



LAC-IEE-04-29

ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD DECISION

Activity Location	:	LAC Region
Activity Title	:	Improve Conservation of the Region's Biological Resources
Activity Number	:	SO 22
Funding	:	\$45,264,600
Life of Project	:	FY 2001 – FY 2007
Ref IEE	:	LAC-IEE-01-32
IEE Prepared by	:	Brian Dusza, LAC/RSD/E
Recommended Threshold Decision	:	Categorical Exclusion/ Negative Determination
Bureau Threshold Decision	:	Concur with Recommendation, but with noted conditions

Comments:

The *Parks in Peril 2000* Program, is a Cooperative Agreement signed in September 2001 between the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau (LAC) at USAID and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The LAC Bureau is amending the Cooperative Agreement to increase the Total Estimated Cost (TEC) and extend the program's completion date through FY07. Nothing else has changed.

Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) and (iii), **Categorical Exclusion** is issued, still applicable for activities that involve education, technical assistance, training programs, and support for analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings, except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)

A **Negative Determination with conditions** is issued to activities involving the construction of basic facilities, such as guard shacks, information centers, parking lots, hiking trails, associated

with park protection and protected areas management and for activities involving the testing and promotion of sustainable uses of natural resources, including nature tourism and non-timber forest products, as these activities could have a negative impact on the environment if mitigation and monitoring measures are not in place. The **condition** is that annual work plans for these activities shall incorporate environmental review using the environmental guidelines and checklists currently used by the Parks in Peril program. Though this is the same requirement as for the original ETD, I believe it is more appropriate to add the condition in the decision as well as the text.

Under no circumstances will funds be used for: the procurement or use of pesticides; the purchase of equipment which could be used for commercial timber harvesting; nor activities, projects, or programs involving commercial timber harvesting unless the appropriate environmental assessment is conducted, and approved by the LAC Bureau Environmental Officer.

_____ Date _____
George R. Thompson, P.E.
Bureau Environmental Officer
Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean

- Copy to : Cecily Mango, Director, LAC/RSD
- Copy to : Kermit Moh, Deputy Director, LAC/RSD
- Copy to : Laura Cornwell, Biodiversity Advisor, LAC/RSD/E
- Copy to : Sue Hill, LAC/SPO
- Copy to : Brian Dusza, LAC/RSD/E
- Copy to : IEE File

Attached: IEE

SUPPLEMENTAL INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION

Activity Location	:	LAC Region
Activity Title	:	Improve Conservation of the Region's Biological Resources
Activity Number	:	SO 22
Funding	:	\$45,264,600
Life of Project	:	FY 2001 – FY 2007
IEE Prepared by	:	Brian Dusza, LAC/RSD/E
Recommended Threshold Decision	:	Categorical Exclusion/ Negative Determination

Comments:

This is a supplemental Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) for the Biodiversity Conservation Strategic Objective. The original IEE, LAC-IEE-01-32, determined a Categorical Exclusion and Negative Determinations. The *Parks in Peril 2000* Program, the main activity under this initiative, is a Cooperative Agreement signed in September 2001 between the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau (LAC) at USAID and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The LAC Bureau is amending the Cooperative Agreement to increase the Total Estimated Cost (TEC) and extend the program's completion date through FY07.

The PiP Program builds upon 12 years of TNC and USAID cooperation in previous phases of the Parks in Peril Program to expand best practices and strengthen existing institutions for conservation. The current program proposes to continue site-based work in some of the most important protected areas in the region, leveraging earlier work and previously developed networks of sites and partners to improve conservation at a greater number of protected areas. In its third year, PiP 2000 has received from USAID a total, cumulative obligation of \$21,783,600 – leaving \$1,084,400 left for USAID to obligate within the TEC.

Due to the greater than expected interest on behalf of Missions and the expansion of strategies beyond what was intended to be funded under the basic funding level of \$22,868,000, the TEC is expected to increase by \$12,896,600 to \$35,764,600.

Since the beginning of the program, PiP accumulated a large “pipeline” of unexpended funds against the USAID obligation. This pipeline resulted from various unanticipated factors, including: an unexpectedly high degree of interest on behalf Missions; TNC's reorganization; and changing roles and responsibilities of staff implementing PiP. Consequently, LAC proposes a one year extension of PiP 2000 to 2007 to provide additional time for implementation of multi-year activities.

In addition to PiP 2000, this SO supports conservation and regional conservation initiatives such as workshops and analyses conducted by NGOs, academic institutions, and other conservation organizations. Field based and Washington program staff that contribute to the SO, as well as program support such as travel and environmental guidelines, also are included under this SO.

The SO objectives are to:

- strengthen conservation systems such as national protected area systems, private and indigenous reserves;
- organize efforts to address some of the most critical conservation initiatives in the region;
- strengthen and expand the conservation network to include broader partnerships such as universities, NGOs specializing in areas other than conservation, and the private sector; and
- ensure that adequate financing is available for conservation sustainability.

A number of partners contribute to the achievement of these objectives. Partners in implementation, funding, and priority-setting for conservation include international conservation organizations (e.g., TNC), universities, in-country NGOs, national and local governments, local communities, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), World Bank, InterAmerican Development Bank, United Nations Environment Program, USAID Missions and Global Bureau, U.S. government agencies (e.g., U.S. Department of Interior), other bilateral donor organizations, and the private sector. The LAC/RSD/E office manages this SO with substantial input from the LAC bilateral and regional Missions. Prior to implementation of specific activities, work plans for activities in a given country are jointly reviewed and approved by USAID Mission and Washington staff.

Recommended Environmental Threshold Decision

Categorical Exclusion/ Negative Determination

Many of the proposed activities under SO 22 qualify for a categorical exclusion under 22 CFR 216.2 (c) (2) (i), “Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.),” or 22 CFR 216.2 (c) (2) (iii), “Analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings. A **Categorical Exclusion** is recommended for activities under SO 22 that fall under the above categories.

It is expected that the remaining activities will not have significant negative environmental effects. However, some of the proposed activities, such as construction of basic facilities (guard shacks, information centers, parking lots, hiking trails) associated with park protection and protected areas management could have negative environmental impacts if mitigation and monitoring measures are not in place. In addition, the testing and promotion of

sustainable uses of natural resources, including nature tourism and non-timber forest products could result in negative environmental impacts.

Specific activities for SO 22 are presently unknown, and thus impacts are impossible to predict at this point. Consequently, a **Negative Determination** is recommended for those components of SO 22, noted above, that are not categorically excluded from additional environmental review. The annual work plans for individual project components (site specific work plans for PiP 2000 and activities for NRCP) will identify potential negative environmental impacts of activities and the measures and monitoring activities designed to mitigate these impacts. The guidelines and environmental review checklists currently used by the PiP program and the process by which they are developed and reviewed will continue for the proposed program. This process has worked effectively under the existing program.

The LAC Bureau Environmental Officer will determine if additional environmental review, mitigation, or monitoring is necessary based upon review of an initial work plan submitted to LAC/RSD/E by the partner. Subsequently proposed activities not included in the work plan, substantive amendments, or extensions of approved activities will require further review and approval by the LAC Bureau Environmental Officer, in the form of a supplemental IEE.

Under no circumstances will funds be used for: the procurement or use of pesticides; the purchase of equipment which could be used for commercial timber harvesting; nor activities, projects, or programs involving commercial timber harvesting unless the appropriate environmental assessment is conducted, and approved by the LAC Bureau Environmental Officer.

Concurrence _____ Date _____
Kermit Moh, Deputy Director, LAC/RSD

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Clearance:
LAC/RSD/E, Laura Cornwell _____ Date _____