framework.

However, the NCSA determined that while many committed stakeholders at all levels are undertaking various tasks related to the three Conventions, a lack of coordination is leading to wasted resources, loss of synergy, loss of economies of scale, and duplication.

The government has a large number of coordinating mechanisms in the natural resources sector, mostly focusing on specific technical issues. However coordination has tended to be technical, informal, or limited to preparing policy positions for international meetings. Some of the mechanisms also lack sufficient representation from the private sector, NGOS, and academia. Inter-agency mechanisms are organized to work within specific focal areas instead of between focal areas.

Project Objective: **To strengthen local and national institutional structures and mechanisms for improved coordination of programme activities, creating economies of scale and synergies in achieving Rio Convention objectives.**

Project Strategy: The project strategy is to begin with the development of coordination tools and mechanisms between focal agencies. The tools will then be piloted at a representative local site, and finalized through an in-depth analysis of lessons learned. Coordination mechanisms will be applied to specific tasks, and then refined through adaptive collaborative management to ensure their legitimacy, resilience, effectiveness and sustainability.

Expected outcomes:

1. Government agencies are effectively coordinating the preparation and implementation of related policies, programmes, projects and activities.
2. Local and national stakeholders are addressing key global environmental issues in and around Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park in a coordinated manner.
3. International, national and local partners have adopted the tools developed under the project.

Key Activities:

1. Establish a permanent National Technical Coordination Committee with an adequately funded office
2. Develop a medium-term business plan for the Committee
3. Support national stakeholders in the design of a national system of incentives for coordinated implementation of the Rio Conventions
4. Develop tools to support the coordination of policies, programmes and projects at the local level
5. Support and facilitate the piloting of the tools and incentive system at the local level
6. Institutionalize an incentive system to sustain the application of tools and implementation of the business plan
7. Support activities to disseminate the tools and lessons learned to local government units across the country

Seychelles

Capacity Development for Improved National and International Environmental Management

GEF Contribution	**: US$ 400,000**
Co-financing	**: US$ 100,000**
Implementation period	**: December 2009 – November 2011**
GEF Agency	**: UNDP**

The Challenge: While the 2000-2010 Environmental Management Plan for Seychelles (EMPS) addresses key local priorities, it does not adequately reflect international commitments. The EMPS as the guiding planning framework for environmental management in the Seychelles is not adequately integrated with the broader socio-economic development policy and planning frameworks. Additionally, the capacities of civil society are not properly harnessed to the betterment of local and global environmental objectives.

At the organizational level, the EMPS coordinating unit does not have adequate capacity to properly fulfil its secretariat duties and provide the necessary support and guidance to implement the EMPS. There is insufficient data and no centralized database to guide the planning, inform decision-making, or facilitate national reporting of activities to implement the Rio Conventions. In its current form, the EMPS is viewed as a government-dominated process that is neither sufficiently participatory nor effective in guiding environmental policy or implementing programmes and projects.

There is also inadequate knowledge in Seychelles about how to translate the Rio Convention commitments into local and national action outside of the public sector. This includes insufficient knowledge on the design of projects and systems that incorporate global environmental objectives into local development initiatives. There is an inadequate baseline of field experience in applying integrated environmental management regimes. Relatively few have been provided the basic generic tools to facilitate their practical application.

Project Strategy: This project is based on both the need to mainstream global environmental objectives into the EMPS as well as to strengthen national capacities to effectively apply integrated environmental management approaches. The project will focus on strengthening individual and organizational capacities, targeting the structure, functions and capacities of the EMPS to meet global environmental concerns, broadening the non-governmental partnerships involved in the delivery of the EMPS programme, and providing improved operational capacity (e.g., adaptive management of environmental interventions) to deliver expected results.

Project Objective:
To sustain global environmental management by strengthening the national institutional framework and developing the necessary technical skills and related capacities to manage global environmental commitments within the framework of national environmental objectives.

Expected Outcomes:
The project is intended to achieve the follow results that were identified in the NCSA:

1. Mulltilateral environmental agreements are more effectively managed.
2. Donor-funded projects are better designed to help Seychelles meet international and national environmental commitments and priorities.
3. International and national environmental commitments are financed through more sustainable sources and mechanisms.
4. Seychelles' institutional framework is better enabled to implement the EMPS.

Key Activities:

1. Development of the 2011-2020 EMPS that fully incorporates Rio Convention commitments.
2. Increased training and staffing of the EMPS secretariat for the cost-effective implementation of the EMPS, including direct linkages with national centres of excellence.
3. Establishment of a centralized database containing key data and information directly relevant to the Rio Conventions. The database will enable the development and publication of Seychelles' first State of the Environment Outlook.
4. Pilot projects will be implemented to test the integration of global environmental practices at the district level. Training will be provided for government resource management agencies, NGOs, local resource users and other local stakeholders on new land-use planning processes and their relevance to and incorporation of obligations under the Rio Conventions.

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