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BEST PRACTICES FOR BIODIVERSITY AND TROPICAL FOREST ASSESSMENTS

EPIQ IQC, CONTRACT NO. EPP-I-00-03-00014-00 TASK ORDER 1



April 2005

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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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Best Practices for Biodiversity and Tropical Forest Assessments

This guide will assist USAID Missions and implementing partners to conduct effective biodiversity and tropical forest assessments within the USAID programming cycle. The guide offers a brief background on the purpose and requirements of these instruments. It then describes in more detail useful lessons in the design and preparation of assessments, provides helpful tips for conducting assessments, and concludes with suggestions on how to make them more useful.

A. Background

The formal environmental requirements of USAID operating unit strategic plans are specified in ADS 201.3.8.2, Mandatory Technical Analysis for Developing Strategic Plans, Environmental Analysis, and are derived from the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) and 22 CFR 216 (the relevant sections of the FAA can be found in Annex A of this report). These dictate concern for:

- Environmental Sustainability. Section 117 of the FAA, *Environment and Natural Resources*, dictates that operating units will implement their programs with an aim toward maintaining (and restoring) natural resources upon which economic growth depends and to consider the impact of their activities on the environment. These requirements are fundamental precepts to development assistance and are applicable throughout the program and project development cycle.
- Tropical Forestry and Biological Diversity. FAA Sections 118, *Tropical Forests*, and 119, *Endangered Species*, codify the more specific U.S. interests in forests and biological diversity. These two provisions require that all country plans include: 1) *an analysis of the actions necessary in that country to conserve biological diversity and tropical forests*; and 2) *the extent to which current or proposed USAID actions meet those needs*. Section 118/119 analyses are specific legal requirements of all USAID operating unit strategic plans and are conducted upon the basis of the new strategic plan developed by

the Missions. Section 118 assessments should also consider other relevant laws and regulations including FAA Sections 554 and 522 (Protection of Biodiversity and Tropical Forests).¹

- Agency Environmental Procedures. 22 CFR 216 provides the basis for the application of pertinent U.S. environmental legislation and policy within USAID activity programming. This legislation and supporting guidance from USAID/Washington directs Missions to conduct assistance programs in a manner sensitive to the protection of endangered or threatened species and their critical habitats within the project activity cycle. While FAA Sections 117-119 address the analytic requirements for USAID Missions during the strategic planning process, 22 CFR 216 is designed to guide the evaluation and conduct of specific development activities within the project development and management cycle. Generally speaking, 22 CFR 216 is focused on project level assistance, not strategic planning. However, many 118/119 assessments have determined that one important way to improve conservation is through more continual and thoughtful application of the environmental review process prescribed under 22 CFR 216.

These assessments also discuss the impact of USAID activities on biodiversity and identify actions within current and future programs where USAID could promote conservation per FAA regulations 117, 118, and 119 as amended, and Agency guidance on country strategy

¹ *Section 554 Protection of Biodiversity and Tropical Forests*. The conference agreement includes language directing that USAID should make available \$145,000,000 for programs and activities that directly protect biodiversity. These funds to are expected to be used to protect tropical forests, including support of projects to deter illegal logging in Indonesia, Central Africa, and other threatened biologically diverse areas, both terrestrial and marine. Of this amount, up to \$40,000,000 may be available for the subsidy cost of modifying loans and loan guarantees, pursuant to the provisions of the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998.

development, under ADS 201.3.4.11 and ADS 204.5. While the assessments require Missions only to pause and reflect on the natural resources base, with the support of a willing CTO, a well-organized assessment team can provide tangible advice to help steer the proposed program toward more sustainable use of any country's renewable natural resources.



Climax communities can provide teams with important benchmarks for evaluating biodiversity condition and capacity.

B. Assessment Design and Preparation

In designing the scope of work for a 118/119 assessment, keep in mind some “best practices” to improve planning quality and incorporate conservation into Mission strategies and programs.

Assessment timing: The paradox of 118/119 assessments is that the legislation requires Missions to conduct them *on* the new strategy or country development plan — not necessarily *during* the planning process where they would be most effective in early identification of opportunities and important mitigation measures. Assessment teams have consistently found that “getting in early” before the strategic plan is completed leads to improved analysis and actionable recommendations for developing or tuning new strategic objectives. Assessments conducted prior to finalizing the strategy have proven to help Missions improve the overall quality, including consideration of biodiversity and forest conservation. Conversely, Missions requesting assistance late in strategy development may be attempting only to meet the language of

the FAA and may thus inadvertently overlook easy and viable adjustments that could have had significant benefits or avoidable impacts. The law does not require developing a conservation program *per se* or even changing proposed activities based on the assessment findings. While there are always opportunities to improve a program's impact on conservation issues, the interests and objectives of the Mission should be very clear from the outset for the team to use their time most effectively and organize findings and recommendations accordingly.

Collaborative planning: Collaboratively developing the SOW for an assessment provides a great opportunity to get agreement from strategic objective teams (SOTs). The assessment leader — normally a member of a technical team or of the program office — should call SOT leaders together to explain the requirements, intent, and proposed timing. In developing the SOW, leaders should make their objectives clear and ask each SOT to appoint a representative who can ensure that their objectives are well covered and that activities, partners, and documentation that should be consulted are identified early. Having a well-organized and vested team for the assessors to meet with is essential to obtaining accuracy and buy-in for any identified opportunities or adjustments. The terms of reference for this team should include preparation of the SOW, facilitation of the conduct of the accrual assessment, and vetting the assessment report and action agenda.

Model scopes of work: There is no shortage of templates for developing a 118 and 119 assessment scope of work, and Annex B is a composite of some of the best examples. Many SOWs focus on meeting the needs of the U.S. legislation, which means that assessment teams expend effort documenting resource conditions, listing endangered species, and describing the state of a nation's protected area system. While important, these considerations must be conscientiously balanced with a careful determination and analysis of USAID's own program strategy. Given that few countries now have environment or natural resources strategic objectives, it is incumbent on the CTO and assessment team to review all other strategic objectives to determine if and how they can become more aware of and involved in

conservation issues. Scopes of work should ensure that the assessment team meets early and often with the SOTs and their designated representatives.

117–119 and 22 CFR 216: Many Missions do not fully appreciate the difference between 118/119 requirements of the Foreign Assistance Act at the strategic planning level and the environmental review procedures for specific activities stipulated in 22 CFR 216 and incorporated in ADS 204. Some draft and final SOWs for 118/119 have asked that assessment teams review the environmental performance or impacts of current project activities. While many new Country Strategies simply extend previous activities, and their impacts on the nature and condition of biodiversity and forestry may be implicated, 118/119 assessments should not be used to update or question broader environmental impacts covered under prior environmental examinations or assessments. These broader SOWs can help Missions that are implementing new strategies, particularly when accompanied by practical advice to identify and mitigate impacts on the project level. However, expectations need to be realistic and aligned with the allotted level of effort to ensure that such requests for activity-level impacts do not detract from the assessment team’s primary objective. Identification of potential or unforeseen environmental impacts or opportunities can be included, but the level of effort must be adjusted accordingly. CTOs and assessment teams need to be clear where the lines are drawn between environmental review and the intent of the 118/119 objectives.

Determining Level of Effort: Realistic, careful planning in determining the level of effort is absolutely key to biodiversity and forestry assessments. The scope of work and requisite level of effort are determined by the availability of information, nature and extent of ecosystems and threats, and complexity of the Mission’s strategic plan. Based on a three-person team, 12 to 14 working days is usually required for in-country interviews, site visits, and additional document review. Large countries with poorly documented conservation conditions or complicated political/institutional situations (post-conflict oftentimes) will require additional in-country work.

Illustrative level of effort for conduct of biodiversity or tropical forestry assessment.

Activity	Illustrative Level of Effort
Pre-fielding document review and interviews, meeting with USAID/W	3-5 days X 1
Field work, interviews, and debriefing	12-14 days X 3
Draft report for review	5-7 days X 2
Incorporating comments/editing	3-5 days X 1
Total	52-66 days

Document review should be combined with pre-fielding interviews and will normally take approximately three days to one week. Most often teams are not able to complete writing in the field and need up to a week to finish a draft for Mission review. After review, the team leader should be allocated another three to five days to incorporate needed changes and provide additional substantiating research. It also is recommended that one day of time be allocated to a professional editor and that Missions consider adding an additional day for the team to electronically archive and return all key documents to the Mission. An illustrative break-down is offered in Annex B.



Informal interviews conducted with contract forest laborers in Russia provided insights to conservation challenges.

Selecting the team: An ideal team for a 118/119 assessment will balance local and expatriate participation and reflect a broad set of disciplines, including economics, ecology, and land use planning. One team member must be intimately familiar with the USAID programming cycle and results frameworks, as prescribed in ADS 201. At

least one local resident with local language and cultural skills, and preferably a broad skill set in applied conservation biology and some awareness of the institutional context of conservation, must be on the team. Given the importance of economic growth and trade within USAID, relating the economic consequences of proposed Mission activities on conservation is by far the most effective way to cultivate understanding and support from the Mission. This is best achieved by having at least one resource economist on the team. One or more members of the team should be functionally knowledgeable in the use of value chain standard, to ensure that adequate attention is paid to market valuation of biodiversity and forestry environmental services. Given the tendencies within USAID, team members should always have practical backgrounds in governance, enterprise and trade development, and health, so that assessments are fully cognizant of and responsive to the needs of USAID programs.

Keep the Mission informed: It is critical to bring the CTO into the active planning of the pre-assessment, implementation, and post-assessment work. The CTO is ultimately responsible for carrying forth recommendations and should be involved in assembling a cross-SOT team, field site selection, drafting the list of critical interviews, and unearthing key documents. When possible, the CTO should accompany the team on field trips and some interviews to help transfer information, identify follow-up needs, and improve absorption of lessons learned. In many countries assessment teams are simply dispatched and expected to “get the job done,” which limits Mission interest and ownership of findings. On many occasions the CTO’s direct involvement with the team has been critical to obtaining mitigation actions for unforeseen consequences as well as increasing interest across SOTs. Getting and keeping the active attention of the CTO or his or her delegate is crucial and team leaders should meet regularly with CTOs throughout the performance of field work.

Contracting period: To avoid having to modify contracting vehicles to conduct biodiversity and forestry assessments, it is important to be realistic about the actual amount of time likely to be needed. While most can be completed within six weeks, time lost during contract negotiations at the front end and time lost during Mission review

of deliverables can easily double this time to 12 weeks. It is wise to allow approximately three months from contract signing to submission of the final report.

C. Conducting the Assessment

Balancing biological threats and the policy and institutional environment with the Mission’s ability to intervene requires careful consideration. Spending too much time on the collection of ecological information to the detriment of working closely with each Strategic Objective Team (SOT) to understand their program can be problematic. Managing a team to ensure a comprehensive and effective assessment requires support from the Mission and partner organizations. In this section, work flow procedures are reviewed and suggestions are offered about obtaining maximum value from a well organized assessment team.

Defining team members’ roles: Once the team is selected it is critical for the team leader to work collaboratively with each member to ensure that their specific role is well defined and that the team members understand their respective responsibilities. Delineation of roles and responsibilities can be developed around a draft outline for the assessment report where respective work areas and themes identified in the SOW are delegated to specific team members. After the outline and SOW are reviewed, the development of interview guides or questionnaires can further define team member responsibilities. The team leader must be diligent about routinely checking with each member to gauge comfort levels and to anticipate potential problems.

Assemble crucial pre-departure materials: Prior to departure the team should collect a critical mass of documents to have a full grounding in the overall situation of the country in question as well as the strategy that USAID has been implementing or plans to implement. This pre-departure preparation is often not given the full attention that it deserves and needs to be accorded the attention and LOE that it deserves. Important materials include a good topographic map, World Bank country profile, and copies of pertinent international agreements. See the box on the next page for a comprehensive list of documents.

Valuable Documents for Assessment Preparation

- Good map, preferably a topographic or resource map for specific areas to be visited
- USAID Country Strategy and Congressional Budget Justification
- Previously conducted 118/119 or CFR 216 Assessments
- World Bank Country Profile
- All pertinent International agreements and conventions
- Any country strategic plans from conservation NGOs
- Data on principle commodities produced and exported
- CITES Red List

Develop interview guide: Agree to use an interview guide or questionnaire to ensure that there are similarities in lines of inquiry among team members and that certain information is routinely collected. Ideally, a team leader will develop this prior to the team's arrival and should be prepared to present it at the initial team meeting. A sample assessment site visit guide is located in Annex C.

Interview Fatigue

Most 118/119 teams spend 10-12 hours per day conducting interviews and site visits. This leaves little time to digest findings, conduct team meetings, and check notes. While most teams quickly begin to focus on the important trends after two to three days of intensive interviewing they may also begin to lose important details and anecdotes that keep the assessment relevant and alive. Down time is important and interviews should be kept to not more than four per day.

Outline the report early: Once the team gets started, it becomes more difficult to reign in the scope and keep team members focused on their specific lines of inquiry. A key way of reducing "scope creep" and keeping the team on target is to agree on an outline and writing assignments during the initial team meeting. The outline invariably changes as the team proceeds, but most often the initial plan remains an important tool to keep things on track. It is also essential to establish the interview list and distribute interviewing assignments and field visits. An indicative outline for a 118/119 is included in Annex D.

Initial organizing meetings: The first and most important meetings for any assessment team are those with USAID staff at the Mission. Pre-departure meetings with USAID/W staff (EGAT/NRM, Country Desk Officer, and Regional Environmental Office) are extremely useful and should be conducted by phone if not in person. Teams should allow at least a full day to conduct meetings with each SOT, the program office, and the Mission Director, if possible. These meetings are crucial to finalizing the scope of the assessment with all SOTs so that the team understands what is entailed. Identifying pertinent USAID implementing partners and appropriate stakeholders for further meetings is also important. Team meetings with the CTO should be encouraged twice a week. An exit debriefing with the entire Mission staff should always be conducted immediately prior to team departure.

Exit at the beginning: The closing meeting of the assessment team's conclusions and recommendations is potentially the greatest point of impact in any Mission and should be carefully organized soon after the team arrives. The team must work with the CTO to make sure this debriefing is scheduled just prior to the team's departure but with the highest level of participation possible. Fitting into the Mission Director's schedule is critical and ensuring that the program office and heads of each SOT attend is likewise important. The program office often hosts assessment teams and is an obvious and important player. On several occasions, inviting U.S. Embassy staff has been very successful at improving awareness and commitment to actions. Oftentimes, USAID has also invited their implementing partners to exit briefings to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Discover the program: It is essential to arrange enough meetings with the SOTs to ensure that assessors are familiar and comfortable with the proposed strategic program. Many times assessment teams arrive without the new strategy in hand and occasionally there is little more information available at the Mission. Under such circumstances, pre-fielding meetings with the Country Desk Officer and regional environmental staff are essential in gauging the new program's state and can provide invaluable information about the Mission's ability to internalize assessment findings and suggestions. Once at the

Critical Conventions

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Other Relevant Conventions

- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- World Heritage Convention
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Convention for the Protection of Marine Environment of Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention)
- International Plant Protection Convention
- Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP–Barcelona Convention)
- Regional Seas Conventions
- Basel Convention of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste

Mission, the team must meet with each SOT and conduct a detailed inventory of their current and prospective actions.

Meeting with USAID strategic partners and stakeholders: When possible, the team should meet with current projects' key implementing partners and identify probable changes in emphasis and approach. In the initial organizing meetings, the team should work with USAID staff to identify the appropriate parties to meet.

Engage the program office early and often: The program office in many Missions not only fulfills the role of contracting but often is responsible for ensuring that 118/119 assessments are incorporated in the strategy development as a requirement. Although this may simply mean the program office is charged with “checking the box,” they can be as content oriented as any of the technical strategic objective teams. They may even be more effective simply because the office is considered “neutral ground” and has senior management’s attention. Keeping the program office involved through early briefing meetings is essential because they are often the best source for crosscutting information on results and can provide important background on changes in

program direction, concerns of the Embassy, and fresh information on other donor actions.



Review of trade statistics improves conservation linkages with economic development, such as transportation infrastructure.

Stay practical and focused on the program: Forestry and biodiversity issues remain relevant only if they can be horizontally integrated into the program through project design or management. Assessment teams are in a position to craft conclusions and results that have an effect on portfolio management or may be included in procurement decisions. The 118/119 assessment teams have this opportunity if their findings and conclusions support practical ways for SOTs to incorporate suggested changes during the program strategy phase. Recommending entirely new initiatives, exposing platitudes about the importance of conservation, and spending too much time in describing biological attributes are normally associated with poor uptake of findings and recommendations. Strategic Objectives (SOs) related to food security, competitiveness, energy, public health, and democracy and governance are often highly relevant and, in some cases, are the main conduits for conserving biodiversity and forests, especially in Missions that do not have specific environmental SOs.

Watch for scope creep: Inadvertent additions to the scope of work may occur once an assessment team is in the field. While such “scope creep” is often a good sign of involvement and interest in environmental work, sometimes the addition of unscheduled tasks can erode the overall quality of the assessment and reduce its long-term impacts. Missions may confuse their *programmatic* 118 or 119 requirements with *project level* 22 CFR 216

obligations and ask a team to look at a particular SME or production activity. The Mission may ask the team leader to develop a concept paper for a GDA or TFCA activity that may be tangential to the assessment's work. Most often these additions detract from the assessment and are almost never the subject of additional level of effort. Team leaders and CTOs should protect the agreed upon SOW and only agree to additional work if incremental LOE is provided.

Analyze available data; don't create it: A common ailment for assessments is concluding that "there is a dearth of quality information upon which the team based its conclusions and recommendations" is simply not adequate. In many countries information limitations exist and the team must check their desire to infer beyond the available data. While many assessment teams tend to dwell on the environmental information (e.g., endemism, protected area coverage, or species representation) the most effective data in assisting USAID to better understand and improve their conservation role is most often economic indicators (e.g., ecotourism employment, natural product sales or trade, effects on human health) or civil society parameters. The CTO should carefully consider USAID's internal requirements and clearly describe the level of research required and specify what team resources should be spent on data collection and analysis.

Plan field trips wisely: While field trips are important to getting the sense of real conservation issues they must be well-focused and structured to ground-truth available literature or meet with project implementers to get better information on capacity constraints. During a 119 assessment, it is extremely important to visit one or more protected areas to get an idea of actual infrastructure, outreach to local communities, and surrounding land use. Selecting the protected areas to visit should be considered with the CTO to ensure that the trips can be combined with site visits to partners implementing USAID projects. Too many field trips can break up the continuity of important interaction with the Mission.

Follow the money: It is nearly impossible to overstate the importance of connecting assessment conclusions with Missions' economic growth agendas. In the 1990s, many 118/119 assessments led to significant programming in

natural resource conservation due to public interest and agency commitment. Both have waned in recent years; remaining relevant to USAID's role as a leader in economic development requires that assessment teams focus on the economic benefits of a healthy natural resource base. Assessment teams must expand beyond simple conservation practices to capture the economic value of improved stewardship practices. Documenting contribution to growth through employment, income generation, and sustainable flows of forest and fishery products are paramount. In some countries, the role of nature-based tourism, sport hunting, and formal and informal sector harvest of natural products is key to rural livelihoods. The economic contribution of well-managed aquatic ecosystems is as important to drinking water supplies and clean water intake for fledgling industries as it is to migrant water fowl or threatened wetlands.



Visiting protected areas gives an idea of actual conditions, such as land use.

Look to public and private conservation incentives: The recent growth and interest in stimulating trade, enterprise competitiveness, and privatization of public entities demonstrates the importance of properly accounting for a firm's intake of raw natural resources and costs associated with water, air, and solid waste emissions. Increasingly, these intakes and costs are governed not only by laws and regulations but also by market-based standards and certification schemes. Compounded by increasing attention to environment and biodiversity within free trade

frameworks (such as FTAA and NAFTA) and within the confines of regional initiatives (including EU accession and membership directives), many natural resources are increasingly subject to such standards. Teams should carefully consider the extent to which markets and voluntary standards for sustainability can be harnessed within the proposed program to improve conservation values and practices. In some cases, Missions may want to consider using such standards as part of their overall environmental monitoring strategy across activities and strategic objective teams.

Build a case and library: Assessment teams have the unique ability to focus on a particular subject for short but intense periods. During their work, they nearly always encounter information, documents, and people, which the Missions do not know about. In several cases conflict has disrupted information flow to the point that assessment teams are actually rebuilding Mission archives. Collecting important documents and improving accessibility to Mission staff is an unheralded but important feature of assessments. Everything possible should be done to ensure that this information is stored and passed to the Mission. Assessment teams should routinely provide their presentation, photographs, and particularly the documents they have compiled and reviewed. Putting all of this information on a CD-ROM is key to helping and assessment “grow legs” and encourages the Mission environment staff and strategic team leaders to use the information.

Always take photos: There is a significant, positive correlation between assessment impact and use of photographic and other visual materials. Teams should be fielded with digital cameras to document their findings in the exit debriefing and report. Given the team’s ability to get to places that other USAID staff do not frequent, this information should also be included in the CD-ROM of key documents for Mission use.

Transboundary considerations: Often, bilateral USAID strategies and anticipated programs must be viewed in the context of the entire economic or ecological region. Regional missions have requested biodiversity assessments for individual countries in the region but did not see the need to have a regional overlay produced. But trade nearly

always transcends national borders. A regional or transboundary perspective can identify meaningful issues and opportunities involving illegal trade in forest and wildlife products. Multi-country assessments were conducted (Caribbean, Caucuses, Central Asia), which helped the Missions understand the regional significance of their programs and real pressures against sustainable use. Conservation issues that transcend national boundaries, such as river basin management, biological corridors, and cross-border trade of forest products, cannot be adequately understood in the narrower national-level context only. Transboundary issues should be considered during the SOW composition and a regional perspective should be considered over and above individual bilateral assessments whenever possible.



Impacts of extractive industries on aquatic ecosystems provide important clues to capacity and awareness.

D. Presenting Assessment Findings

Missions and assessment teams go to great lengths to prepare assessment reports but often fail to see the value of improving the accessibility and presentation of findings and recommendations. Improving delivery and follow up of assessments can dramatically improve their usefulness to Missions and mainstream conservation, even in Missions that have no natural resources or environmental programming.

Mission debriefing: Historically, assessment teams provide a debriefing to all Mission staff upon completion of the fieldwork and prior to submission of the written report. This is perhaps the most important and valuable event during the assessment. It is instrumental in clarifying any questions or concerns. Often key partners — including government, multilateral, and nongovernmental — are invited to attend the debriefings, providing additional value.

Presentation tips: Boiling down the assessment team findings to very specific conclusions and recommendations that are directly relevant to each strategic objective team is critical. Using photographs within the presentation helps strategic objective teams see their projects and helps accentuate their role in implementing recommendations. Presentations should be short and to the point — no more than 1.5 hours — and should allow for significant feedback from staff. Copies of slides should be available to participants prior to the presentation.

Highlight recommendations: The importance of providing constructive, program specific recommendations cannot be overstated. The team should seek to provide strategic ideas to enhance the performance and effectiveness of the Mission strategy. These should not be exhaustive, never more than 10, but must directly address the proposed program.

USAID/Washington debrief: After receiving feedback from Mission staff, the presentation should be edited and, whenever possible, given to USAID staff in Washington. Such presentations help inform staff, invite feedback, and fill in gaps. The bureau environment officer or members of the EGAT/NRM office are normally eager to help enhance such events. In the scope of work, include one day of level of effort, if possible, for delivery of the presentation to Washington staff and USAID partners.

Posting the assessment results: Biodiversity and tropical forest assessments should quickly be made available to other interested parties once the Mission has approved the final product. A PDF version of the approved report should be sent to the Development Exchange Clearinghouse, as a matter of contract and grant procedure. Reports should also be made available on the executing

NGO or contractor Web site. Missions should also post assessment reports on their own Web sites and request that the contractor or grantee furnish the Mission with at least 20 copies of the final product.

E. Measuring and Mainstreaming Assessment Results

Much of the criticism about the effectiveness of biodiversity and forest assessments is often self-fulfilling: they are often viewed as perfunctory and a checklist that Missions feel obliged to complete for approval of their strategy. For that reason they are not taken seriously even though these assessments, when fully integrated into strategy development, can be instrumental in identifying opportunities across all objectives and activities. Subsequent follow up on assessment findings and recommendations by appropriate USAID personnel can dramatically improve programming. A few final suggestions are offered below to evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment and stimulate continual improvement of programmatic implementation.



Assessment teams should consider ways to improve the use of certification and labeling systems to improve conservation and competitiveness.

Measure effects of previous assessments: Virtually all missions have completed at least one round of biodiversity and/or tropical forest assessments and can look back and determine if and how they were effective. Assessment teams should carefully review prior assessments and have frank discussions with regional environmental staff and Mission personnel to determine how they could be done differently to

improve traction within programming. This is generally a good topic of discussion for the opening meeting with each strategic team to determine how familiar they are with the 118/119 process and to what extent they have been involved in developing the scope of work.

Bureau follow-up: Most successful assessment teams had the strong support of an advocate at the regional bureau. It is important that the regional environment officer follow up with the Mission to determine satisfaction with the team and the effectiveness of the product. Attention should also be given to ensuring that the Mission take into account recommended changes or inclusions into strategic planning. Simple discussion of concepts, sharing of additional experiences, or perhaps limited additional support to help flesh out or implement some of the recommendations may help a Mission become more committed to conservation.

Identify shifts in strategy: The best indicator of a successful assessment and renewed Mission commitment to biodiversity is likely to be found in changes in the strategic plan itself. Addition of intermediate results or indicators that tie achievements with more sustainable use of natural resources are important. These might include attention to reduced pressure on fragile areas or national parks, greater attention to the management of waste streams from enterprise activity, or more attention to civil society groups working in environmental concerns. Assessment teams have shifted the focus or findings of subsequent environmental analyses conducted underneath 22 CFR 216. Biodiversity assessment teams have worked with conflict assessment teams to their mutual benefit, resulting in specific recommendations for shifts in anticipated democracy and governance results.

Inclusion in procurements: An area where the assessment team's success can be measured is in identifying the extent to which findings and recommendations may be included in subsequent procurements. Request for applications (RFAs) and proposals (RFPs) have frequently included attention to issues raised during assessments, including improvement of screening for grant activities. Attention to assessment findings in new procurements can help identify potential impacts on protected areas and fragile ecosystems, foster

increased attention on civil organizations pursuing involvement in forest or biodiversity management, and identify ways that the privatization and management of utilities and infrastructure can foster better conservation practices. In several instances specific monitoring and mitigation requirements have been incorporated in contracts and grantees. "Flowing down" of such requirements, and holding implementing partners accountable for measuring activity performance, is an excellent measure for 118/119 success.

Sections 117, 118, and 119 of the Foreign Assistance Act

Foreign Assistance Act, Part I, Section 117 – Environment and Natural Resources

Sec. 117^(*) Environment and Natural Resources.—

(a) The Congress finds that if current trends in the degradation of natural resources in developing countries continue, they will severely undermine the best efforts to meet basic human needs, to achieve sustained economic growth, and to prevent international tension and conflict. The Congress also finds that the world faces enormous, urgent, and complex problems, with respect to natural resources, which require new forms of cooperation between the United States and developing countries to prevent such problems from becoming unmanageable. It is, therefore, in the economic and security interests of the United States to provide leadership both in thoroughly reassessing policies relating to natural resources and the environment, and in cooperating extensively with developing countries in order to achieve environmentally sound development.

(b) In order to address the serious problems described in subsection (a), the President is authorized to furnish assistance under this part for developing and strengthening the capacity of developing countries to protect and manage their environment and natural resources. Special efforts shall be made to maintain and where possible to restore the land, vegetation, water, wildlife, and other resources upon which depend economic growth and human well-being, especially of the poor.

(c)(1) The President, in implementing programs and projects under this chapter and chapter 10 of this part ^(*), shall take fully into account the impact of such programs and projects upon the environment and natural resources of developing countries. Subject to such procedures as the President considers appropriate, the President shall require all agencies and officials responsible for programs or projects under this chapter—

(A) to prepare and take fully into account an environmental impact statement for

any program or project under this chapter significantly affecting the environment of the global commons outside the jurisdiction of any country, the environment of the United States, or other aspects of the environment which the President may specify; and

(B) to prepare and take fully into account an environmental assessment of any proposed program or project under this chapter significantly affecting the environment of any foreign country.

Such agencies and officials should, where appropriate, use local technical resources in preparing environmental impact statements and environmental assessments pursuant to this subsection.

(2) The President may establish exceptions from the requirements of this subsection for emergency conditions and for cases in which compliance with those requirements would be seriously detrimental to the foreign policy interests of the United States.

[*Footnotes omitted]

Foreign Assistance Act, Part I, Section 118 – Tropical Forests

Sec. 118.^(*) Tropical Forests.

(a) **Importance of Forests and Tree Cover.**— In enacting section 103(b)(3) of this Act the Congress recognized the importance of forests and tree cover to the developing countries. The Congress is particularly concerned about the continuing and accelerating alteration, destruction, and loss of tropical forests in developing countries, which pose a serious threat to development and the environment. Tropical forest destruction and loss—

- (1) result in shortages of wood, especially wood for fuel; loss of biologically productive wetlands; siltation of lakes, reservoirs, and irrigation systems; floods; destruction of indigenous peoples; extinction of plant and animal species; reduced capacity for food production; and loss of genetic resources; and
- (2) can result in desertification and destabilization of the earth's climate.

Properly managed tropical forests provide a sustained flow of resources essential to the economic growth of developing countries, as well as genetic resources of value to developed and developing countries alike.

(b) **Priorities.**—The concerns expressed in subsection (a) and the recommendations of the United States Interagency Task Force on Tropical Forests shall be given high priority by the President—

- (1) in formulating and carrying out programs and policies with respect to developing countries, including those relating to bilateral and multilateral assistance and those relating to private sector activities; and
- (2) in seeking opportunities to coordinate public and private development and investment activities which affect forests in developing countries.

(c) **Assistance to Developing Countries.**—In providing assistance to developing countries, the President shall do the following:

- (1) Place a high priority on conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests.
- (2) To the fullest extent feasible, engage in dialogues and exchanges of information with recipient countries—

(A) which stress the importance of conserving and sustainably managing forest resources for the long-term economic benefit of those countries, as well as the irreversible losses associated with forest destruction, and

(B) which identify and focus on policies of those countries which directly or indirectly contribute to deforestation.

(3) To the fullest extent feasible, support projects and activities—

(A) which offer employment and income alternatives to those who otherwise would cause destruction and loss of forests, and

(B) which help developing countries identify and implement alternatives to colonizing forested areas.

(4) To the fullest extent feasible, support training programs, educational efforts, and the establishment or strengthening of institutions which increase the capacity of developing countries to formulate forest policies, engage in relevant land-use planning, and otherwise improve the management of their forests.

(5) To the fullest extent feasible, help end destructive slash-and-burn agriculture by supporting stable and productive farming practices in areas already cleared or degraded and on lands which inevitably will be settled, with special emphasis on demonstrating the feasibility of agroforestry and other techniques which use technologies and methods suited to the local environment and traditional agricultural techniques and feature close consultation with and involvement of local people.

(6) To the fullest extent feasible, help conserve forests which have not yet been degraded, by helping to increase production on lands already cleared or degraded through support of reforestation, fuelwood, and other sustainable forestry projects and practices, making sure that local people are involved at all stages of project design and implementation.

(7) To the fullest extent feasible, support projects and other activities to conserve forested watersheds and rehabilitate those which have been deforested, making sure that local people are involved at all stages of project design and implementation.

(8) To the fullest extent feasible, support training, research, and other actions which lead to sustainable and more environmentally sound practices for timber harvesting, removal, and processing, including reforestation, soil conservation, and other activities to rehabilitate degraded forest lands.

(9) To the fullest extent feasible, support research to expand knowledge of tropical forests and identify alternatives which will prevent forest destruction, loss, or degradation, including research in agroforestry, sustainable management of natural forests, small-scale farms and gardens, small-scale animal husbandry, wider application of adopted traditional practices, and suitable crops and crop combinations.

(10) To the fullest extent feasible, conserve biological diversity in forest areas by—

(A) supporting and cooperating with United States Government agencies, other donors (both bilateral and multilateral), and other appropriate governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations in efforts to identify, establish, and maintain a representative network of protected tropical forest ecosystems on a worldwide basis;

(B) whenever appropriate, making the establishment of protected areas a condition of support for activities involving forest clearance or degradation; and

(C) helping developing countries identify tropical forest ecosystems and species in need of protection and establish and maintain appropriate protected areas.

(11) To the fullest extent feasible, engage in efforts to increase the awareness of United States Government agencies and other donors, both bilateral and multilateral, of the immediate and long-term value of tropical forests.

(12) To the fullest extent feasible, utilize the resources and abilities of all relevant United States Government agencies.

(13) Require that any program or project under this chapter significantly affecting tropical forests (including projects involving the planting of exotic plant species)—

(A) be based upon careful analysis of the alternatives available to achieve the best sustainable use of the land, and

(B) take full account of the environmental impacts of the proposed activities on biological diversity, as provided for in the environmental procedures of the Agency for International Development.

(14) Deny assistance under this chapter for—

(A) the procurement or use of logging equipment, unless an environmental assessment indicates that all timber harvesting operations involved will be conducted in an environmentally sound manner which minimizes forest destruction and that the proposed activity will produce positive economic benefits and sustainable forest management systems; and

(B) actions which significantly degrade national parks or similar protected areas which contain tropical forests or introduce exotic plants or animals into such areas.

(15) Deny assistance under this chapter for the following activities unless an environmental assessment indicates that the proposed activity will contribute significantly and directly to improving the livelihood of the rural poor and will be conducted in an environmentally sound

manner which supports sustainable development:

(A) Activities which would result in the conversion of forest lands to the rearing of livestock.

(B) The construction, upgrading, or maintenance of roads (including temporary haul roads for logging or other extractive industries) which pass through relatively undegraded forest lands.

(C) The colonization of forest lands.

(D) The construction of dams or other water control structures which flood relatively undegraded forest lands.

(d) **PVOs and Other Nongovernmental Organizations.**—Whenever feasible, the President shall accomplish the objectives of this section through projects managed by private and voluntary organizations or international, regional, or national nongovernmental organizations which are active in the region or country where the project is located.

(e) **Country Analysis Requirements.**—Each country development strategy statement or other country plan prepared by the Agency for International Development shall include an analysis of—

(1) the actions necessary in that country to achieve conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests, and

(2) the extent to which the actions proposed for support by the Agency meet the needs thus identified.

(f) **Annual Report.**—Each annual report required by section 634(a) of this Act shall include a report on the implementation of this section.

*[*Footnotes omitted]*

Foreign Assistance Act, Part I, Section 119 - Endangered Species

Sec. 119.^[1] Endangered Species—

(a) The Congress finds the survival of many animal and plant species is endangered by over hunting, by the presence of toxic chemicals in water, air and soil, and by the destruction of habitats. The Congress further finds that the extinction of animal and plant species is an irreparable loss with potentially serious environmental and economic consequences for developing and developed countries alike. Accordingly, the preservation of animal and plant species through the regulation of the hunting and trade in endangered species, through limitations on the pollution of natural ecosystems, and through the protection of wildlife habitats should be an important objective of the United States development assistance.

(b)^[1] In order to preserve biological diversity, the President is authorized to furnish assistance under this part, notwithstanding section 660,^[1] to assist countries in protecting and maintaining wildlife habitats and in developing sound wildlife management and plant conservation programs. Special efforts should be made to establish and maintain wildlife sanctuaries, reserves, and parks; to enact and enforce anti-poaching measures; and to identify, study, and catalog animal and plant species, especially in tropical environments.

(c)^[1] **Funding Level.**—For fiscal year 1987, not less than \$2,500,000 of the funds available to carry out this part (excluding funds made available to carry out section 104(c)(2), relating to the Child Survival Fund) shall be allocated for assistance pursuant to subsection (b) for activities which were not funded prior to fiscal year 1987. In addition, the Agency for International Development shall, to the fullest extent possible, continue and increase assistance pursuant to subsection (b) for activities for which assistance was provided in fiscal years prior to fiscal year 1987.

(d)^[1] **Country Analysis Requirements.**—Each country development strategy statement or other country plan prepared by the Agency for International Development shall include an analysis of—

(1) the actions necessary in that country to conserve biological diversity, and

(2) the extent to which the actions proposed for support by the Agency meet the needs thus identified.

(e)^[1] **Local Involvement.**—To the fullest extent possible, projects supported under this section shall include close consultation with and involvement of local people at all stages of design and implementation.

(f)^[1] **PVOs and Other Nongovernmental Organizations.**—Whenever feasible, the objectives of this section shall be accomplished through projects managed by appropriate private and voluntary organizations, or international, regional, or national nongovernmental organizations, which are active in the region or country where the project is located.

(g)^[1] **Actions by AID.**—The Administrator of the Agency for International Development shall—

(1) cooperate with appropriate international organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental;

(2) look to the World Conservation Strategy as an overall guide for actions to conserve biological diversity;

(3) engage in dialogues and exchanges of information with recipient countries which stress the importance of conserving biological diversity for the long-term economic benefit of those countries and which identify and focus on policies of those countries which directly or indirectly contribute to loss of biological diversity;

(4) support training and education efforts which improve the capacity of recipient countries to prevent loss of biological diversity;

(5) whenever possible, enter into long-term agreements in which the recipient country agrees to protect ecosystems or other wildlife habitats recommended for protection by relevant governmental or nongovernmental organizations or as a result of activities undertaken pursuant to paragraph, and the United States agrees to provide, subject to obtaining the necessary appropriations, additional assistance necessary for the establishment and maintenance of such protected areas;

(6) support, as necessary and in cooperation with the appropriate governmental and nongovernmental organizations, efforts to identify and survey ecosystems in recipient countries worthy of protection;

(7) cooperate with and support the relevant efforts of other agencies of the United States Government, including the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and the Peace Corps;

(8) review the Agency's environmental regulations and revise them as necessary to ensure that ongoing and proposed actions by the Agency do not inadvertently endanger wildlife species or their critical habitats, harm protected

areas, or have other adverse impacts on biological diversity (and shall report to the Congress within a year after the date of enactment of this paragraph on the actions taken pursuant to this paragraph);

(9) ensure that environmental profiles sponsored by the Agency include information needed for conservation of biological diversity; and

(10) deny any direct or indirect assistance under this chapter for actions which significantly degrade national parks or similar protected areas or introduce exotic plants or animals into such areas.

(h)^[*] **Annual Reports.**—Each annual report required by section 634(a) of this Act shall include, in a separate volume, a report on the implementation of this section.

[*Footnotes omitted]

ANNEX B

Scope of Work

Country X Biodiversity and Tropical Forestry Assessment

I. Objective

To conduct a country-wide assessment of biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation needs and related issues for the purposes of complying with section 117, 118, and 119 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and Agency guidance on country strategy development, under ADS 201.3.4.11 and ADS 204.5. Based on this needs assessment, provide analysis of proposed actions under USAID's strategy to identify how they contribute to the conservation needs identified.

II. Background

A. Policies Governing Environmental Procedures

USAID environmental compliance is directed by U.S. policy and law. The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, Section 117, requires that the President take fully into account the impact of foreign assistance programs and projects on environment and natural resources (Sec 117 (c)(1)).

Section 118 states that each country development strategy statement or other country plan prepared by the U.S. Agency for International Development shall include an analysis of (1) the actions necessary in that country to achieve conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests, and (2) the extent to which the actions proposed for support by the Agency meet the needs thus identified.

Section 119 of the FAA relates to Endangered Species. It states that "the preservation of animal and plant species through the regulation of the hunting and trade in endangered species, through limitations on the pollution of natural ecosystems and through the protection of wildlife habits should be an important objective of the United States development assistance" (FAA, Sec. 119 (a)). Furthermore it states, "Each country

development strategy statement or other country plan prepared by the Agency for International Development shall include an analysis of (1) the actions necessary in that country to conserve biological diversity and (2) the extent to which the actions proposed for support by the Agency meet the needs thus identified" (FAA, Sec. 119(d)).

USAID/Country X is currently in the process of developing a new country strategy for its assistance program to Country X. To be in compliance with the above, and for USAID Missions to effectively determine potential contributions toward natural resources and endangered species, a biodiversity assessment is needed to inform Mission planning. The purpose of this Task Order is to provide USAID/Country X and the cooperating country government with this information and analysis.

B. USAID's Program in Country X

Provide a brief overview of the Mission's Strategic Objectives.

III. Statement of Work

The Contractor shall perform the following activities:

- A) Pre-travel informational meetings and information gathering. Prior to traveling to the field, the contractor is expected to:
 1. Hold meetings with the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO) in the appropriate USAID/Washington bureau to ensure full understanding of USAID environmental procedures, the role of the regional bureau in environmental compliance, and purpose of this assignment. This would include policy decisions and approaches that the BEO and agency environmental advisor are taking as per their authority under Reg. 216.

2. Gather and get acquainted with existing background information on Country X, such as the country's natural resources, geographical, ecological and biological specificities, current status of environment and biodiversity, institutional organization on entity and state level, key stakeholders and donors in environment and biodiversity, legislation related to the environment and biodiversity, and other relevant information required for the country assessment.
 3. Meet or speak with key stakeholders or managers at the World Bank, USDA Forest Service, and U.S.-based NGOs including World Wildlife Fund, World Resources Institute, and Wildlife Conservation Society, or other organizations involved in biodiversity conservation in Country X or relevant regional efforts.
- B) Field a team to conduct an overview and general analysis of the country's biodiversity and its current status. Upon arriving in Country X the team will:
1. Meet with USAID/Country X to get a solid understanding of Mission program goals and objectives under its proposed updated strategy; perspectives of this assignment and specific interests for the team, including advice and protocol on approaching USAID partners and host country organizations with respect to this assignment. The team shall be aware of sensitivities related to an assessment exercise (i.e., the potential for raising expectations, and the need to be clear about the purpose of the assessment) and respect Mission guidance. The team will discuss organizations to be contacted and any planned site visits with the Mission and coordinate as required. USAID/Country X will facilitate meetings with other USAID Strategic Objective teams.
 2. Hold meetings with donor organizations, NGOs, relevant government agencies, and other organizations that are knowledgeable about biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation or are implementing noteworthy projects and gather information locally.
 3. Conduct no more than three priority site visits, which would supplement understanding of USAID's program, or of biodiversity issues that arise in interviews and literature or would confirm information in previous assessments. One visit shall include [provide priority area description]. The site(s) for the second (or third) field visit will be determined by the team during the assessment in consultation with USAID.
- C) Assess and summarize the needs for biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation in Country X based on key threats and analysis of country, donor and NGO responses to meet these needs. Prepare a report on the status of biodiversity, tropical forestry and conservation efforts in Country X and potential implications for USAID or other donor programming and environmental monitoring which shall define the actions necessary for conservation. The report shall include:
1. The current status of biodiversity, tropical forests, and water resources in Country X based on current and available information.
 2. Major ecosystem types, highlighting important, unique aspects of the country's biodiversity, including important endemic species and their habitats.
 3. Descriptions of natural areas of critical importance to biodiversity conservation, such as forests, wetlands, and coastal areas critical for species reproduction, feeding or migration, if relevant. Particular attention should be given to critical environmental services and non-commercial services they provide (watershed protection, erosion control, soil, fuel wood, water conservation and amenity and recreation). It will also summarize how current land tenure arrangements affect conservation in Country X.
 4. An overview table and map of the status and management of protected area system in Country X including: an inventory of all declared and proposed areas (national parks, wildlife reserves and refuges, forest reserves, marine reserves, sanctuaries, hunting preserves and other protected areas) including marine and coastal areas.

The inventory will identify the institution responsible for the protection and management of each decreed area, its date of establishment, area, and the protection status of each (i.e., staff in place, management plan published, etc.). In addition to this summary of the current protection and management status of each park, an overview of the major threats and challenges facing protected areas in Country X, including vulnerability of areas to predicted changes in climate, and a brief summary of any recognized economic potential of these areas (including productive assets, environmental services and recreation and tourism opportunities) should be provided.

5. Descriptions of plant and animal species that are endangered or threatened with extinction. Endangered species of particular social, economic or environmental importance should be highlighted and described, as should their habitats. Technical information resources such as the IUCN red list and their websites should be referenced for future Mission access as required. This section should not emphasize species counts, but look at the relation of endangered species and important habitat conservation areas and issues, and evaluate the pressures on those areas, including vulnerability to predicted changes in climate, and current efforts to mitigate pressures, including the participation and compliance with CITIES and other international efforts.
6. Recent, current, and potential *primary* threats to biodiversity, whether they are ecological (i.e., fire, pests), related to human use (i.e., agriculture, contamination), or institutional (i.e., failed policy) or transboundary issues, as appropriate. These should emerge from a general assessment of national policies and strategies and their effectiveness, issues related to institutional capacity, trade, private sector growth, participation in international treaties, and the role of civil society.
7. Conservation efforts, their scope and effectiveness. This section also should include recent, current, and planned

activities by donor organizations that support biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation, identification of multilateral organizations, NGOs, universities, and other local organizations involved in conservation, and a general description of responsible government agencies. A general assessment of the effectiveness of these policies, institutions, and activities to achieve biodiversity conservation should be included. Priority conservation needs that lack donor or local support should be highlighted.

8. Analysis of the current legislation related to the environment and biodiversity. This section should include identification of laws related to protection and management of biological resources and endangered species. It should also point out any differences in laws that require further harmonization. This section should also review international treaties signed and ratified, as well as those that Country X needs to sign in order to conserve and manage its biological resources more efficiently.
9. An overview of the major biodiversity and tropical forest conservation activities of the commercial private sector to identify ways to better foster private sector alliances. Of interest are the norms and standards followed by those commercial entities most engaged in management and use of Country X's tropical forests and tracts near protected areas, including tourism developers and coffee producers. Consideration of policies promoted by the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Economy, and other key relevant governmental ministries should also be included.
10. An assessment of how USAID's program and proposed country strategy meets the needs for biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation. This could include potential opportunities for USAID to contribute to biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation, consistent with Mission program goals and objectives, through strategic objectives other than environment. The assessment shall include recommendations on where U.S. comparative advantages and capabilities

are likely to have the greatest impact. These issues and recommendations should be prioritized to identify those requiring the most immediate attention.

If any perceived areas of concern related to USAID’s program and its contribution or impact arise during this assessment, the contractor shall provide views and suggestions directly to the Mission Environmental Officer in a separate briefing.

IV. Timing

The Biodiversity and Tropical Forest Background Assessment Study will be carried out to inform the final USAID/Country X Country Plan to be developed in Month Y and, therefore, should be completed no later than [one month before the final Country Plan is completed].

V. Illustrative Level of Effort

USAID anticipates that the assessment can be completed in approximately [#] weeks by a team of at least two full-time members, one of whom is the team leader. The team leader shall have USAID experience, with hands-on experience conducting assessments and be familiar with USAID environmental regulations and strategic planning processes. The team members should have a combination of skills and knowledge in biodiversity, natural resources management, institutional development, policy, and economics, in order to address issues affecting Country X. At least one team member shall be a CCN or TCN who is knowledgeable about Country X. Experience from Country X and/or countries in the immediate vicinity is preferred. (Depending on country size)

The approximate LOE is estimated as follows:	
• U.S. Consultations	4 person days
Fieldwork:	
• Team Leader/U.S.	20 person days
• Institutional Policy Specialist/U.S.	14 person days
• CCN NRM or Biodiversity Specialist	18 person days
• Report preparation	10 person days
TOTAL	66 person days

VI. Relationships and Responsibilities

The Contractor shall report to the USAID/Country X Environment Office Director or his/her designee. The Contractor will be responsible for identifying and obtaining the majority of the reference materials needed for this study with only minimal interventions on the part of USAID/Country X.

VII. Deliverables

There shall be four deliverables under this contract:

1. Preliminary Work Plan and Schedule: The Contractor shall provide USAID with a work plan and schedule within 7 days of contract inception. The work plan and schedule shall also contain a list of those individuals and agencies that are to be interviewed, and a list of reports, evaluations, etc., to be reviewed.
2. Draft Report: The Contractor shall submit a draft report to the Environment Office no later than Date. The draft report shall follow the generic outline provided in the attachment to this SOW, as refined during the course of the contract in consultation with USAID. The report shall not exceed thirty pages, in English, excluding suitable annexes and pertinent figures (maps, institutional charts, tables) and references. Among the expected appendices is a briefly annotated bibliography of the most important current reference materials related to the topic and a contact list for each of the organizations discussed in the report.
3. Final Report: The final report is due no later than two weeks after receiving USAID/Country X’s comments on the first draft report.
4. In-Country Mission Exit Briefings: The team shall meet with USAID/Country X to provide them with a brief of the report findings. The exit brief shall be accompanied by a two-page written summary of key findings and recommendations.

The Contractor will furnish both electronic file versions of all submissions (first draft and final report) and five copies in English, including one photocopy ready version of the final report.

ANNEX C

Biodiversity Assessment Site Visit Guide
Country X

	Site Description & Condition	Persons Interviewed	Documents & Records Reviewed	Key Findings & Conclusions	Time
Site 1					
Site 2					
Site 3					

USAID/Country X 117/118/119 Biodiversity and Tropical Forestry Assessment Outline

Executive Summary

Table of Contents

Assess and summarize the needs for biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation in Country X, based on key threats and analysis of country, donor, and NGO responses to meet these needs. Prepare a report on the status of biodiversity, tropical forestry, and conservation efforts in Country X and potential implications for USAID or other donor programming and environmental monitoring, which shall define the actions necessary for conservation.

Section A. Introduction

- Background on USAID/Country X program
- Current programming efforts
- Rationale of 118/119 (regulations, etc.)
- Country X context for NRM

Section B. Legislative and institutional structure affecting biodiversity and forestry

Analysis of the current environment and biodiversity legislation. This section should identify laws related to protection and management of biological resources and endangered species. It should also point out any differences in laws that require further harmonization. This section should also review the international treaties signed and ratified, as well as those that Country X needs to sign in order to conserve and manage its biological resources more efficiently.

- Government of Country X
 - Policies, including international treaties
 - Legislation
 - Institutions (major players: NEPA, FD, Fisheries Division, etc.)

- Major NGOs (categorized as national, regional, local, etc.)
- International organizations

Conservation efforts, their scope and effectiveness. This section should also include recent, current, and planned activities by donor organizations that support biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation, identification of multilateral organizations, NGOs, universities, and other local organizations involved in conservation, and a general description of responsible government agencies. Also include a general assessment of the effectiveness of these policies, institutions, and activities to achieve biodiversity conservation. Highlight priority conservation needs which lack donor or local support.

- Bilateral donors
- Multilateral donors
- International PVOs

Global and regional initiatives and policies should be brought to bear fully in 118 and 119 assessments. The Initiative for the Americas and the Millennium Challenge Account are two examples where conservation issues have been and, in the case of the latter, could be integrated into USAID efforts to “improve governance, promote economic growth and make sound investments in people.”

- Regulatory institutions
- Private sector

Provide an overview of the major biodiversity and tropical forest conservation activities of the commercial private sector to help identify ways to better foster private sector alliances. Of interest are the norms and standards followed by commercial entities most engaged in management and use of Country X’s tropical forests and tracts

near protected areas, including tourism developers and coffee producers. Consideration of policies promoted by the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Economy and other key relevant governmental ministries should also be included.

Section C. Status and management of protected areas

The overview table and map of the status and management of protected area system in Country X should include an inventory of all declared and proposed areas (national parks, wildlife reserves and refuges, forest reserves, marine reserves, sanctuaries, hunting preserves, and other protected areas) including marine and coastal areas. The inventory identifies the institution responsible for protection and management of each decreed area, its date of establishment, area size, and the protection status of each (i.e., staff in place, management plan published, etc.). In addition to the summary of each parks' current protection and management status, provide an overview of the major threats and challenges facing the Country's protected areas, include vulnerability to predicted changes in climate and a brief summary of any recognized economic potential (such as productive assets, environmental services, and recreation and tourism opportunities).

- Types
- Present list
- Management models/mechanisms (financial sustainability, etc.)
- Future directions
 - New areas being proposed
 - How perceived to evolve

Section D. Status and protection of endangered species

Plant and animal species that are endangered or threatened with extinction. Endangered species of particular social, economic, or environmental importance should be highlighted and described, as should their habitats. Technical information resources such as the IUCN Red List and its Web sites should be referenced for future Mission access, as required. This section should not emphasize species counts but look at the relation of endangered species to important habitat conservation areas and issues and evaluate pressures on those areas, including vulnerability to

predicted changes in climate and current efforts to mitigate pressures, as well as participation and compliance with CITES and other international efforts.

- IUCN Red List as appendix
- Importance of endemism
- Current protection and rehabilitation activities

Section E. Status and protection of forest resources

- Forest cover data and information
- Types
- Socio-economic importance
- Present management and protection programs

Section F. Conservation outside of protected areas

Particular attention should be given to critical environmental services and non-commercial services they provide (watershed protection, erosion control, soil, fuel wood, water conservation and amenity and recreation). Summarize how current land tenure arrangements affect conservation in Country X.

- Managed Natural Systems (categories, status, environmental implications)
 - Watersheds
 - Coastal and marine resources
 - Wetlands (including mangroves)
 - Agricultural systems — concise overview

Section G. Other Considerations

- Impacts of development projects

Conservation efforts, their scope and effectiveness. This section should also include recent, current and planned activities by donor organizations that support biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation, an identification of Multilateral organizations, NGOs, universities and other local organizations involved in conservation, and a general description of responsible government agencies. A general assessment of the effectiveness of these policies, institutions and activities to achieve biodiversity conservation should be included. Priority conservation needs which lack donor or local support should be highlighted.

- Ex-situ conservation (e.g., zoos, seed banks)
- Conservation of economically important species and germplasm (including land races and wild relatives of agriculturally important crops and livestock)
- Alien invasive species

Section H. Major issues in biodiversity and tropical forest conservation

Recent, current, and potential *primary* threats to biodiversity whether they are ecological (i.e., fire, pests), related to human use (i.e., agriculture, contamination), or institutional (i.e., failed policy) or transboundary issues as appropriate. These should emerge from a general assessment of national policies and strategies and their effectiveness, and issues related to institutional capacity, trade, private sector growth, participation in international treaties, and the role of civil society.

Section I. Recommendations and proposed actions

An assessment of how USAID's program and proposed country strategy meets the needs for biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation. This could include potential opportunities for USAID to contribute to biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation, consistent with Mission program goals and objectives, through strategic objectives other than environment. The assessment shall include recommendations on where U.S. comparative advantages and capabilities are likely to have the greatest impact. These issues and recommendations should be prioritized to identify those requiring the most immediate attention.

Section J. Appendices

- Bibliography
- Biodata sketch of team members
- List of persons contacted
- SOW
- FAA 117/118/119
- IUCN Red List for Country X