

UNDP Financing for Biodiversity

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As the development arm of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with its universal in-country presence and its regional and global networks, assists countries to build cross-sectoral capacities and put in place effective policies and institutions to both protect the environment and reduce poverty. Major areas of support include assisting countries with the development of national strategic, policy and regulatory frameworks for environmentally sustainable development; national and local level capacity development to support participatory approaches to environmental management; and helping countries meet their commitments under the global environmental conventions in ways that maximize their synergies with, and contributions to, national development objectives.

During the period 1991-2000, spanning UNDP's second and third programming cycles, UNDP has allocated more than \$920 million of its core resources to assist countries in integrating environment and development. Of this amount more than \$120 million has directly supported biodiversity activities, including agrobiodiversity, sustainable forestry and fisheries, support to Indigenous Peoples, and protected areas. UNDP has also been responsible for managing a further \$100 million leveraged in cost sharing for these and other projects by governments and other funding sources. In addition, as one of the three Implementing Agencies of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP has mobilized over \$430 million of GEF support to countries specifically for biodiversity activities. This in turn has leveraged more than \$600 million of support for biodiversity from other sources including the private sector.

UNDP's biodiversity support to countries is tightly integrated into its core work, mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into activities such as governance and poverty reduction in more than 50 countries. In the Philippines, for example, UNDP's assistance is helping to empower indigenous peoples to pursue their right to self-determination and strengthen the capacity of government and NGO's to provide the support for sustainable management of ancestral domains. In agro-ecosystems UNDP's support of the Sustainable Agriculture Network and Extension (SANE) project promoted an international network of regional and local NGO's that assist small, resource-poor farmers in the development and demonstration of sustainable farming systems to overcome poverty, ensure food security, and conserve agrobiodiversity. Conservation of biodiversity in agro-ecosystems is also a goal of UNDP's work on integrated pest management. For example, integrating capacity building with policy advice in the area of IPM resulted in the Republic of Korea becoming the first Asian nation to adopt a pesticide and fertilizer reduction policy.

With its primary focus on capacity development, UNDP has partnered with the GEF in the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI). It is helping, and supporting through 'south-south' networking, more than 85 countries to prepare national biodiversity strategies and action plans and assess and develop capacities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, including critical issues such as biosafety and access and benefit sharing. At the grassroots level, the

UNDP managed GEF Small Grants Programme assists local communities to integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their own local development activities (more than 1,300 projects to date). On a larger scale UNDP biodiversity projects provide more than \$1 billion in financing globally to assist countries in activities as diverse as developing sustainable financing mechanisms based on user fees in Belize's Barrier Reef, training teachers in conservation management, and helping communities establish local conservation site support groups at more than 100 different biodiversity sites in Africa. In all of these activities participation is the key to success and recent work is expanding the traditional notions of participation beyond local communities, NGO's and governments into partnerships with the private sector and international corporations.

As part of UNDP's work to capture 'good practices' and encourage expanded donor financial support for biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing related to poverty eradication, and in support of the Biodiversity Convention, a new program was launched on January 30, 2002 called, the ***'Equator Initiative: The Innovative Partnership Awards for Sustainable Development in Tropical Ecosystems.'*** In partnership with BrasilConnects, the Government of Canada, IDRC, IUCN, the Television Trust for the Environment (TVE), the UN Foundation, as well as UNESCO and the other members of the Ecosystem Conservation Group (ECG), UNDP aims to identify and highlight community-based sustainable development and biodiversity success stories, involving civil society, the private sector and/or government, at a high-level awards ceremony to take place at WSSD in Johannesburg. The award component of the *Equator Initiative* is complemented by major capacity building and research, analysis and policy impact programmes. See www.EquatorInitiative.org for further information.