

Biodiversity IN Development

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EC development cooperation and biodiversity

As one of the main themes of the Rio Earth Summit agreements, biodiversity has risen rapidly to prominence, and its continuing presence as a global issue is indicated by the increasing funds which have been committed to it. However, its importance for development is often poorly appreciated and it is weakly integrated into development cooperation policies, programmes and projects.

EC environmental commitments

The Amsterdam Treaty (1999) states that *'Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of other Community policies'* (Article 6). The Declaration on environmental impact assessments, annexed to the Treaty, notes that the Commission will undertake EIAs on any proposed action with potential negative implications for the environment. The EIA Directive of 1985 (amended 1997) also covered the use of EIA, requiring that the environmental consequences of projects be identified and assessed before authorisation is granted.

The recently adopted Communication on *Integrating Environment and Sustainable Development into Economic and Development Cooperation Policy* (Com (2000) 264) further states that *'EC economic and development cooperation should support developing countries' efforts to protect their environment and the shared global environment'*. Accord-

ingly, both the Cotonou Agreement (with Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries), and the regulations governing EC cooperation with Asia and Latin America (ALA), provide for consideration of environmental aspects in all activities. Furthermore, 10% of financial assistance under the ALA budget lines must be spent on environmental measures.

EC biodiversity commitments

The European Community ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on 21 December 1993 (see BB16). It is one of 180 Parties to this Convention.

As a Party from the developed world, the EC commits itself to providing *'new and additional financial resources'* to assist developing country Parties to fulfil their CBD obligations.

For the period 1996–1998, the total amount committed from all sources to environment programmes and projects by DG Development was 274.3 million Euro (5.3% of total funds committed by DG Development), and the amount disbursed was 101 million Euro.

Using OECD DAC categories for classifying these environment projects, 181 million Euro were committed between 1996 and 1998 to

EC Development Policy (COM (2000)212)

Central Objective	Poverty Reduction
Strategic Areas deriving from the Treaty	A. Sustainable development, in particular through promoting equitable growth, investment, employment, social and human development and environmental protection
	B. Integration into the world economy, including through support to regional cooperation and integration
	C. Fight against poverty
	D. Democracy, human rights, rule of law and when necessary peace-making and conflict prevention
Guiding Principles (mainstreaming)	1. Effect on poverty reduction
	2. Support for institutional development and capacity-strengthening
	3. Gender equality
	4. Sustainable management and use of environment and natural resources
	5. Enhancement of economic, social, political and cultural rights

projects that address the UN Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification (see table below). This means that on average 1.2% of the total funds committed annually by DG Development were spent on

implementing the CBD. In addition, 19 million Euro went on integrating the environment into development cooperation policy.

The OECD DAC categories of activities supporting the implementation of the CBD are broad, and include water resources protection, sustainable agriculture, combating deforestation, sustainable fishing and sustainable use of sensitive environments for tourism. Classification of European Commission projects for the purpose of updating the Evaluation Report (1997) adopts a much narrower definition of biodiversity: *the protection of natural resources, scarce natural resources and wild-life species*. Using this classification, around 3% of all environment spending was committed to biodiversity² (see figure on page 3).

Evaluating the spending

Following the *Evaluation of the Environmental Performance of EC Development Cooperation* covering the period 1990–1995 (ERM 1997), it is difficult to judge whether the level of support to the environment in ACP states is consistent with EC policy objectives. This is, for example, because the Lomé IV Convention defined no targets for the amount of funding to be allocated. There is some lack of priority to incorporating environmental issues into country and regional programming documents and activities because other sectors take precedence, and environmental institutions have limited capacity.

It was also noted in the Evaluation Report that biodiversity projects have a number of special characteristics that affect their performance:

EC commitments and disbursements¹ (MEuro) which support UN Conventions (1996–1998)

	1996		1997		1998		1996–1998	
Convention	Committed	Disbursed	Committed	Disbursed	Committed	Disbursed	Committed	Disbursed
Convention on Biological Diversity	20.55	4.8	18.39	8.8	25.80	10.1	64.74	23.7
Framework Convention on Climate change	23.54	3.2	15.38	3.8	19.27	5.0	58.19	12.0
Convention to Combat Desertification	28.43	7.2	10.22	10.2	19.51	6.9	58.16	24.3
	72.52	15.2	43.99	22.8	64.58	22.0	181.09	60.0

Source: Tractebel/ERM/Kampsax 2000

- there are often limited resources for the protection and management of biodiversity in developing countries;
- the demand for, and use of, biodiversity resources can lead to unsustainable exploitation.

The Evaluation made a series of recommendations that included:

- raising the awareness of Commission staff to the socio-economic and ecological importance of biodiversity;
- practical tools for Commission staff for integrating biodiversity.

At a general level, the integration of the environment into development cooperation policy and practice was also felt to be a cause for concern.

Addressing the Evaluation's findings

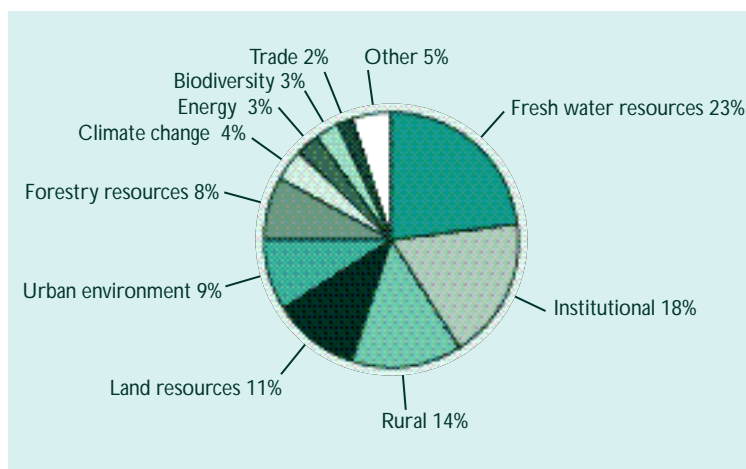
Since 1997, the Commission has put in place a number of tools and policy documents to address these recommendations:

The EC adopted its *Biodiversity Strategy* (Com (98) 0042) in 1998 which calls for a number of Action Plans for integrating biodiversity into the ongoing work of other sectors. The *Biodiversity Action Plan for Economic and Development Cooperation* was adapted by the commission in March 2001 and identifies priority actions for:

- addressing institutional capacity constraints within the European Commission, such as the establishment of an Environmental Help Desk, and training programmes;
- integrating biodiversity into development cooperation projects and programmes in partner countries through: (a) support to national Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans; (b) support for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and (c) incorporating biodiversity into EIA and SEA procedures, and strengthening the capacity to carry out EIA/SEA;
- promoting EC/EU coordination, for example, through support to the Tropical Biodiversity Advisers' Group (TBAG) and improving EC/EU coordination with other organisations (e.g. GEF).

The recently revised EC *Environmental Integration Manual* covers the procedures to be followed and the tools available for integrating the environment, including biodiversity, at policy, programming and project levels. Tools include EIA, SEA, Environmental Audit, Envi-

Themes to which EC environment funds were committed (1996–1998)



Source: Adapted from Tractebel/ERM/Kampsax 2000

ronmental Management Plans and Environmental Management Systems. It also provides sections on best practice.

A programme of training seminars for EC staff (and other partners) on Environment in EC Development Cooperation was undertaken during 2000, covering such issues as Environmental Assessment, Environmental Economics,



The links between poverty and environment are complex. It is those who depend most directly on biodiversity for their livelihoods who tend to be the most vulnerable to economic, social and environmental shocks (rice lost in Honduras during Hurricane Mitch).

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Results of Environmental Impact Assessments are important in striking a balance between development actions which serve distant markets (here shrimp farms in Vietnam for export to Japan) and ensuring sustainable development for a broad range of local stakeholders.

Strategic Environmental Assessment and National Environmental Profiles, and has included a session specifically on biodiversity. A number of documents are also being produced by the Biodiversity in Development Project, to support EC development cooperation officers:

- a *Strategic Approach for Integrating Biodiversity in Development Cooperation*, outlining the basic framework for action determined by the Action Plan;
- 20 *Biodiversity Briefs*, designed to raise awareness of key issues amongst Commission staff for whom biodiversity is not a primary responsibility;
- *Guiding Principles for Biodiversity in Development: Lessons from field projects*. This summarises a consultation involving around 100 participants, from 35 developing countries, and 11 case studies of EC/ EU-funded development projects (see BB17).

These documents will be widely distributed in the EC, the EU and partner countries, as well as used in the training of EC staff in environmental issues.

What remains to be done

The tools are in place for a more integrated, strategic approach to EC development cooperation support for biodiversity. As always, political commitment is needed, followed by actions such as ensuring the implementation of legislation concerning the use of EIA. Many of the issues that are particular to biodiversity require long-term perspectives and the changing of entrenched opinions and behaviour.



¹ Approximations.

² The figure of 3% and the percentages shown in Figure 1 are approximate rather than actual commitments: they are based on an analysis in which many projects were scored for more than one theme.

Further Information

- EC. 1998. *First Report on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity by the European Community*.
- ERM. 1997. *Evaluation of the Environmental Performance of EC Programmes in Developing Countries 1990–1995*.
- OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.
- Tractebel/ERM/Kampsax. 2000. Draft Update of ERM 1997: 1996–1998.
- UNDP. 1997. *Human Development Report*.
- UNDP. 2000. *Human Development Report*.
- reference to other Biodiversity Briefs is denoted as (see BB#).

Website

All Biodiversity Development Project (BDP) documents can be found on the website: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/sector/environment>