



**Sierra Tarahumara
Forest Conservation Program
Chihuahua, México**

**First Year Workplan
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1. Background on program

The Sierra Tarahumara Forest Conservation Program is a natural resource management project implemented by WWF Mexico in the headwaters of the Rio Conchos with an Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) approach. IRBM includes improved techniques for natural resource management and is based on participatory techniques that allow incorporating the needs of social stakeholders in a region defined by a watershed.

The headwaters of the Rio Conchos are located in a region known as Sierra Tarahumara, in the state of Chihuahua. This area is named after the numerically dominant indigenous nation in the area, the Rarámuri or Tarahumara. The program aims to achieve its goals through the formation and consolidation of a multisectoral Steering Committee and local community-level Subcommittees that will plan, implement and evaluate activities that lead to improved watershed management. The overall objective of these activities will be to undertake sustainable forest management and conservation activities through participatory processes. Project development will be supported by an external evaluation program based on a Geographic Information System (GIS) created with existing data and information generated by this program. Feedback will be collected through a Monitoring and Evaluation System (M&E) designed to assess the progress and document the experiences generated throughout the lifecycle of the project. The program also includes an environmental education and communications component designed for local and regional outreach in order to share the project results at the scale of the entire Conchos basin and create models for social participation and increased governance at the national level.

Even though there have been many studies that describe the natural history, ecology and biology of the natural systems that are found in the Sierra Tarahumara, there have been few efforts that recognize the active role of local communities as shapers of the landscape that incorporate them in the implementation of projects that foster sound practices for natural resource management. Many organizations that work in the area are focused in providing immediate social assistance to the Rarámuri during the harsh winters; legal advice for conflicts related to land ownership and forest management, and support against abusive large companies or illegal timbering. However, few efforts have been made to assist local communities in improving their immediate environment and their natural resource management practices.

WWF aims to improve the livelihoods of local people through the implementation of sustainable forest management and natural resource management practices designed with an IRBM approach, either by maintaining the land cover through sustainable management activities or by restoring the land cover to provide environmental services such as maintaining water quantity and quality.

a) Description of the region

The Sierra Tarahumara is a mountainous area of approximately 60,000 km² located in the Sierra Madre Occidental in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico. The landscape is dissected by heavily eroded trenches—called *barrancas*— and winding streams, and dominated by large stands of mixed pine and oak forests. The Sierra Tarahumara is the headwaters of the most ecologically and culturally important rivers in northern México. The rivers Yaqui, Mayo and Fuerte drain in the Gulf of California, and the Rio Conchos that drains into the Rio Bravo/Grande, which terminates in the Gulf of Mexico. Water originating in the forested Sierra Tarahumara and channeled by these rivers irrigates more than 600,000 hectares of agricultural land in the Mexican states of Chihuahua, Sonora, and Sinaloa. These river systems also supply potable water for over 1.5 million people distributed in five large urban centers in northern Mexico. Thus, the forested headwaters are key to insure stable water supplies that support vibrant ecological communities and healthy human communities downstream.

The Sierra Tarahumara is considered a center of mega biodiversity in the North American continent, mainly due to its floral richness. It is also a center of floristic diversity for oaks (*Quercus* sp.) as well as a

biological refuge for endemic trees including *Pseudotsuga* sp. (Douglas fir), and home to many highly valued flowering plants like orchids. In terms of fauna, it is one of the few remaining areas where wild turkeys can be found, it hosts a large number of migratory bird species, it is the nesting area of the threatened thick-billed parrot, and is home to the last reported sighting of the imperial woodpecker. The Sierra Tarahumara is considered a WWF Freshwater Priority Site due to the incredible diversity and endemism of fish species found in this freshwater ecoregion.

This region is also the epicenter of three indigenous North American cultures: the Rarámuri (or Tarahumara), Pima, and Guarijío, all of whom have unique understandings of their surroundings. These are incorporated in their cosmovisions as sound natural resource practices that reflect their commitment to a long-term stewardship of their natural heritage that is evident in their daily behavior.

The Tarahumara region is composed of 17 geopolitical divisions called municipalities. Cross cutting these municipalities are other geopolitical entities called *ejidos*, created after the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and its Agrarian Reform process, and characterized by a strong sense of communal management and ownership. Most of the population in the region belongs to the Rarámuri ethnic group, with smaller numbers of Pima, Guarijío and mixed ethnic heritage people in small, isolated communities. The vast majority of the approximately 270,000 people in the Sierra Tarahumara are rural and extremely poor.

b) Problem statement

The principal economic activities for residents of the Sierra Tarahumara are based on timber and non-timber forest product harvesting from forests and woodlands, as well as largely subsistence-oriented agriculture and cattle grazing. The area residents work within a framework of state and national policies affecting natural resource management that are unclear to them and minimally enforced. Even though timber extraction rates are typically low, the residual damage to the forest structure is high and the high-grading of valuable species remains a prevalent practice, resulting in significant impacts on land and water ecosystems. Local timber production systems are of low profitability associated to technological inefficiency of the mills and high wood waste. Marketing and transportation is very constrained in this region, especially in the low-income communities that own nearly 80% of the mills in the area. Foresters are external contractors that live outside the agrarian communities, who have to assume responsibility for most forest management planning activities, their implementation and the operation of infrastructure. Livestock management and small-scale agriculture are activities increasing in economic importance, although nowhere on the scale of timber extraction.

Residents also lack access to good markets, and the existing infrastructure affects the kind and quality of forest and agricultural products available for marketing at the regional level. Recent forest fires have damaged the region, and residents are in serious need of capacity building to help them detect and prevent this ecological threat. Lack of training in sustainable forest management practices is a further obstacle to natural resource management in the Sierra Tarahumara, combined with lack of access to funds to support innovative projects. Additionally, technical and traditional information on forest and watershed conditions, uses, and management opportunities is limited and poorly integrated into community planning and decision-making in the area. Planning practices could also be greatly enhanced to ensure the long-term sustainable use of this region's natural and human resources. The proposed Sierra Tarahumara Watershed program will specifically respond to each of these issues through an integrated participatory approach.

c) Overall objective

To improve the ecological integrity of the forested and freshwater ecosystems of the Sierra Tarahumara and the livelihoods of local people. This will be achieved by fostering community-based natural resource management activities, including zoning of community lands and developing community-based protected

areas, and by improving capacity within local water management boards to devise and implement sound watershed-level management programs and practices.

The WWF Sierra Tarahumara project will aim to identify specific communities to participate in the inventory, planning, and marketing of forest and agricultural products that can be incorporated into community driven micro-enterprises. In addition, community management plans that incorporate forest management, protected areas, and fire prevention and control will be developed through participatory processes of analysis and planning, as well as by capacity building. This initial experience will be scaled up within each watershed to allow for replication of the community development process in multiple communities, potentially with different products and marketing strategies to allow for enhanced regional diversification and sustainability.

The Sierra Tarahumara watershed planning and conservation process will aim to achieve multiple broad-ranged goals:

- Build capacity at local levels in planning and decision-making to guide sustainable forest and natural resource management
- Enhance community awareness and capacities to develop and manage local initiatives for achieving ecological, economic and social sustainability
- Establish and increase community protected areas, including the protection of sites deemed sacred by residents
- Increase the area of certified productive forests, and to provide guidance to communities and landholders seeking certification
- Improve water quality and the reliability of downstream water supplies through enhanced management of upland watersheds
- Implement, monitor and evaluate demonstration projects that can produce lessons learned to guide similar projects replicated in other parts of Mexico
- Enhance or improve economic conditions and community well-being in the Sierra Tarahumara through locally driven small business development, administration, marketing, and evaluation
- Provide site-based models that will enhance the broader objectives outlined in USAID's National Enabling Environment for México (NEEM) initiative

d) Partners and roles

Partners that will be directly funded by this project are listed here, even though a watershed-level Steering Committee (SC) will be conformed in order to plan, implement and follow-up activities of this program, including high-level state and federal government agencies who have already agreed to participate in this process.

To conduct this program, WWF is being supported by several local organizations that have experience in the area. Annex 1 provides further information regarding the main partners of the program and their roles in each of the activities. Given that an important expected project outcome is to create local capacity within partner NGOs, their staff will receive training in participatory planning approaches during the first year.

The main partners in the project are:

- CEDEC, S.C., a consultancy group hired for the facilitation of participatory workshops and for local NGO training.
- The Chihuahua Chapter of Profauna, A.C., will lead the construction of the Integrated Conservation Information System, based on their proved capacity to develop and maintain Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as well as their knowledge of remote sensing techniques and the region. They will also

be in charge of maintaining the Monitoring and Evaluation System, given their highly rated ability to conduct fauna and flora surveys, their knowledge of the region and their proved GIS capacity.

- The Coahuila Chapter of Profauna, A.C., will be in charge of the Environmental Education and Communications component, given their success in the development of a voluntary payment mechanism for environmental services in the city of Saltillo. This program assessed the citizens' willingness to commit to the protection of the Sierra de Zapalinamé, a municipal-level protected area. Profauna also has developed and produced educational material for the following protected areas: Cuatrociénegas, Sierra de Zapalinamé, and Maderas del Carmen.

The community work will be conducted by three local NGOs that have been working in the area:

- Fuerza Ambiental, AC, a group that has been involved with the Rarámuri (Tarahumara) nation for almost 12 years providing legal assistance for land claims as well as capacity building for improved land and natural resource control in the region.
- Fundación Río Conchos, A.C., a local NGO who has conducted natural resource management projects throughout the Rio Conchos basin.
- México Norte, A.C., an organization that has focused in anthropological work in the Tarahumara area.

e) Project design

The Sierra Tarahumara Forest Conservation Program is part of World Wildlife Fund's current efforts for Integrated River Basin Management and is part of WWF's Freshwater TDP (Target Driven Program). These approaches match USAID Mexico priorities, incorporating tools to promote sustainable management of natural resources at the watershed level, fitting under USAID/Mexico PO: Improved management and conservation of natural resources in targeted watersheds.

2) Workplan for the year

a) List of activities to be accomplished during the first year and how these will advance the program toward the intermediate or overall objectives.

Activity 1. Formation and consolidation of a Steering Committee for watershed-level planning and activity follow-up

This activity will lead to the formation and consolidation of a Steering Committee (SC) that will oversee watershed-level planning. Members of this committee will be representatives of agencies of the different government levels (federal, state and municipal), representatives of the NGO sector, agrarian and traditional community authorities, and representatives of the civil society. The committee will undertake a participatory planning process in order to set objectives for coordinated work in the watershed, ensuring that the implemented activities match them. It will also seek to create synergies to improve the utilization of available funds and resources, and will provide a forum for direct communication between all the actors involved in management of the watershed.

1.1. Formation of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC) will be formed by representatives of different stakeholders involved in the watershed, providing a space for participatory decision making in natural resource planning and project implementation across the watershed. Community representatives will participate in the SC by providing input in terms of existing needs, effects and results of planning decisions in the area. The representatives of different government levels and agencies will provide input in order to optimize actions, programs and resources allocated to the region, while academic institutions and the private sector will provide technical support and information for decision making. The SC will develop an M&E system that will provide feedback for planning and decision making.

By including social actors in planning processes at the watershed level, this activity is expected to secure cross-sectorial participation in project design, implementation and evaluation, conducting to improved water resource governance, which constitutes a major void in the existing CNA-sponsored Basin Councils (Consejos de Cuenca).

1.1.1 Selection of participants

All of these stakeholders have been identified through WWF's experience in the area. Invitees to the first SC meeting will include representatives of state and federal government agencies that are involved in water and forest management, as well as private sector representatives from the forestry and agricultural sectors, Rarámuri traditional authorities, agrarian community authorities, church representatives and academic institutions.

1.1.2 Strategic planning workshop

A participatory planning workshop will be held with the identified stakeholders. CEDEC, S.C., a group of consultants specializing in work with the Mexico environment sector will facilitate this process.

1.1.3 Develop action plan

The main outcomes of the planning workshop are an MOU and action plan that will be signed by all SC members. The action plan will include a five year, logframe-based program, and will include the vision, mission, purposes, activities, regional stakeholder analysis and will identify responsible parties as well as financial and human resources commitments from all SC members.

1.2. Follow-up of Steering Committee

The action plan will also define indicators and completion dates for the activities implemented towards sustainable management of the Upper Conchos River Basin, an annual follow-up plan to evaluate progress towards the accomplishment of its mission statement, as well as its goals and indicators.

1.2.1 Annual review of action plan

This will be undertaken during the yearly meeting of the SC, and its results will be incorporated to the SC annual report.

1.2.2 Activity evaluation

This will be undertaken during the yearly meeting of the SC, with inputs from the M&E system and ICIS, and its results will be incorporated to the SC annual report.

Activity 2. Development and maintenance of the Integrated Conservation Information System (ICIS)

The ICIS is a key tool to generate and exchange information of the activities designed and implemented throughout the watershed, providing detailed information concerning the field work conducted at the site level. The transparency and the relevance of the project at the watershed and community level will be ensured by documenting the efforts undertaken by the project's partners.

2.1. Building and using the ICIS

A strategic component of the Sierra Tarahumara project is the generation of baseline data and basic information about the watershed. The SC and community level action plans will include indicators that will be used to evaluate progress at both levels.

2.1.1 Preliminary design of ICIS

Profauna Chihuahua, a local NGO has solid experience in collecting, capturing and analyzing information. Their expertise will be used to create preliminary indicators as well as data capturing formats that can be used or discussed in the participatory planning meetings at both basin and community levels.

2.1.2 Operation and evaluation of the ICIS

Once potential indicators, software and formats have been discussed at both levels, tests will be conducted to prove the ability of progress evaluation and documentation of the ICIS. This will

be the basis for both basin and community level steering committees to evaluate and revise the action plans as they evolve.

2.1.3 Design of field data collection formats and protocols

Formats will be designed to guarantee uniformity in quality of collected data. Data collection will be conducted as soon as the information system is operating at the watershed and community levels.

2.1.4 Information input

Input of information to the system will occur once the ICIS is designed and as soon as information and data are generated.

2.1.5 Assist partners in ICIS use

Assistance will be provided to partners as needed, in order to ensure transparency. All the SC members will be trained in ICIS use by Profauna, who will provide technical support for data processing, analysis, and reporting.

Activity 3. Development of watershed management and conservation plans

Given that most of the watershed is forested and that forest extraction is a major economic activity in the area, the components of this activity are focused on the development and implementation of sustainable forest management plans that incorporate environmentally sound practices, and certification will be used as a mechanism to verify that these are in fact implemented successfully. WWF will provide technical expertise as well as information on the tools available for improved management practices.

Once the forest conservation and management plans are finalized, WWF will continue to support the communities to obtain approval and funding for their implementation, with the support of local NGOs.

3.1. Provide technical assistance in forest management and certification

Some communities and ejidos in the Sierra Tarahumara are already evaluating their forest conditions or have advanced to the point where they are seeking certification. However, some of these landholders are not yet at a point where certification is appropriate or feasible. The objective of this component is to engage CONAFOR, and regional or national NGOs such as Consejo Civil Mexicano para la Silvicultura Sustentable in capacity building through workshops, seminars, and study tours with representatives from communities and ejidos seeking to improve their forest management activities in order to seek certification.

3.1.1 Conduct workshops on forest management and certification

Workshops will be carried-out to address identified capacity needs in topics of forest management and certification.

3.1.2 Conduct forest management and business administration workshops

Workshops will be carried-out to address identified capacity needs in topics of forest management and business administration.

3.2 Develop forest conservation and management plans

Once local capacities have been strengthened, forest management plans will be defined by participating communities, according to the needs and priorities set in the community action plans. This activity will attempt to catalyze resources from existing government programs such as PRODEFOR, PRODEPLAN and PRONARE. Activities will be defined more specifically as communities undergo planning processes and identify their goals.

3.2.1 Collect data for forest management plans

Information needed for forest management plans will be gathered during this phase.

3.2.2 Collect information for land use zoning proposals

Information needed for land use zoning will be gathered during this phase.

3.2.3 Develop forest conservation and management plans

Forest conservation and management plans will be developed for participating communities.

3.3 Implement forest conservation and management plans

Once local capacities have been strengthened, forest management plans will be implemented in participating communities, according to the plans designed through the previous component. Activities will be defined more specifically as forest management plans will vary depending on the goals set by each community.

3.3.1 Monitoring and enforcement of land use practices

This activity will ensure that land use practices defined by the communities are implemented and enforced.

3.3.2 Elaboration of local fire management plans

Assist communities to develop an implement fire management plans as an integral part of their forest management processes, enhancing collaboration between communities and external agencies responsible for fire management.

3.3.3 Implement certification processes

Assist communities in the implementation of certification processes, including M&E practices that allow for information feedback into the forest management plans.

3.3.4 Restoration of forest cover

Restoration activities will be implemented in the cases where this has been set as a target in the communities' forest management plans.

3.3.5 Improve forest management practices for non-timber forest products

In those cases where NTFP production has been defined as a management target, assistance will be provided to improve existing management practices for these products.

Activity 4. Strengthen local and institutional capacities

4.1 Formation of local subcommittees

A key component of the project is to foster and insure participation of key communities from the Upper Conchos Basin. To achieve this, three local NGOs will conduct community workshops to develop Action Plans based on the logic framework methodology. This component is similar to the one described for the watershed level SC, and will ultimately lead to the elaboration of documents, signed by the local community authorities, describing consensed vision, mission, purposes, responsibilities and commitment to a sustainable use of the communities' natural resources. Then, subcommittees will be comprised at the community level, with similar responsibilities as those of the SC. The goal is to engage at least three communities working with three partner NGOs.

The community action plans will include training needs defined by the communities, and WWF will seek the support of Rainforest Alliance, an organization with solid expertise on forest management and training, as well as experience working in the region, in order to develop comprehensive training and microenterprise strategies for the local communities.

4.1.1 Selection of community sites and local NGOs

Ejido Panalachi has been identified as a top priority site for WWF's work, since it covers nearly 50,000 ha of forests that represent some of the better quality community owned forests in the watershed. A local NGO with experience in the area will be recruited in order to engage this ejido in the project. If Ejido Panalachi's cooperation is secured, the most important river tributaries of the Upper Conchos will be included in this project, allowing for its replication to the lower parts of the basin.

4.1.2 Develop communities' action plans

These community-level planning processes will be undertaken by local partner NGOs, and they will be consistent with the watershed-level action plan. This activity is expected to be completed by December 12, 2004.

4.1.3 Follow up communities' action plans

This component will assure that action plan progress is documented and used as feedback to improve the projects, as well as successes and obstacles that are found throughout their implementation.

4.2 Strengthening local community skills for forest management

Developing economic alternatives and more efficient forest management techniques and technologies are key for sustainable development, and can be used as a measure of success in the application of a development strategy at the community level. Thus, an important component of this activity is to identify the skills needed in communities and address those needs in order to develop successful projects.

4.2.1 Conduct participatory strategic planning processes at community level

Training in participatory planning processes at the community level will be provided by CEDEC, S.C., a consultancy firm specializing in capacity building in the environment sector. It will involve three major stages: 1) participatory planning processes and project administration workshop (one week); 2) conflict resolution tools (three days), and 3) indicators and their role in planning (three days). CEDEC, S.C. will facilitate the workshops to WWF's local NGO partners and will be open to other organizations, subject to a maximum of 30 participants. Workshops will be held between May and June, 2004. A final report of these workshops will be available by July 1, 2004.

4.2.2 Identify skills needed for support to forestry enterprises

Identifying existing capacities and management tools in the communities is part of the planning processes, as well as identifying those capacities that communities want to develop in order to improve their skills. Previous WWF experience in the area shows that basic accounting and natural resources management workshops are important to have a real impact at the community level.

4.2.3 Training to address identified skills

Training will be provided in order to address the needs identified by communities through participatory planning processes.

4.3 Microenterprise creation

4.3.1 Assistance for microenterprise creation

Following training implementation and in order to further strengthen local capacities, assistance will be provided in order to set up local microenterprises working with a vision towards improving efficiency of internal processes that derive in increased benefits from timber extraction that are distributed more equally among local forest owners.

Activity 5. Environmental education and communications

This program seeks to secure involvement of local communities through outreach activities, such as environmental education and communications. This will increase awareness of the local communities concerning their natural resources and their role at regional, national and global scales. The audience for this component comprises a wide range of ages, from young community members that will be engaged by incorporating activities to existing school programs and curricula, to adults, that will be engaged by creating appropriate activities such as festivals and communication materials.

Another important element of this activity is to devise and implement a special communications program focused in increasing community awareness regarding the importance of watershed health in relation to the provision of environmental services, as well as assessing the social conditions for implementation of a mechanism of voluntary payment for environmental services.

5.1. Formal education

This component will create complementary activities for existing school curricula in order to discuss natural resource management practices and their role in local subsistence, as well as to foster pride on the natural heritage of rural communities. Profauna's environmental education program in Coahuila has developed successful tools to achieve these goals.

5.1.1 Apply surveys to assess local knowledge of environment

A survey will be used to gather information regarding existing knowledge and awareness of the environment. This information will be used to develop an environmental education strategy, including educational materials and activities.

5.1.2 Develop educational activities and materials

Materials and activities will be designed according to needs identified by the survey.

5.1.3 Train teachers in use of educational materials

Training for the use of materials and implementation of activities will be provided to local teachers.

5.2. Informal education

This component is focused in creating and increasing awareness among adults about sound resource management practices, as well as the local, national and global importance of conservation in the area.

5.2.1 Organize festivals for local communities to increase awareness of natural heritage

Festivals create an open forum to engage communities and increase participation and awareness about their environment, better natural resource management practices and other important actions that will create a basis for the implementation of this program. Pronatura Coahuila has been identified as the key partner for this component, given their broad experience in environmental education and outreach in northern Mexico.

5.3 Design and implement a campaign for voluntary payment of environmental services

One of this project's long term goals is to devise and implement a payment mechanism for environmental services among water users in the lower Conchos watershed, specifically in the municipalities that benefit from its water and the irrigation districts.

5.3.1 Conduct survey

The main activity funded by this project for this component will be to assess people's willingness to pay for watershed management activities that will improve or maintain the water supply's quantity and quality in the most important cities of the basin.

5.3.2 Prepare campaign materials

Materials will be created to target information needs identified by the survey, in order to create awareness of watershed health for production of environmental services.

5.3.3 Implement campaign

5.3.4 Evaluate campaign

Activity 6. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) play a crucial role in this project as it will provide basic input for continuous project feedback and improvement. M&E will help track and document project development, successes, obstacles and lessons learned. It is expected that the implementation of an M&E system will contribute to gain government by providing information about activities in the area that help increase accountability of the implementing agencies. The M&E system will also provide WWF with a baseline to measure its impact in the watershed. Lastly, the M&E system will be used to assess the progress, effectiveness and relevance of the work conducted at the field level and as feedback for the watershed and community planning sessions.

6.1. Design M&E system

The M&E system will be based on the indicators developed at the watershed and community levels, providing feedback for indicators such as forested or restored area. The ICIS will be a key tool in the development and implementation of the M&E system, which will be consensed among SC members, providing a basis for annual evaluations, as well as mid-year and final evaluations conducted by USAID.

6.1.1 Preliminary design of an M/E system in collaboration with stakeholders

A preliminary design of the M&E system will be designed with input from stakeholders.

6.1.2 Test M&E system

Once the M&E system is designed, the next stage will be to test it in order to assess the sensitivity of its parameters and its effectiveness.

6.2. Implement M&E system

This stage includes activities related to M&E implementation and feedback for improvement.

6.2.1 Conduct annual or bi-annual monitoring activities

These activities will provide feedback on M&E design and results, in order to keep stakeholders informed of program development, lessons learned and obstacles faced by WWF and its partners.

6.2.2 Report and communicate to partners on an annual basis

M&E reports will provide follow-up information about program implementation progress to stakeholders.

6.3 Communication of the M&E system

The M&E system will generate information that will be transmitted to all the stakeholders and SC members in order to guarantee the project's accountability and transparency. Profauna will be a key partner in the development of a communication strategy for the M&E system.

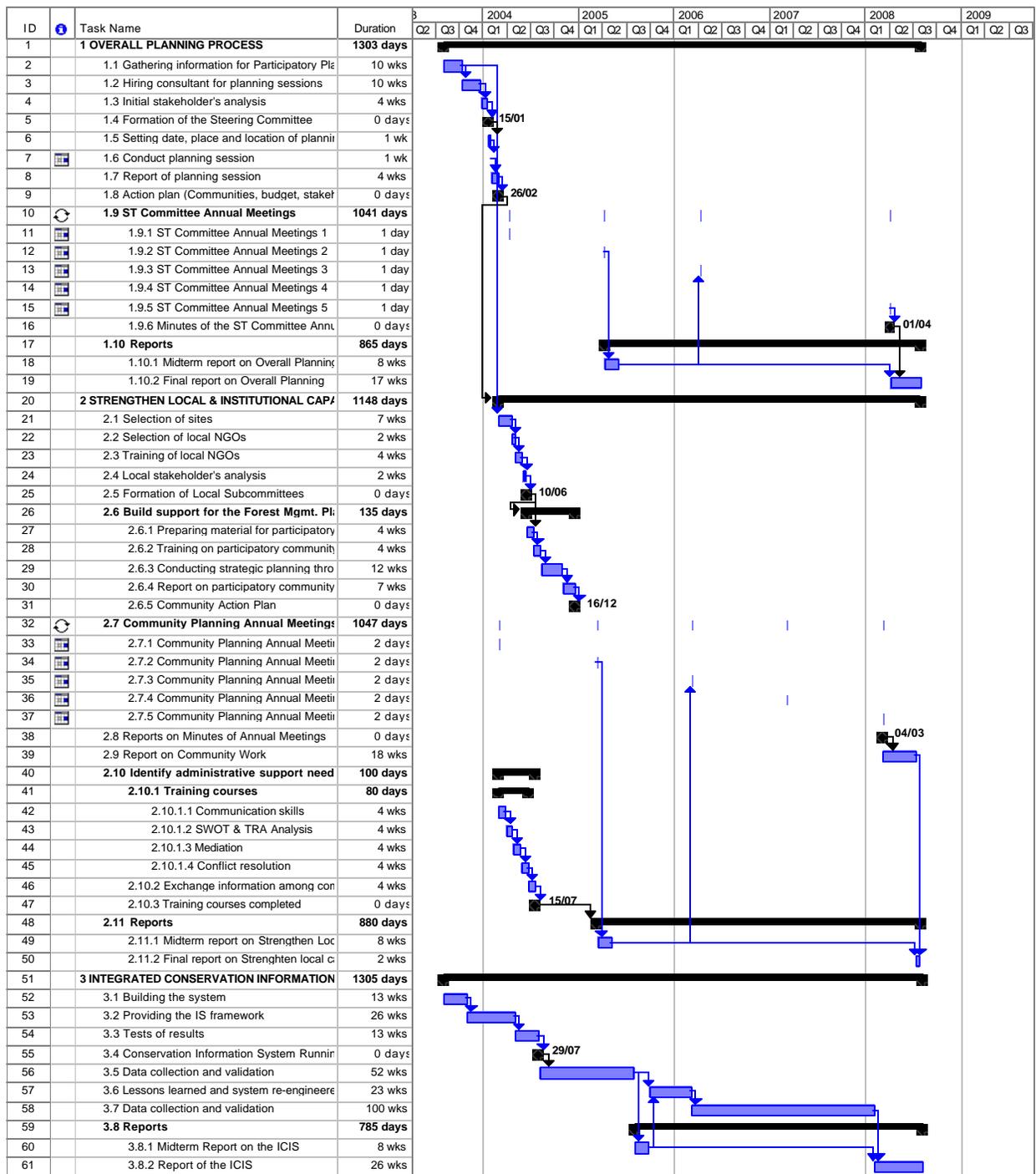
b) Critical factors that will influence the project

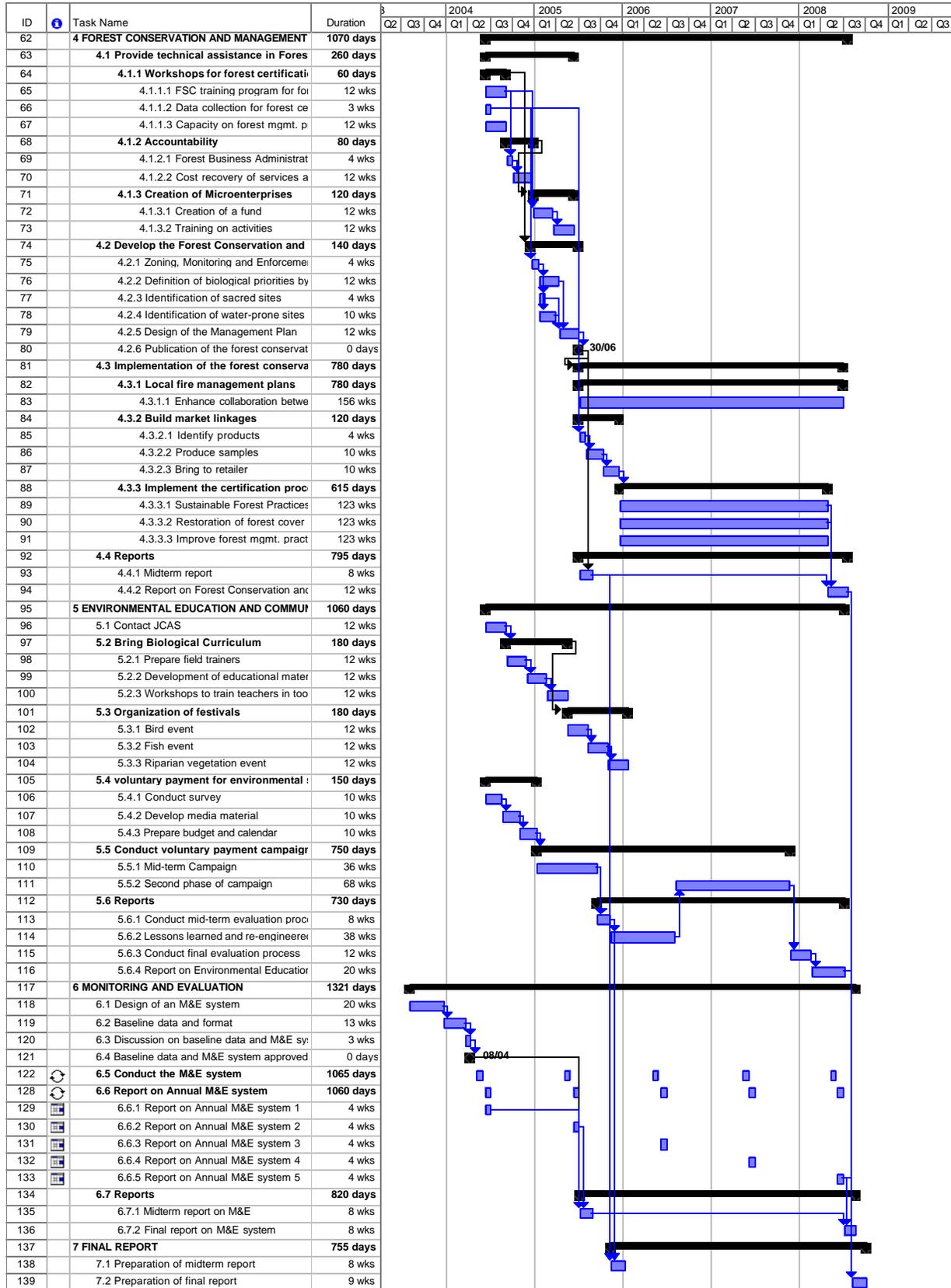
In the first year, the most critical factor is the participatory planning process at the community level. Given the community focus of this project, securing community participation is fundamental to project success, both for planning processes and to secure their commitment throughout the project implementation phases. This project is expected to act as a catalyzer of government funds and resources, and therefore it is very important to show success in the early implementation stages.

Other factors that may influence progress in the first year are the identification of a local NGO to work in Ejido Panalachi, the area defined as critical for the development of sustainable forest management programs and zoning regulations that include declaration of community-level protected areas.

c) Time frame of the project as activities to be developed and milestones.

In the following pages, a Gantt diagram shows the different activities and their interactions.





3) Work Plan Table

Major activities	Actions to support may include (what and who)	Year	If this year, quarter	Comments, verifiers and expected products
Activity 1. Formation and consolidation of a Steering Committee for watershed-level planning and activity follow-up.				
USAID SO 1: Enhance the national enabling environment for natural resource management.				
USAID SO 3: Community role in natural resource management strengthened.				
1.1 Formation of the Steering Committee	1.1.1 Selection of participants	2004	1	List of workshop invitees
	1.1.2 Strategic planning workshop	2004	1	Workshop minute, list of workshop attendees
	1.1.3 Develop action plan	2004	2	Action plan report
1.2 Follow-up of Steering Committee	1.2.1 Annual review of action plan	Annually on 2Q starting 2005		SC annual reports
	1.2.2 Activity evaluation	Annually on 2Q starting 2005		SC annual reports
Activity 2. Development and maintenance of the Integrated Conservation Information System (ICIS)				
USAID SO 2: Increased use of environmentally sound and economically viable practices and technologies.				
2.1. Building and using the ICIS	2.1.1 Preliminary design of the ICIS	2004	1	ICIS draft design.
	2.1.2 Operation and evaluation of the ICIS	2004	3	ICIS quarterly reports.
	2.1.3 Design of field data collection formats and protocols	2004		Draft of data collection protocol.
	2.1.4 Input of information to the system.	Continuous		ICIS annual reports.
	2.1.5 Assist partners in ICIS use	Continuous		ICIS quarterly and annual reports.
Activity 3. Development of watershed management and conservation plans				
USAID SO 2: Increased use of environmentally sound and economically viable practices and technologies.				
USAID SO 3: Community role in natural resource management strengthened.				
3.1 Provide technical assistance in forest management and certification	3.1.1 Conduct workshops on forest management and certification	2005-2		Workshop reports.
	3.1.2 Conduct forest management and business administration workshops	2005-3		Report on data collection
	3.1.3 Conduct forest management and business administration workshops	2005-3		Workshop reports
	3.1.4 Gather information for land use zoning	2005-3		Land use map and report
	3.1.5 Develop forest conservation and management plans	2005-4		Communities' forest management and conservation plans
3.2 Develop forest conservation and management plans	3.2.1 Collect data for forest management plans	2005-3		Forest map and report
	3.2.2 Collect information for land use zoning proposals	2005-3		Land use map and report
	3.2.3 Develop forest conservation and management plans	2005-4		Forest conservation and management plans
3.3 Implement forest conservation and management plans	3.3.1 Monitoring and enforcement of land use practices	2006-2		Communities' Regulations report
	3.3.2 Elaboration of local fire management plans	2006-1		Fire management plans
	3.3.3 Implement certification process	2008-2		Certification of forest operations
	3.3.4 Restoration of forest cover	2008-2		ISIC annual reports

Major activities	Actions to support may include (what and who)	Year	If this year, quarter	Comments, verifiers and expected products
	3.3.5 Improve forest management practices for non-timber forest products	2008-2		ISIC annual reports
Activity 4. Strengthen local and institutional capacities				
USAID SO 2: Increased use of environmentally sound and economically viable practices and technologies.				
USAID SO 3: Community role in natural resource management strengthened.				
4.1 Formation of local sub-committees	4.1.1 Selection of community sites and local NGOs	2004	2	Contracts to develop communities' action plans
	4.1.2 Develop communities' action plans	2004	4	Communities' action plans
	4.1.3 Follow-up communities' action plans	Annually on 2Q starting 2005		Communities' action plans annual reports
4.2 Strengthening local community skills for forest management	4.2.1 Conduct participatory strategic planning processes at community level	2005-1		Minutes of meetings
	4.2.2 Identify skills needed for administrative support to forestry enterprises	2005-1		Minutes of meetings
	4.2.3 Training to address identified needs	2005-2		Course reports
4.3 Microenterprise creation	4.3.2 Assistance for microenterprise creation	2005-3		Microenterprises created
Activity 5. Environmental education, outreach and communications				
USAID SO 1: Enhance the national enabling environment for natural resource management.				
USAID SO 3: Community role in natural resource management strengthened.				
5.1 Formal education	5.1.1 Apply surveys to assess local knowledge of environment	2004	3	Survey report
	5.1.2 Develop educational activities and materials	2004	4	Educational materials
	5.1.3 Train teachers in use of educational materials	2005-2		Training course report
5.2 Informal education	5.2.1 Organize festivals for local communities to increase awareness of natural heritage	2005-2		Festival report
5.3 Design and implement campaign for voluntary payment of environmental services	5.3.1 Conduct survey	2004	3	Survey report
	5.3.2 Prepare campaign material	2004	3	Campaign material
	5.3.3 Implement campaign	2005-1		Campaign report
	5.3.4 Evaluate campaign	2005-4 2008-2		Campaign evaluation report
Activity 6. Monitoring and Evaluation				
USAID SO 1: Enhance the national enabling environment for natural resource management.				
USAID SO 3: Community role in natural resource management strengthened.				
6.1 Design M&E system	6.1.1 Preliminary design of an M&E system in collaboration with stakeholders	2005	1	Draft of M&E system
	6.1.2 Test M&E system	2005	2	M&E report
6.2 Implement M&E system	6.2.1 Conduct annual or bi-annual monitoring activities	Annually on 2Q starting 2005		M&E annual reports
	6.2.2 Report and communicate M&E results and updates to partners annually	Annually on 2Q starting 2005		M&E annual reports

4) Link to USAID's Strategic Objectives:

	PO: Improved management and conservation of natural resources in targeted watersheds.	IR1: Enhanced national enabling environment for natural resource management.	IR2: Increased use of environmentally sound and economically viable practices and technologies.	IR3: Community role in natural resource management strengthened.
Activity 1: Watershed Committee and Overall Planning Process	Improved watershed management through participatory planning actions overviewed by the Steering Committee (SC).	It is expected that the SC provides basis for the re-organization of the Basin Committee in the Conchos River Basin.		SC and subcommittees involved both at the basin and community level.
Activity 2: Integrated Conservation Information System (ICIS)	The ICIS will allow all stakeholders to monitor the current progress of their activities and support decision-making processes throughout the watershed.		Quantitative and qualitative tools will be disseminated in order to improve the natural resource management decisions taken at the watershed and community level.	
Activity 3: Watershed Conservation and Management Plan	An output of the SC and community planning and implementation processes is to create and validate natural resource management models for their dissemination and adaptation at the larger Conchos watershed scale.		The creation, testing and dissemination of natural resource management models at the watershed level will enhance decision making capacity in all the actors. Economic incentives for sustainable forest management will be created by linking landowners with markets.	The basis for this component is to improve natural resource management at the community level in order to create models for the larger watershed.
Activity 4: Strengthen Local and Institutional Capacity	Strengthening the capacity of local landowners will lead to improved natural resource management.	By providing training on forest certification, assistance to develop markets for products, and other capacities identified by local forest owners we will prove to them and other actors that environmentally sound practices are also economically viable.		Communities will be empowered through capacity building and through their participation in the SC.
Activity 5: Environmental Education and Communications	This component will strengthen community projects by fostering environmental awareness among young generations, it will also contribute to the dissemination of lessons learned and other project information.	The campaign for voluntary payment of environmental services will increase regional and national awareness about the importance of conservation in terms of environmental services.		The environmental education component will be focused on local communities, while the communications component will address different sectors of the population at the regional level, in order to convey information concerning project progress, lessons learned, etc.
Activity 6: Monitoring and Evaluation	The M&E system will provide information to evaluate progress of field activities and to document lessons learned.	M&E training within the SC and local communities will increase awareness about the transparency in sound decision making.		Local community members participating in the SC and subcommittees will receive M&E training.

5) Environmental impact assessment

There are no negative environmental impacts expected from any of the proposed activities or actions conducted by this program. This project focuses on local capacity building through planning and training for improved stewardship of natural resources.

Most of the work on the first year is related to participatory planning and building of the information system as well as constructing the basis for the environmental education and communication strategy. Monitoring and evaluation is an integral part of this project, allowing to keep track of changes induced by the activities implemented through this project.

Forest monitoring sites will be installed in the selected communities where field work will be conducted, and appropriate ecological variables will be measured to evaluate progress, such as forest and understory cover, water quality or soil erosion. Land cover information, obtained through remote sensors, will provide large-scale information on forest cover that will be ground-truthed and integrated into the ICIS. Water source inventories will be mapped and monitored throughout the project's life in order to generate information on rainfall-runoff relationships and their association to land cover. Integral Biological Indices will be used to account for the health of aquatic sites.

6) Budget for this year, including subgrants

Annual summary format

CATEGORY	YEAR 1
Personnel	72,239.48
Third party fees & expenses	19,100.00
Grants & agreements	74,700.00
Travel, meetings & workshops	20,210.00
Other direct costs	5,000.00
Equipment	0.00
Total direct costs	191,249.48
Indirect costs	32,703.66
Total usg costs	223,953.14
Total cost share	188,094.00
Total project costs	412,047.14

Subgrants for this year:

Grantee/Contractor	Amount	Deliverable	Start date	End date
CEDEC, SC	\$21,300.00	Steering Committee Action Plan	January 1, 2004	June 30, 2004
Profaua Saltillo	\$10,000.00	Complement Comm. Campaign	January 1, 2004	June 30, 2004
Profaua Chihuahua	\$20,000.00	ICIS	January 1, 2004	September 30, 2004
Fuerza Ambiental, AC	\$15,000.00	Community Action Plan	January 1, 2004	September 30, 2004
Mexico Norte, AC	\$15,000.00	Community Action Plan	January 1, 2004	September 30, 2004

7) Annexes

Annex 1. - Information on the organizations that will be directly involved in the program.

Organization	Members	Date of creation	Type	Contact (name, position, address, Tel./fax)	Main objective
1. Formation of a Steering Committee for watershed-level planning and activity follow-up					
CEDEC, S.C. (Consultores en Educación, Desarrollo y Capacitación, S.C.)	9	May 27, 2002	Consultant	Manuel Noriega Echeverría Director General Magdalena # 434 – 202 Colonia Del Valle, C.P. 03100 México, D.F. Tel. (55) 5543-3109 Fax.(55) 5543-3109 manuelnoriega@noriegacedec.com	Professional services and real and effective solutions for organizations committed with education as a link for human progress; the utilization, care and respect for natural resources for the well-being of the population and sustainable development promoting the equilibrium among men and the environment.
2. Integrated Conservation Information System					
Profauna, A.C. Chihuahua	6	March 8, 1999	Local environmental NGO	Dr. Alberto Lafón Terrazas Drector Estatal Calle 16 # 2604 Col. Pacífico 31030 Chihuahua, Chih. Tel./Fax (614) 415 43 43 profauna@ch.cablemas.com	Promote, induce, develop and elaborate operational plans that improve the coordination and collaboration between public and private sector in actions towards environmental conservation, improvement and restoration.
3. Watershed management and conservation plans					
Fuerza Ambiental, A.C.	5	June 20, 2000	Local environmental NGO	Agustín Bravo Gaxiola Director General Emilio Carranza # 910 Col. Centro 31000 Chihuahua, Chih. Tel. (614) 410 8179, 416 0861 info@fuerzaambiental.org	Strengthen communities and minority groups that search for community sustainable development and environmental protection.
Fundación para la conservación del Río Conchos A.C.	4	June 5, 1999	Local environmental NGO	Ing. Víctor Ortiz Franco Presidente del Consejo Directivo Suiza # 2723 Col. CTM 31130 Chihuahua, Chih. Tel. (614) 417 29 42 conchos@uach.mx	Promote actions towards the conservation, care and restoration of the natural resources of the Río Conchos.
Profauna, A.C. (Chihuahua)	6	March 8, 1999	Local environmental NGO	Dr. Alberto Lafón Terrazas Drector Estatal. Calle 16 # 2604 Col. Pacífico 31030 Chihuahua, Chih.	Promote, induce, develop and elaborate operational plans that improve the coordination and collaboration between public and private sector in actions towards environmental conservation, improvement and restoration.

Organization	Members	Date of creation	Type	Contact (name, position, address, Tel./fax)	Main objective
				Tel./Fax (614) 415 43 43 profauna@ch.cablemas.com	
4. Strengthen local and institutional capacities					
Fuerza Ambiental, A.C.	5	June 20, 2000	Local environmental NGO	Agustín Bravo Gaxiola Director General Emilio Carranza # 910 Col. Centro 31000 Chihuahua, Chih. Tel. (614) 410 8179, 416 0861 info@fuerzaambiental.org	Strengthen communities and minority groups in sustainable community development and environmental protection.
Fundación para la conservación del Río Conchos A.C.	4	June, 5, 1999	Local environmental NGO	Ing. Víctor Ortiz Franco Presidente del Consejo Directivo Suiza # 2723 Col. CTM 31130 Chihuahua, Chih. Tel. (614) 417 29 42 conchos@uach.mx	Promote, within its programs and activities, all actions towards the conservation, care and restoration of the natural resources of the Río Conchos.
Profauna, A.C. (Chihuahua)	6	March 8, 1999	Local environmental NGO	Dr. Alberto Lafón Terrazas Director Estatal. Calle 16 # 2604 Col. Pacífico 31030 Chihuahua, Chih. Tel/Fax (614) 415 43 43 profauna@ch.cablemas.com	Promote, induce, develop and elaborate operational plans that improve the coordination and collaboration between public and private sector in actions towards environmental conservation, improvement and restoration.
5. Environmental education and communications					
Profauna, A.C. (Coahuila)	6	October 5, 1988	National environmental NGO	Eglantina Canales Gutiérrez Directora General Juan Bautista Escorza # 383 Fracc. Urdiñola 25020 Saltillo, Coah. Tel. (844) 414-4840 Fax. (844) 412-5404 profauna@interclan.net.mx	Promote, induce, develop and elaborate operational plans that improve the coordination and collaboration between public and private sector in actions towards environmental conservation, improvement and restoration.
6. Monitoring and evaluation					
Profauna, A.C. (Chihuahua)	6	March 8, 1999	Local environmental NGO	Dr. Alberto Lafón T. Director Estatal. Calle 16 # 2604 Col. Pacífico 31030 Chihuahua, Chih. Tel/Fax (614) 415 43 43 profauna@ch.cablemas.com	Promote, induce, develop and elaborate operational plans that improve the coordination and collaboration between public and private sector in actions towards environmental conservation, improvement and restoration.