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Strategic Environmental and Natural Resources Planning

DESFIL

Development Strategies for Fragile Lands
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Strategic Environmental and Natural Resources Planning

Hypotheses, Case Studies, and Policy Conclusions from Latin America and the Caribbean

by

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FOREWORD

Development Strategies for Fragile Lands (DESFIL) is a centrally funded project of the Bureaus for Science and Technology and Latin America and the Caribbean, United States Agency for International Development. Strategic environmental and natural resources planning is perhaps the most fundamental purpose of the DESFIL Project.

This report is a synthesis of three long-term DESFIL projects in environmental and natural resources planning. Dr. Isabel Valencia, a frequent DESFIL consultant and former core staff member, has coordinated the National Environmental Program in Honduras since its inception in 1987. Dr. Sandra Russo is a permanent staff member of Tropical Research and Development and coordinated the Southeast Peninsula Planning Program through the two-year life of that project. Dr. Michael Hanrahan is a core DESFIL staff member and directed the Central America Regional Environmental and Natural Resources Planning Program from its inception in 1988 through initial project implementation in late 1989. Together, these three projects provide a wealth of experience from which DESFIL is able to synthesize hypotheses and policy conclusions applicable to any long-term strategic planning program. This represents a major contribution to fulfilling DESFIL's original goals.

The authors define a strategic plan as "a written statement which sets out a course of action and an allocation of resources to implement a policy," and suggest a general outline of a strategic plan. They argue that such plans can only bring about actions and influence policies if they are used to shape public debate, set priorities, coordinate the actions of diverse agencies and funding institutions, set common agendas, and provide for coordinated and concerted action. Pedagogy is also a common purpose of planning. The synthesis of the DESFIL experience in strategy preparation is that these outcomes of planning are determined by the way the plan is prepared. The contents of the plan, or what it may say, are, by contrast, less important than the process by which the plan is prepared.

ACRONYMS

AHE	Honduran Association of Ecology
EA	Environmental Assessment
ED	Environmental Department
ENR	Environment and Natural Resources
ENRM	Environmental and Natural Resources Management
DESFIL	Development Strategies for Fragile Lands
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GOH	Government of Honduras
GOSKN	Government of St. Kitts and Nevis
HED	Head of the Environmental Department
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
RDSS	Regional Development Strategy Statement
RENARM	Regional Natural Resource Management Program
ROCAP	Regional Office for Central American Programs
SECPLAN	Ministry of Planning and Budget
SEPCDB	Southeast Peninsula Conservation and Development Board
SEP	Southeast Peninsula

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The process involved in strategic planning for environmental and natural resources management (ENRM) has not received the attention it deserves. Our experience shows that iterative, participatory planning can have a significant impact on the efficacy of the resulting ENRM program(s). We define an environmental and natural resources management strategy as a written statement that sets out a course of action and an allocation of resources to implement a policy (McCaffrey and Webb, 1989).

We present definitions and purposes of planning and hypothesize that **the process or way in which strategic ENR plans and programs are formulated determines their impact** — hence the success of the planning. We use three case studies from Latin America and the Caribbean to illustrate different planning processes and the impact of the processes on national and regional ENRM programs.

The first case study, from St. Kitts and Nevis, deals with a land use planning and environmental management program to ensure that land development for tourism and high quality residential development occur in a timely and environmentally sound manner. On a larger scale, the second case study deals with the national environmental program of Honduras. At the regional level, the final case study examines the planning process behind A.I.D.'s Regional ENRM Strategy and the resulting RENARM Program. In the third and final section of this paper, we present our conclusions regarding the importance of the process involved in strategic ENRM planning, and offer suggestions as to the way such processes might be encouraged and carried out.

We equate impact with how aware intended users are of the existence and contents of these plans; whether the plans are recognized as important; whether their contents are understood; whether those who are supposed to use the plans agree with and accept what they say; and, hence, whether these plans are used to guide, in this case, resource use in development. This is true whether the plan is for content, pedagogy, a combination of the two, or some other reason. The process used can also have significant implications with respect to **cost, pedagogy,** and **speed** or **delay** in completing the plan.

RESULTS

In all three case studies, the participatory planning process has had continuing impact on program design and effectiveness as well as policy formulation. However, this process is lengthier and more costly than the procedures typically followed in ENRM strategic planning. An intentionally deliberate pace fully incorporated the constituents (the anticipated users of the plans) in the planning process. Painstaking processes encouraged participants to exchange the views and criteria of their respective institutions. This gave a vested interest to the crafters of the plans, who have now become their users.

A lengthy, iterative, participatory process contributes greatly to the awareness of problems associated with degrading ENR use. The process also helps planners to recognize the relevance of those problems to equity and growth and to accept the idea that care must be taken to ensure sustainable ENR

use. Thus, the planning process results in more complete plans whose rationale and content are better understood and therefore actively implemented by their users. Interests become entitlements, as the participant-users find themselves with a stake in implementing the results of their own planning efforts.

Pedagogy, often a fundamental development objective, is well served by participant planning. Throughout the process, participants are made more aware of the linkages between ENRM use and development assistance. In preparing ENRM plans, participants are forced to recognize the legitimate need to strengthen these linkages through technical policy changes, environmental analysis, and resource-using project activities. In human resource development, participants learn to compromise and cooperate through a constant barrage of meetings, workshops, consultations, plenary discussions, and review sessions. Quiet, patient, behind-the-scenes constituency building occurs during these types of planning activities. By working together with representatives from organizations with different agendas, participants learn to negotiate and reach consensus on ENRM plans. Thus, plans do not remain external consultant documents, but become internal working documents.

Participation of this type results in high-impact, extensively used plans that set boundaries on debate and priorities, coordinate agendas, and result in concerted action, especially in the programming of financial resources.

CHAPTER ONE

SETTING THE STAGE: DEFINITIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

The process involved in strategic planning for environmental and natural resources management (ENRM) has not received the attention it deserves. Iterative, participatory planning can have a significant impact on the efficacy of the resulting ENRM program(s). While those involved in ENRM often tend to focus on implementing plans or strategies through specific project activities, this paper encourages ENRM planners and practitioners to focus on the planning process. Our hypothesis is that the **process** by which strategic ENRM plans and programs are formulated determines their impact.

We use three case studies from Latin American and the Caribbean to illustrate different planning processes and the impact of processes on national and regional ENRM programs. The case studies come from St. Kitts, Honduras, and the Central America Region. Each exemplifies the efficacy of long-range, strategic ENRM planning processes.

ENRM planners and practitioners will both benefit from the case studies and conclusions in this paper. As is shown in the case studies, we advocate full participation by those who will be using or implementing the plan. Thus, this paper is directed toward policy decision-makers as well as the project staff in both governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

This paper is organized into three sections. First we present definitions and purposes of planning and suggest the way our hypothesis can contribute to more successful, strategic long-range ENRM planning. Second, we use three case studies to illustrate the planning process. The first case study, from St. Kitts and Nevis, deals with a land use planning and environmental management program whose goal is to ensure that land development for tourism and high quality residential development occur in a timely and environmentally sound manner. On a larger scale, the second case study deals with the national environmental program in Honduras. The final case study examines, at the regional level, the planning process behind the Regional ENRM Strategy of the U.S. Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) and the resulting RENARM (Regional Natural Resource Management) Program. In the final chapter of this paper, we present our conclusions regarding the importance of the process involved in strategic ENRM planning and offer suggestions as to the way such processes might be encouraged and carried out.

DEFINING STRATEGIC PLANS AND PROGRAMS

We define an environmental and natural resources management strategy as a written statement that sets out a course of action and an allocation of resources to implement a policy (McCaffrey and Webb, 1989). An example is the policy of A.I.D. to "support the achievement of broadly based, sustainable economic growth (through) encouraging the preservation and sustainable use of the natural resource base" (USDS Cable 144647, April 1990).

As distinct from a strategic plan, a project or program sets forth the tactics or specific activities intended to implement the plan. Thus, the policy defines a general desired outcome, a strategic plan

maps the broad actions needed to attain or realize the policy, and a program contains specific measures to implement the strategy.

To draw effectively from its parent policy and to stimulate the creation of programs with specific actions, a strategic plan must contain certain structural components. These structural components or statements are outlined as follows and are illustrated in each of the three case studies:

- Background, situation, and context;
- ENRM problems, with explicit priorities for them, and an argument as to why these are important in the context of growth and development;
- Constraints to the solution of these problems, again with priorities;
- Priority actions and areas for USAID intervention; and
- Recommended levels of development assistance, keyed to the action menu.

Purposes and Uses for Long-Range Strategic Plans

Among the many reasons why it is important to devise long-range strategic plans, content and pedagogy are in the forefront. Strategic plans can serve as valuable reference materials when they describe ENRM problems or review existing programs that address these problems through the integration of environmental and resources considerations into development actions.

In the process of putting together a strategic plan, technicians, administrators and policy makers not only learn in-depth about ENRM problems and programs, but they also receive training in the technical aspects of writing and group participation. The small groups, workshops, consultations, revisions, and compromise that accompany the participatory approach are all part of the process involved in generating a long-range strategic plan. Resulting from this process is a cadre of trained and environmentally aware technicians, administrators, and policy makers.

Aside from content and pedagogy, strategic plans also fulfill program requirements and are useful program guides for governments or donor agency personnel, either public, private, domestic, or international. When seeking funds for programs or policy support, strategic plans can serve to show long-term commitment and ensure development of sound program actions.

Outcome, Importance, and Impact

No matter how well prepared a strategic plan may be, it can only bring about program actions and influence policy if it is put to use. This means that everyone involved in preparing a long-range strategy must take action to ensure that the plan does not sit on a shelf, but rather stimulates program activities and formulates future policies.

Strategic plans have great potential, especially in sustainable environmental and natural resource management. Such plans can shape public debate, set priorities, coordinate the actions of diverse

agencies and funding institutions, set common agendas, and provide for coordinated and concerted action. However, this potential must be translated into action for the plan to be useful.

HYPOTHESIS

The previous paragraphs equate impact with use, and use with concerted action, coordinated agendas, agreement on priorities, and the setting of boundaries on debate. We propose that these are determined by all of the following:

- An **awareness** that the subject being addressed — in this case, ENRM in the context of development — is important, and the **recognition** that the subject is legitimate and significant;

- A **consensus** as to priority problems, constraints, and actions; **acceptance** of the actions and assistance advocated; and the **co-opting** of related issues, opinions, and positions under the common strategic plan;

- The **completeness** of the strategic plan: the many points of view should be subsumed in it, and hence it should be complete enough to be of **broad appeal**. Its contents and advocated actions should be **understood** by its constituency; and

- The extent that it succeeds in setting a **common agenda** and in coordinating actions to implement the policy.

Our **hypothesis**, illustrated by the case studies, **is that** the **process** or way in which strategic ENRM plans and programs are formulated **determines** their **impact**. In other words, the **impact** of the plan is determined by **how** it is prepared, as opposed to what it says or advocates, who it is done for, its purpose, or how it is intended to be used. This is true whether the plan is for content, pedagogy, a combination of the two, or some other reason. The process can also have significant implications with respect to **cost**, **pedagogy**, and **speed** or **delay** in completing the plan.

We agree with Bromley (1989) that the **process**, whereby interests become transformed into entitlements, is the essence of collective action and institutional change. Having a stake in the situation at hand — for whatever reason — increases the impact of the proposed policy. Reliance on cost-benefit analysis and economic efficiency arguments alone ignores the political realities of most policy-making situations. Clearly, the force of public attention and policy set the stage. When the topic addressed is current and buttressed by top-level policy pronouncements, the stage is set for the strategy to have an impact.

CHAPTER TWO

PLANNING THE USES OF THE SOUTHEAST PENINSULA, ST. KITTS CASE STUDY ONE

The Handbook for Developers, the Land Use Management Plan, a series of technical reports, and the early operations of the Southeast Peninsula Planning and Conservation Board of St. Kitts and Nevis are the subjects of this case study.

BACKGROUND

In 1983, St. Kitts-Nevis achieved independent statehood after more than 200 years of colonial rule by the Britain and France. The country is small, with (in 1980) a population of 44,400 and 269 square kilometers of land. In contrast to other Caribbean islands, St. Kitts has abundant fresh water, whose steady supply is assured by a rainforest that crowns several small mountains and an active volcano, all of which are protected from development. More than 23 percent of the island is forested, while almost half of the island's arable land is under agricultural production, primarily sugar. By contrast, the Southeast Peninsula (SEP) was essentially an inaccessible, undeveloped, and unoccupied area of the island with beautiful beaches, diverse landscapes, and spectacular Caribbean vistas. The peninsula is an attractive development site because of these physical features, but development required an access road. Since 1968, six or seven road and tourism development schemes for the SEP have been submitted to or commissioned by the government. In 1986, the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis (GOSKN) and USAID signed a SEP agreement designed to open up the SEP to planned physical and economic development. The project included supervision and construction of an access road, technical assistance to improve tax administration, and development and implementation of a land use and environmental management program.

The SEP land use planning and environmental management program is intended to ensure that land development for tourism and high-quality residential development occurs in a timely and environmentally sound manner. In 1985, an environmental assessment (EA) was carried out (IRF, 1985). It provided information essential to environmental and land use management. In the face of greatly intensified land use expected with SEP development, the EA heightened the awareness of GOSKN, USAID, and potential investors to the relationship between the environment and the type of development envisaged. Existing planning and environmental legislation, some of it extremely outdated, was not seen as adequate for the demands that would be made by upscale development. Legal revision and drafting of new legislation has been underway since.

A 1986 Land Use Management Plan (IRF, 1986) proposed the institutional framework required to support the optimal development of the SEP. This proposal included the creation of a Southeast Peninsula Conservation and Development Board (SEPCDB) and an associated Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) to implement planned land use, environmental management, and investment decisions. The board was established by law in 1986.

The Planning Program

The pristine character and extreme natural beauty of the SEP make it a prime target for development. Access difficulties had limited historic use of the SEP to salt and sugar production, and sporadic recreational use. The entire 4,000 acres are currently used by a handful of Kittians and tourists at one small resort hotel accessible only by shallow draft boats. Occasional recreational use by Kittians, Nevisians, and small numbers of tourists has had little impact on environmental amenities. However, further development will intensify impact in a potentially negative way. Easy road access and an avalanche of development interest have created an immediate need for land use and environmental management plans, and the institutional capacity to enforce them.

The purposes of the South East Peninsula Conservation and Planning Program are to:

- Provide support to the SEP Board in carrying out its functions for land use management;
- Implement the essential mitigation measures identified in the SEP Environmental Assessment and to establish the institutional framework for the subsequent implementation of its secondary recommendations;
- Train personnel in land use management and environmental protection;
- Analyze, describe, and inform on government policies regarding investment; and
- Streamline systems for approval of Peninsula-related investments (development and use of its resources).

These purposes were advanced by preparing a series of technical, financial, and institutional analyses,[1] preparing site-specific land use management plans and drawings, preparing a handbook for interested developers, and developing locally adapted procedures for environmental analysis. The capabilities of the SEP Board and Technical Analysis Unit in planning and zoning were developed by their participation in preparing the planning documents (learning by doing). An island-wide environmental education program conducted in schools, the media, and workshops sought to raise the awareness of the whole Kittian population as to the importance of preserving the natural amenities of the peninsula. The Development Strategies for Fragile Lands (DESFIL) project provided professional expatriate planners.

[1] These included analysis of and proposals for erosion control, sediment reduction, wildlife and endangered species management, beach and dune management, parks and recreation and related management, marine resource management, marina development, liquid and solid waste disposal, afforestation, finance and investment, training, and so forth.

In a larger sense, the program was intended to empower the SEP Board, GOSKN functionaries, and the Kittian public in planning and managing land use, and raise environmental awareness by providing the tools and knowledge to understand and deal with the demands and pressures put upon them as the SEP developed. The SEP Board and other planners had experience and some expertise with the issues, although they did not have the formal technical background and had rarely dealt with the intense pressure of big money developers. GOSKN did have the will and commitment to carry out a coordinated and well-planned development strategy for the SEP.

GOSKN and about 30 private individuals, companies, trusts, and partnerships own the peninsula. These owners and potential developers, and the government, are the constituency for the land use and environmental management plans. The people of St. Kitts and Nevis stand to gain or lose a great deal, depending on how development proceeds. The intent from the beginning has been to use the plans and the developing institutional capacity (an enabled and empowered board) to regulate the development that has already started.

The Plans

While upwards of two dozen planning documents have been drafted and presented for SEP consideration to date, the most critical of these are the Proposed Land Use Management Plan, the Handbook for Developers, the Financial Report, and the Tourism Report.

- The Proposed Land Use Management Plan (PLUMP) uses a series of maps to zone building sites, regulate heights and set-backs, protect site lines, zone waste disposal, regulate beach use, and detail general land use provisions.

- The Developers Handbook sets out proposed codes, details zoning restrictions, gives an overview of applicable government regulations and tax considerations, and otherwise condenses information and proposed rules relevant to interested developers.

- The Fiscal Impact report analyzes for the government the considerable potential tax and revenue gains, and the considerable costs the government will incur in promoting upscale development.

- An analysis of Conditions and Trends in Caribbean Tourism analyzes the market potential for the services and amenities GOSKN proposes to develop.

The board, using these planning documents, intends to establish rules and regulate SEP development. Its constituents are the interested developers who, by 1986, were already pressing to know what the zoning and development rules would be, and GOSKN, because Kittian government and society will be profoundly affected by the development sure to come.

THE PROCESS

The 1985 environmental analysis and the 1986 Land Use Management Plan were prepared to fulfill donor requirements permitting the loan and grant to GOSKN of foreign assistance funds. The SEP

Board was set up in 1986, but did not have its own office, regular staff, or regular meetings until around the time expatriate consultants began to arrive in 1987. Perhaps because the board and the plans made prior to 1987 were born of external pressure, and did not arise from internal Kittian political processes, the government was reluctant to provide the board real teeth to make or enforce zoning rules. A conservation law was enacted in 1987 but not signed until 1989. The ambiguous status and authority of the board prior to completion of the access road tended to dull its mandate. Nonetheless, even before 1986, intense, literally worldwide interest in "what the rules were going to be" continued to be manifested by potential developers.

In 1987, the SEP Planning Office (the original TAU) was set up with the assistance of DESFIL. The office was to be the focal point for all parties concerned with development of the SEP. An initial board staff of two professionals and one support person were to work with DESFIL, the board members, and the larger GOSKN community to design and prepare the necessary documents. The first external DESFIL consultant was a civil engineer by training who became heavily involved in monitoring the road construction, and not in the overall planning activities. As a result, the first outline for the Developer's Handbook was modeled entirely on a similar handbook for a city in the northeastern U.S. and was not useful in the context of St. Kitts.

After a change of staff, the planning and institution building started over, with the arrival of a full-time DESFIL planner and a Nevisian environmental education specialist also from DESFIL. A large number of external short-term consultants began preparing the technical resource management plans (later used in the PLUMP and Developer's Handbook), and the board acquired its own offices. All these events occurred in mid-1987. Because of the board's embryonic status and a lack of Kittian experience with multimillion dollar investments in tourism, recreation, and residential development, a large number of external consultants were required to provide the initial assessments needed for environmental and land use planning.

The unpaid board members were appointed from both government and private sources. Some board members were SEP landowners, one member owned two of the larger hotels on the island, others were businessmen, and some were government officials. A permanent Kittian board member was seconded by GOSKN from the Planning Division. He was a recent college graduate with training in geography and planning. These permanent Kittian-Nevisian staff were invaluable to the program.

The empowerment of the SEP Board began at about the same time as the external consultants prepared the key planning documents and the building of the access road intensified worldwide development interest in the peninsula. These same factors pushed GOSKN to take stands on thorny, multifaceted development questions, such as zoning and permit rules, whose financial and social consequences are enormous in the Kittian context.

Preparation of the development plans and the parallel empowerment of the board can be characterized as follows:

- The consultants would arrive to prepare either a technical analysis or one of the principal planning documents;

- They would meet with the cognizant GOSKN officials and prepare a draft document while still on the island;

- The consultants would leave while this document would receive initial scrutiny and comment from the board and the GOSKN;

- The consultant(s) would then return to incorporate the initial round of comments and reactions into a second draft; and

- The board and the TAU would then begin a lengthy and quiet process, continuing to the present time, of circulating this document to solicit further comment and review, build support, and seek consensus.

While these plans were not prepared initially by their ultimate constituents, the process required board, government, and developers to familiarize themselves with them. It required their analysis, comment, and input on all of the plans and proposed rules. It provided opportunity for modification and co-opting of diverse interests and points of view. Though still in "draft," these documents are being used daily as the SEP Board and GOSKN receive development proposals from interested developers. Meanwhile, a parallel environmental education program was carried out all over the island to raise public awareness about the natural resources of St. Kitts in general and the proposed activities on the SEP in particular.

Chronology

An abbreviated chronology of some of the more important events in the program is presented below.

- First Environmental Assessment and first Land Use Plan: 1985 - 1986. GOSKN and USAID sign agreement for the SEP Area Development Project. Tarmac access road construction begins.

- Establishment of Technical Assistance Unit and SEPCDB: 1986 - 1987. Both Kittian and expatriate staff are part of the TAU. An office is established. GOSKN establishes the board, consisting of Kittians from public and private sectors.

- Resource Management Plans completed: 1988 - 1989. A large team of consultants is fielded to develop the resource management plans needed by GOSKN for decision making about the SEP.

- First draft of Proposed Land Use Management Plan and the Developer's Handbook: 1989. Using the Resource Management Plans, the TAU, SEPCDB, and the outside consultants draft these two working documents. The Handbook and guidelines are subsequently approved by the SEPCDB.

- Review of environmental legislation: 1989. The environmental lawyer, working with the TAU, SEPCDB, and the Attorney General, reviews proposed legislation. The National Conservation and Environment Protection Act of 1987 is put into law in 1989.

- DESFIL involvement ends: 1989.

- Environmental education program initiated: 1988 - 1990. Includes workshops, training activities, town hall meetings, radio and TV shows, a newsletter, lectures, the formation of an environmental education working group, production of slide sets on marine and terrestrial ecology, and a video on preserving the SEP for future generations; the environmental education program provided high visibility to the SEP planning process.

- SEPCDB tours: 1988 - 1990. A series of tours for the board is implemented, including Barbados and the Florida Keys, to observe examples of good and bad tourism development.

Access by tarmac road became a reality in 1989. Pressure from interested developers had become intense. The SEP Board was embryonic, its permanent staff new. Impending and profound economic and social changes were clearly visible to all parties. Vested interests were high, while all sides agreed on the need for "quality" or top-end development.

These currents moved the SEP Board into the center of development regulation and coordination, and forced the GOSKN to become familiar with the proposals and ideas contained in the plans. It was probably unrealistic to expect the cognizant GOSKN functionaries to actually draft initial plans, given their capabilities and experience by 1987. However, the rapidly unfolding events served to establish the board's legitimacy, required it to assume the role of clearinghouse, and impelled it to shepherd the proposed plans through a review and modification process.

OUTCOME

DESFIL involvement ended in 1989, but the SEPCDB continues to function with one external advisor. The board and the 1989 law provide a framework for SEP development while the board continues to serve as advisor to the Minister of Planning.

Though they were willing to learn and participate, the board members were often overwhelmed by the highly technical information contained in many of the resource management plans. To assist the board in the learning process, the consultants, often highly educated professional planners, produced detailed technical reports, and then talked through the reports with the respective board members so that the board would understand the rationale and implications of all of the plans and documents. The consultants confined their attention largely to technical matters, but the board also dealt with political realities. It was essential that the consultants meet with the members of the board, both to explain their findings and to elicit information from the members.

As the road came closer to completion, interested developers turned in proposals for development with increasing frequency, causing the board to use the PLUMP and Handbook, in extensive consultation with public and private interests. One of the most useful educational experiences for all of the board members was touring other islands and resorts. The board came away from those experiences with a firm grasp of what they did, and did not, want to happen vis-a-vis development of the SEP.

Impact

At the present writing, the board and GOSKN continue the technical assistance in planning and environmental education. The SEP Board and its TAU office continue to function. The plans are used, and the board is the clearinghouse for interested developers, requesting clarification and modification of projects that do not follow the guidelines as set out by the Land Use Management Plan and Developers Handbook.

The quiet, patient, and behind-the-scenes building of a constituency for the plans allows for their modification, and serves to co-opt interests and build consensus and authority for them. This, in turn, mitigated the fear of both the board and the government that the plans, if formally codified, would become set in stone.

Visibility and awareness are high because of the stakes and pressure involved. Everyone on the island and all of the interested developers are aware that the development of the SEP is imminent, and that GOSKN is controlling its planning. As the developers flood the board with proposals, and the government is pushed to make decisions, the planning documents are used increasingly, and so have ceased to be external consultant documents and become internal Kittian working documents. It has been both inevitable and desirable that the plans have been modified and adapted with the press of events.

A good illustration of these assertions is provided by the board's gradual acceptance of the land use classification map.[2] On the map, land classified as unsuitable for the development of certain kinds of structures represents a large part of the SEP. Initially, the board reacted adversely to being barred, as they saw it, from building freely on the SEP. As the consultants and planners worked with the board and pointed out why building density on these lands was limited by steep slopes, soil types, waste disposal requirements, and other limits, the board finally agreed to the land use classifications (formally approved in June 1989).

Like the other case studies presented in this report, the highly participatory mode adopted was a major source of delay. By the time the board had approved and started to use the plans, the project (but not the program) was almost over. Any idea that reports would be produced and turned into functioning land use and environmental management plans immediately ignored political reality.

Given the Kittian context, the project and program may not have been able to achieve their intended purposes using a more direct approach. And given the uncertain status of the board and the powerful interests acting on the SEP, the planning process may have had more impact because it was developed and slowly institutionalized in this continuing way, which reflects Kittian political reality, and ultimately enables compromise between the need to preserve the original environmental amenities that impel development, the interests of the developers, and the ultimate paramount interests of Kittian society.

Still, GOSKN must make increasingly difficult, portentous policy decisions about economic development on the island, where to put the few trained staff, and how to acquire and allocate the considerable up-front financial resources needed as development occurs. Development of the SEP is going to occur with or without government input, due primarily to the sheer financial weight brought by

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[2] It classifies every acre on the SEP according to whether it is suitable for hotel, condominium, or single residential use; parks; or protected areas.

international developers. The board and GOSKN will have to stand firm, commit resources and people, and present the image of authority necessary to guide development on the SEP.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IN HONDURAS CASE STUDY TWO

This case study reviews the background and the preparation of the Honduras Environmental Profile, the Rio Sampile Pedagogic Case Study, and the National Environmental Management Plan for Honduras.

BACKGROUND

Approximately 80,000 hectares of forests are destroyed annually in Honduras by conversion to agriculture and pastures, forest fires, and disease. This represents a great loss in potential revenue for a country whose main economic activity has traditionally been based on the forest industry. The loss of forests is a causal factor of rural out-migration, increase of marginal urban populations, poverty, and social unrest. Until recent years, these and other aspects of natural resource management, such as protection of flora and fauna, water quality, and coastal resources, have been neglected by Honduran institutions and policy makers.

Since 1978, the Government of Honduras (GOH) has been attempting to include environmental and resource considerations in national development plans. The 1979-1983 plan, developed in cooperation with the United Nations Environmental Programme, was the first to include guidelines related to environmental protection. Subsequent five-year plans have also included these guidelines. The general nature of the guidelines, a lack of adequate infrastructure, and weak GOH institutions have largely precluded their implementation.

In 1982, the first Honduras Environmental Profile was prepared. It described the environmental characteristics and problems of the country, and presented a series of recommendations for action. The profile was developed by an external company. Although many host country professionals were consulted, the profile was produced in three months and written by an expatriate team without formal GOH institutional participation. While it is the only document to summarize the status of natural resources in Honduras and has been used extensively by Honduran professionals in a variety of settings, it has been found to contain many inaccuracies and omissions.

In the intervening eight years, the capacity of GOH institutions to monitor environmental change has greatly increased. There is much data to indicate that accelerating problems of environmental degradation in Honduras are resulting in serious economic impacts. The enormous cost to distribute clean water to Tegucigalpa, the problems around the reduced life span of the El Cajón Dam, and the diminishing agricultural productivity of the Southern Zone are examples. They will occupy the attention of Honduran policy makers and technicians for years to come (Honduras Environmental Profile, 1989).

The recognition that resource degradation is a major development problem and the institutional weaknesses that have prevented the implementation of existing guidelines indicated the need for strategic planning and institutional development. In 1988, the GOH through the Ministry of Planning and Budget

(SECPLAN) decided to develop a national institutional capability for environmental management. The agency chosen for this responsibility was SECPLAN's Territorial Planning Division. External technical assistance was provided, and DESFIL joined SECPLAN in discussions leading to the design of a national ENRM program. Its purposes were to:

- Enhance the institutional capacity of SECPLAN for environmental management, including coordination with other GOH institutions;
- Strengthen SECPLAN's Department of Environment;
- Contribute documentation needed for policy making — that is, the contents of the Profile and National Management Plan;
- Help define institutional guidelines regarding the sustainable use of natural resources; and
- Train a cadre of Honduran professionals capable of environmental analysis, aware of the implications of resource use in development, and able to propose mitigation and abatement measures.

The purposes were to be achieved through a series of activities requiring cooperation between SECPLAN's Territorial Planning Division and other GOH resource management institutions, and through the creation and support of an interinstitutional, multidisciplinary team of national professionals who would undertake all project activities with assistance from the expatriate DESFIL personnel.

An institutionalized capability for sustainable resource use in the design, implementation, and evaluation of development programs was the fundamental desired outcome. From the outset, the pedagogic purpose was explicit.

The Program

To achieve all five purposes at once, it was decided to update the 1982 Environmental Profile. The updated profile document would measure the status of natural resources and provide information for decision making. The updated profile would diagnose problems and constraints. Its resource-use recommendations could be translated into a strategy for action at the policy level and would serve as a set of guidelines to SECPLAN and other GOH institutions. The pedagogic purpose would be furthered through learning by doing, as the Honduran team updated the profile.

To contribute to the process, DESFIL conducted a series of seminars and workshops for a wide audience of Honduran government officials and technicians. Workshops were held on geographic information systems (GIS), environmental impact assessment, and land use classification systems. Visiting expatriate technicians presented informal seminars to SECPLAN on aspects of natural resource management, at SECPLAN's request. A four-day meeting of Honduran environmental educators was also organized to prepare a national strategy for environmental education and to promote the creation of a national environmental education network.

DESFIL conducted a field exercise in problem analysis in the Southern Zone of Honduras — the Rio Sampile Pedagogic Case Study. Examples of most environmental problems that affect Honduras as a whole are concentrated in this small area of geographic diversity and high population density.

From the beginning of the project, efforts were directed towards the formation of a national interinstitutional team, which would include professionals from all concerned GOH institutions and from collaborating NGOs, and would remain constant throughout the project. The intention was that this team would use the experience and information gained in the Environmental Profile, the case study, and the other activities to become uniquely qualified to prepare the National Environmental Management Plan, the ultimate written product of the program. At the conclusion, the team, or at least its individual members, would remain as a research and think tank for the GOH.

Although the intended uses of the profile and plan were to set the ENRM agenda and to guide ENRM use in the development of Honduras, pedagogy and the development of interinstitutional cooperation were equally important from the outset. Many of the individual professionals, and many of their institutions, had not worked together before. The large number of cooperating institutions joining together on a common task was unprecedented. The constituency was nothing less than Honduran society, as represented by its public institutions.

THE PROCESS

The process began when DESFIL was assigned to the Territorial Planning Division within the Ministry of Planning. DESFIL and the division began by jointly outlining a series of actions leading to the preparation of the profile, case study, management plan, and workshops. The whole program was then advertised throughout the Honduran government, in an attempt to acquire temporary staff on secondment, who were to become the interinstitutional working group.

With numerous delays occasioned by the normal functioning of the public sector, this group, over a period of two years at this writing, participated in the activities and prepared the documents that are the subject of this case. No DESFIL personnel remained permanently in Honduras and none are there now. Rather, a continuing series of short visits has been used to coordinate the work and reach consensus on subsequent actions. External consultants have been absent from Honduras for long periods, while Honduran personnel performed agreed-upon actions.

Methodology

Program development included the following activities:

- Preliminary Stage: July to October 1988.

  A series of planning sessions was held with the Territorial Planning Division to define program elements and their sequence and to select participating institutions and individuals. SECPLAN prepared letters inviting concerned institutions to second personnel part-time, or to designate an institutional representative to attend key events (workshops).

- Outline of the Environmental Profile: October 1988.

  Workshops on profile preparation and environmental impact assessment were held. Using the profile as a framework, the workshops showed the interrelation of environmental problems. The initial outline of the profile was determined by group consensus during the profile workshop. The national team was constituted and divided into 12 groups, each responsible for a profile chapter.

- Data gathering, chapter drafting, GIS workshop, and Life Zone Classification fieldwork: October 1988 to July 1989.

  Chapter teams compiled information needed for the profile, and wrote first drafts.

  A bi-level national Program Coordinating Committee was established at the request of SECPLAN.

  A DESFIL team reviewed the status of GIS technology and applications in Honduras, and presented a seminar to the profile team and other interested persons.

  A DESFIL team from the Tropical Science Center in Costa Rica presented a field training shortcourse to a group of Honduran technicians. The group formed a commission to promote the completion of a Life Zone map for Honduras.

- Review, revise, and edit the draft Profile: January 1989 to March 1990.

  DESFIL chapter advisors visited Honduras to assist the national team in revising chapter drafts. Initial drafts were gathered by the editor in January 1989. In April, the editor spent two weeks in Honduras compiling missing information. Information and corrections continued to be delivered to the DESFIL editors by the national team until January 1990. The 300-page, 10-page profile was published in the United States in Spanish in March 1990. A 50-page English summary was in draft in September 1990.

- Rio Sampile Pedagogic Case Study: March to June 1989.

  The Rio Sampile watershed was selected for study in March 1989. In May 1989, a team of 15 national and four DESFIL professionals reviewed available information, conducted interviews and field visits, and prepared land use maps and a draft report of findings and recommendations.

- Workshop for Environmental Educators: August 1989.

  A first-ever meeting of environmental educators in Honduras was conducted, with participation from all interested national sectors. SECPLAN and the Honduran Association of Ecology (AHE), a local NGO, organized the event.

  The participants reviewed educational materials and attended presentations on environmental education activities currently going on in Honduras and other Latin American countries. Workshop participants drafted a National Strategy for Environmental Education. The meeting provided a setting for the Ministry of Education

to interact with other GOH institutions involved in environmental management, local NGOs, and the Honduras Peace Corps. The Vice-Minister of Education attended the closing ceremonies, and declared 1990-2000 the Decade of Environmental Education in Honduras.

- The National Environmental Management Plan: December 1989 to date.

  A first workshop was held for the national team to discuss the recommendations presented in the Environmental Profile, and to outline policy, regulatory, and institutional actions related to the profile's recommendations.

- A second workshop will be conducted in mid-1990, to complete the strategy and initiate diffusion of the priorities signaled by the profile and plan to decision makers at the national, regional, and local levels.

Participation and Users

The whole effort has been coordinated by SECPLAN's Environmental Department (ED). The DESFIL Coordinator and the Head of the ED (HED) shared authority and responsibility for the project. It was understood that SECPLAN's HED would coordinate the national team, the DESFIL coordinator would manage the DESFIL personnel, and joint decisions would be made regarding the scheduling of activities, participation, methodology, quality of products, and so forth. This arrangement, although plagued with pitfalls, proved highly successful in the long run, as experience taught each side what were reasonable expectations regarding performance.

Approximately 150 Honduran professionals gathered information and wrote the profile. Over 100 professionals, from 23 GOH institutions, took part in the profile workshops. Fifty are listed as profile authors, 115 as collaborators. Sixty Hondurans participated in the environmental education encounter. Fifteen Hondurans participated with six expatriates in the Southern Zone case study. The National Plan is still in progress. The whole program has had involvement at ministerial level; several vice-ministers have participated in workshops, and the President of Honduras is expected to read a statement based on the National Plan document at a public ceremony.

By design, those planning the National Environmental Management Program and its ultimate constituents have not been separate groups. The scientists and professionals who participated in the workshops and the 1990 profile also function as its audience, using the results as information becomes available. Their understanding of the complex and extensive interrelationships between environmental problems grows. They also form part of the larger audience of Honduran decision makers and the general public. Those carrying out the program are an interinstitutional, multidisciplinary team of Hondurans, now empowered to undertake environmental analysis.

OUTCOME

The profile contains 12 chapters, each on an individual subject, and 346 pages. It describes and analyzes the availability and quality of natural resources, as well as related urban problems. A series of recommendations are made under each chapter. The interested reader is referred to the executive summary of the profile.

Because the purposes of the national ENRM program concentrate on human and institutional development, and because the profile was so recently published (the Rio Sampile Case Study and the National Plan are still in draft), the more important effects at this writing have been in human and institutional development.

Pedagogic Impacts: Human and Institutional Development

SECPLAN could not function as an island in the Honduran government. To implement a program of this nature, which involves many other institutions, SECPLAN first had to enjoy the credibility and then the cooperation of at least some of these other institutions. Without this network, a plan would not be implemented. Therefore, the first task at hand was to involve, on an equal footing, as many as possible of these other agencies, so that the program was felt to belong to all of them.

To cooperate in this way, SECPLAN issued invitations through the ministry to other institutions, conducted a series of visits to the heads of relevant institutions, and used many channels to elicit interinstitutional collaboration. In addition, a local NGO was contracted for production of one chapter of the profile and for the logistic arrangements of the environmental education workshop.

The original estimated timeframe for the ENRM program greatly underestimated the time actually required. The highly participatory mode was largely responsible for the delays. Institution building required time for training and experiential demonstrations, and additional time for these activities to result in awareness and action from the institutions and professionals involved.

Honadle and Van Sant (1985) studied 27 integrated rural development programs and found that projects tend to reflect the organizational structures and problems of their host institutions. This was true in the Honduras Program. SECPLAN is a young institution, plagued by many of the problems exhibited by bureaucratic institutions in Latin America and elsewhere (DESFIL, 1987). Its influence is limited, while its empowerment was a project goal. These factors caused additional delay and limited SECPLAN's capacity to influence other institutions and manage the local effort.

GOH professionals seconded from other institutions to the program received no extra salary and only limited per diem for field exercises. Often, they were also expected to perform their normal duties in their home institutions. This created workload conflicts, friction with the electoral process which took place during 1989, and resentment of some institutions and individuals who refused to cooperate if additional salary was not provided. Even the ED personnel were often unable to deliver on schedule, because of the press of their other duties. The ability of SECPLAN and DESFIL to enforce agreed deadlines was limited at best. However, the whole process is normal in the GOH way of doing projects and realistic in that context.

At first, the profile chapter groups did not interact among themselves as much as desired. Chapter coordinators had infrequent meetings. Groups worked in relative isolation. This has started to improve in the preparation of the National Plan, where synthesis and the assignment of priorities have underscored a larger awareness of the complex interdependencies in sustainable resource use. Outside the team, the large number of professionals (around 250) participating in the meetings, field exercises, and workshops resulted in very high visibility for the project. Even conflict publicized the project and created expectations about it.

Understanding of the problems, causes, and consequences of resource degradation has gradually increased as the program evolves. Working initially in isolation limited understanding, and delayed the creation of an empowered national environmental analysis capability — that is, a think tank or interinstitutional team of government professionals. The increase in awareness of the degradation problem, the understanding of its causes and its consequences, the ability to analyze and assign priorities, and the attempt to set a consensus action agenda defined and coordinated by Hondurans are of major importance.

The finished profile will undoubtedly be widely used — an outcome assured by the manner in which it was prepared. The National Plan is forcing a pragmatic definition of goals, and a prioritization of objectives. As limited resources force choices, the team is acquiring a more complex understanding of ENRM problems and realistic corrective actions.

Original mistrust and isolation have gradually evolved towards a much improved working relationship between DESFIL, SECPLAN, and the other participating GOH institutions. They have become partners in a process that includes more reasonable expectations and acceptance of limitations. SECPLAN no longer attempts to impose its will on the other institutions, which had reduced cooperation. SECPLAN now relies more on the expertise of its partners. In turn, this secures cooperation and co-opts points of view. Assurance of wide authorship of the profile and careful attention to providing visibility to the cooperating institutions and professionals have helped considerably to reduce initial tensions and create a team spirit.

The view of DESFIL's role has gradually modified. Initially, DESFIL was viewed by SECPLAN as its advisor but also as a consultant responsible for the end product. The inherent conflict between these roles was not evident to SECPLAN and was the subject of a number of fruitless discussions. As the project advanced and several instances of unilateral planning resulted in failure to advance project purposes, increased managerial participation of DESFIL was requested by SECPLAN. The present cooperative mode has improved the planning documents and allowed for distribution of specific responsibilities between all participants.

Events Since March 1990

The profile is already in use by scientists, teachers, and trainers. Numerous requests for it were received long before its publication, and 2,500 copies have been distributed to national, regional, and local government offices, libraries, environmental education groups, and interested individuals. Peace Corps expects to use the profile in the training of volunteers, who will use it as a teaching tool at the local community level. The program has undoubtedly helped to strengthen the networks within institutions of the GOH, and between these and NGOs. It has contributed greatly to the existing information base, and to the discussion of policy alternatives.

These efforts have been newly reinforced by the democratic election of President Leonardo Callejas, who has made the preservation of the natural resource base the fourth most important topic of his agenda. The president has named an Environmental Committee consisting of officials from concerned institutions and headed by a competent individual with ministerial rank who reports directly to him. Without doubt the GOH professionals who participated in the profile and National Plan will use both as tools, and are a more effective team because of the networks created during the program.

President Callejas will be considering a series of recommendations based on a special report prepared for his use by SECPLAN with DESFIL assistance. The special report, *A Basis for the Environmental Strategy*, describes the critical environmental problems and the proposed actions for their improvement — the strategy proposes the creation of permanent interdisciplinary teams in GOH institutions, the training of personnel in environmental sciences and policy, and the active promotion of dialogue and joint responsibility as resources are used in development.

DESFIL has produced an executive summary of the 300-page profile. The National Environmental Management Plan and the Rio Sampile Pedagogic Case Study are to be published later in 1990. A future phase of the ENRM program is expected to include the preparation of a series of interpretive and interactive chapter modules for use by national, regional, and local decision makers. A future training-of-trainers phase would cover successive levels of transfer of information, from central to local officials.

CHAPTER FOUR

STRATEGIC, LONG-RANGE INTRAINSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES PLANNING IN CENTRAL AMERICA
CASE STUDY THREE

This case study examines the process involved in designing an environmental and natural resources planning strategy and creating a program to implement that strategy. This study shows that, although this particular type of planning process required greater time, personnel and financial investments, it resulted in a more complete, well-accepted, and effective program.

The strategy discussed here is "Environmental and Natural Resource Management in Central America — A Strategy For A.I.D. Assistance" (referred to as the A.I.D. Strategy). The program in this case study is the RENARM Program, an ongoing regional A.I.D program designed to carry out the A.I.D. Strategy.

BACKGROUND

The nations of Central America[1] are all facing accelerating destruction of their natural resources. This environmental destruction has been well documented in seven individual Central America country profiles, a landmark regional profile, and numerous scientific and social writings (Leonard; Daughtery et al.; EMTECSA de C.V.; Universidad Rafael Landivar; Campanella et al.; Hilty; ISTI; Tschinkel and Zadroga). Agricultural and rural development programs designed to generate income for poor rural communities, stimulate national income growth, and encourage export-based industry have all been undermined by this environmental destruction. The successes that have occurred in such programs came about at significant environmental costs and dramatic decreases in productivity. As productivity fell, so did the forests, accompanied by lost biological diversity, eroded soil, coastal resources destruction, watershed degradation, and pesticide contamination. Development assistance agencies and national governments began to realize that long-term economic growth requires nondegrading natural resource use.

Biophysical, economic, and social similarities among the Central American nations allow these environmental and development problems to be addressed at the regional level. Thus, as opposed to national or bilateral solutions, it may be more effective to combine resources and experiences in region-wide programs.

Poor coordination among institutions has contributed greatly to resource degradation. Not only has there been a proliferation of institutions involved in resource management combined with a consequent dilution of authority among the many involved, but these institutions were often acting at cross-purposes. The result was that the actions and policies of some institutions fostered resource degradation, while others sought sustainable environmental natural resource management. Efforts to

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[1] Central America is defined to include the seven countries from Panama to Belize.

manage natural resources have been further complicated by a lack of long-term program continuity and an absence of political or institutional will (Hanrahan, 1987). These difficulties are often viewed as interinstitutional, and yet they may also occur internally in large, complex institutions.

In the case of A.I.D. in Central America, for example, there are over 10 actors on the natural resource management stage. A.I.D. has seven bilateral missions, one Regional Office for Central American Programs (ROCAP), and at least three Washington-based Bureaus with natural resource management interests in Central America. Each of these actors may have different views and agendas concerning the significance of resource degradation within the development assistance context. Other obstacles to their coordination include differences in program continuity, the allocation of development resources, policies, procedures, and priorities. Thus, by late 1987, A.I.D. programs in Central America were characterized by institutional constraints accompanied by resource degradation for the sake of income growth and social development.

The Strategy and Program

To address these institutional weaknesses of the one regional and seven bilateral USAID missions while recognizing the importance of natural resources in the economic and social development of the region, coordinated action and sustained political will towards a common agenda were needed. This common agenda took the form of the A.I.D. Strategy, which sets forth the global plan of A.I.D. for environmental and natural resources use in Central America; the RENARM Program followed, to implement the regional dimensions of the strategy.

The purpose of the A.I.D. Strategy is twofold. First, the strategy had to establish boundaries and rationale for A.I.D.'s Central American efforts. Second, it had to set forth a 10-year framework for environmental and natural resources management in the design, justification, and implementation of related programs.[2]

To implement this strategy, the RENARM Program (Regional Natural Resource Management Program) was designed with the goal "to produce, with the citizens of Central American countries, the conditions for sustained exploitation of natural resources in a manner that minimizes the damage to the environment, protects bio-diversity, and provides the means for equitable and sustainable economic growth."

To achieve this goal, the RENARM Program put forth the following objectives. To:

- Develop and strengthen environmental and natural resource NGOs (both international and Central American);

- Develop and strengthen regional research, training, and outreach institutions in the ENRM programs of these organizations;

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[2] The contents of the strategy and program are discussed in more detail on pages 27-28.

- Provide regional technical services in the areas of pest and pesticide management, forestry, environmental analysis, and policy analysis;

- Increase interaction, cooperation, and reciprocal support with the ENRM actions of the region's bilateral missions; and

- Increase interaction and cooperation with the regional ENRM actions of other donors, and with the region's seven national governments.

Together, the A.I.D. Strategy and the RENARM Program define and take action on the agenda for environmental and resources use within the context of economic growth and social development in Central America through the year 2000. The constituency of the strategy and the program were Central American USAID actors and the institutions and people with whom USAID works in its development endeavors.

THE PROCESS

This section outlines the process and institutions involved in creating and forming the A.I.D. Strategy and RENARM Program. In so doing, this section also shows the impact of public and intrainstitutional policy in defining the strategy and the program.

The basis for both the strategy and the program began in U.S. law and proceeded through U.S. government and A.I.D. policy, finally culminating in a Latin America Bureau directive. The specific steps in this process are listed below.

1. The Foreign Assistance Act of the United States (1961, as amended), requires the conservation of tropical forests (Section 118, amended 1986), of biological diversity (Section 119, 1986), and systematic environmental review of A.I.D. activities, including the examination of alternatives and the inclusion of specific mitigating measures (Regulation 16, 22 CFR Part 216).

2. In 1985, the Kissinger Commission on Central America highlighted the importance of agricultural development and its dependency on the sustainable long-term use of natural resources, shifting development policy to a new approach linking these two factors.

3. The 1988 USAID-BIFAD Task Force Report "Environment And Natural Resources - Strategies For Sustainable Agriculture," put the weight of the U.S. Land Grant academic community behind this approach to development by stating: "The Task Force encourages USAID to incorporate environment and natural resource considerations into all agriculture and rural development projects." (BIFAD, 1988).

4. The 1988 USAID Policy Paper, "Environment and Natural Resources," stated Agency policy as follows: "The Agency's central environmental objective is to promote environmentally sound, long-term economic growth by assisting developing countries to conserve and protect the environment and manage their exploited resources for sustainable yields" (USAID-PPC, 1988).

5. Finally, in approving ROCAP's 1987-1992 strategic plan,[3] the Latin America Bureau specifically directed ROCAP to take the lead in addressing the problems of environmental and resource management and use as these affect Central American development.

These and other Agency-level pronouncements show the force of public and intrainstitutional policy in determining the development and acceptance of the Central America Strategy and RENARM Program. They have been a driving impetus for a new level of concerted action, and for new, coordinated programs by A.I.D. in the region.

Methodology

The year-long, iterative process leading to the Central America A.I.D. Strategy and the RENARM Program first involved extensive discussions and consultations, followed by the drafting and redrafting of the strategy and program documents. Subsequent extensive review (including formal workshops, informal round table discussions, office meetings, and reworking of written drafts) was followed by additional consultations and drafting. The actual writing process started in May 1988 and continued beyond formal Latin America Bureau approval, in August 1989, of the RENARM Program.

Some of the events that took place during this process are highlighted here.

- Conference: April 1988, in Antigua, Guatemala. Through plenary discussions and working groups, the participants focused on prioritizing the region's ENRM problems. They then defined the constraints to solving these problems and recommended actions. Representatives of four centrally funded projects (in the theme areas of fragile lands, forestry, agricultural policy, and environmental management) attended the conference along with representatives from two Washington Bureaus, five bilateral USAID Central American missions, and ROCAP. All were represented by their chief Rural Development Officers, Deputy Mission Directors, or Mission Directors. Participants concluded the conference by stating explicitly the need for an ENRM strategy for Central America.

- Reporting cable: May 1988. The 15-page cable summarized conference discussions. Regional technical advisors drafted the cable, which went to six missions and three Washington Bureaus, proposing the broad elements of a regional program and inviting comments.

- Technical assistance agreement concluded: July 1988. ROCAP concluded an agreement with the DESFIL project for assistance in preparing the strategy and the planning documents relating to the RENARM Program, and for the organization of a series of related meetings.

- Iterative drafting of A.I.D. strategy: June - November 1988. This involved at least three small workshops and 15 persons, including USAID staff and technical consultants.

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[3] The 1987-1992 Regional Development Strategy Statement, RDSS.

- Second regional meeting: October 1988. The chief Agricultural and Rural Development Officers of the six USAID missions then active in Central America attended this meeting. They discussed the ideas in the draft strategy and the outline of the RENARM Program.

- Formal review and approval: November 1988. The five bilateral USAID Central America Missions reviewed the final strategy drafts, leading to formal approval.

Using the A.I.D. Strategy as a basis, work then began on the RENARM Program:

- Internal review: December 1988. Three ROCAP office chiefs, the regional technical advisors, and consultants participated in a two-day review of a draft document outlining the RENARM Program.

- Formal review and approval: February 1989. The Assistant Administrator for Latin America identified the scope and structure of the RENARM through a formal review and approval in Washington of the RENARM Program document.

- Background papers and think pieces: February - May 1989. A set of background papers and think pieces was prepared on the components of the RENARM Program.

- Workshops: April and May 1989. Two 2-day workshops were held to propose final content for the RENARM Program, and to solicit final comment and input. Representatives of 20 international and Central American NGOs attended the first workshop while representatives of the region's bilateral missions and Washington bureaus attended the second.

- Preparation of appendices: June and July 1989. Each bilateral mission then prepared appendices for the RENARM Program document, defining USAID and other national actions in each country. They also defined how these would relate to the proposed regional actions of the RENARM Program, and how the three (USAID, national, and RENARM regional actions) would complement and reinforce each other.

- Final review and approval: July - August 1989. The Assistant Administrator for Latin America held a final internal review, and formally reviewed and approved the RENARM Program Paper, which defined the 10-year scope and structure of RENARM.

This type of participatory collaboration in defining and implementing the strategy and program s expected to continue at least through 1995.

Participation and Users

This process involved many institutions and personnel. All of those listed here actively participated in the creation and formation of the A.I.D. Strategy and the RENARM Program document:

- All the Chiefs from USAID Central America Agriculture and Rural Development Offices;

- Personnel from Program, Project Development, and Director's Offices in all seven missions;
- Staff from the A.I.D. Washington Bureaus for Latin America, Program and Policy Coordination, and Science and Technology;
- Approximately 60 representatives from over 20 Central American and international NGOs;
- The directors and staff from CATIE and Zamorano;
- Staff from INCAE, ESNACIFOR, and IICA; and
- Project officers, directors, and other staff from nine centrally funded or Central American regional USAID projects.

In addition, the RENARM Program agenda has been discussed with representatives of large international foundations (Tinker, MacArthur, and others), and of 11 non-USAID donors active in Central America.

Throughout this process, some 250 persons either delivered oral argument or commented in writing on written drafts, and 60 persons wrote parts of the A.I.D. Strategy or RENARM Program documents.

This process fully incorporated the constituents and anticipated implementers of the strategy and the RENARM Program. It encouraged people to exchange viewpoints and mesh together their respective institutions' criteria. This gave a vested interest to the crafters of the A.I.D. Strategy and the RENARM Program since the group participating in writing the documents would also be setting and implementing the regional agenda.

By widely involving non-ROCAP personnel through the lengthy iterative discussions and writing sessions, the process forced participants and their respective institutions to recognize ENRM problems throughout the region. In working on the A.I.D. Strategy and the RENARM Program documents, participants had to come to terms of consensus on environmental and natural resource management problems and set a common agenda towards resolving these problems. Ongoing and proposed development assistance programs, funding levels, and the incorporation of the strategy agenda into the programs of USAID bureaus and missions other than ROCAP, as well as the programs of other national and international agencies, are all evidence of the success of this process in bringing ENRM to the forefront in development assistance.

OUTCOME

The Agenda

Now that the process involved in creating and refining the A.I.D. Strategy and the RENARM Program document has been outlined, it is important to see the complementarity in agendas of these two

documents. This section outlines the similarity in constraints and priority action areas of the strategy and the RENARM Program document, and considers this to be evidence of the success of the long, iterative process involved in creating these two documents. Since the RENARM Program was designed to implement the A.I.D. Strategy, the process described above would be successful only if RENARM does just that. This section shows that the process has so far proven to be successful.

Constraints

The A.I.D. Strategy For Environmental And Natural Resource Management In Central America identifies the following four broad constraints to remedial action:[4] (1) inappropriate, inadequate, or missing ENRM **policies** in the region; (2) **institutional** limitations; (3) **cultural and social** forces; and (4) **inappropriate or destructive technologies**. As elaborated in the strategy, these

> collectively limit the scope of action to protect the natural resource base of Central America. They intertwine at many levels, reinforce each other, limiting success of single-focused efforts. AID-supported programs must address, either directly or through a set of interrelated actions, all four constraints.

Priorities

To attack these, the A.I.D Strategy recommends the following priority areas for development assistance:

- Sustainable agriculture, including programs in soil conservation, watershed management, natural forest management, farm forestry, and pest and pesticide management;
- Wildlands management and the protection of biological diversity;
- Policy reform and formulation, and the application of benign ENRM policies;
- Institution strengthening, including both public and NGOs; and
- Environmental education and raising of public awareness of ENRM.

The strategic goal of this agenda for development assistance is

> to produce, with the citizens of Central America, the conditions for sustained exploitation of natural resources in a manner that minimizes the damage to the environment, protects biodiversity, and provides the means for equitable and sustainable economic growth.

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[4] Actions designed to remedy the problems are discussed under the heading "Context," pages one and two of this case study.

Finally, the strategy sets out a series of actions to be taken by A.I.D., reviews current levels of development assistance in the priority areas, and proposes that development assistance in these areas range between a low target of US$ 400 million and a high target of US$ 650 million, to the year 2000.

The RENARM Program, based on the priority areas set forth by the strategy, has the following strategic goals. To:

- Support natural resources policy initiatives, and provide technical assistance primarily to missions for environmental analysis, pest and pesticide management, forestry, and policy;
- Strengthen international and regional NGOs through support for their programs in long-range ENRM strategic planning, raise regional environmental awareness and education, encourage environmental specialist training and research, expand and strengthen regional wildlands or natural areas management, and improve conservation information availability and use; and
- Support sustainable agriculture and forestry by strengthening regional institutions and their research, training, and outreach programs in watershed management, production from natural forests, farm forestry, and plant protection.

Events Since September 1989

The A.I.D. Strategy and RENARM Program were approved by A.I.D. for 10 years in September 1989. ROCAP has the approval to commit as much as $83 million to this program. Specifically, ROCAP has the authority to spend as much as $43 million over the 1989-1994 period, and $5.3 million during fiscal 1989-1990. As much as $15 million in private sector funds will match ROCAP's expenditures. Bilateral missions are encouraged to develop national programs that extend, complement, and interface with the A.I.D. Strategy and the RENARM Program. The program also includes specific provisions for support and cooperation with the programs of other development assistance agencies (multilateral development banks and the development assistance agencies of non-U.S. governments).

Bilateral mission actions in support of the strategy and programs since September 1989 are listed below.

Panama	Proposed resumption of ENRM activities interrupted by political events — specifically, a major new nationwide watershed management initiative.
Costa Rica	Implemented a parks and wildlands management program that simultaneously strengthens private sector organizations dedicated to this purpose; designed a nationwide watershed management project; updated the 1985 National Resource Management Strategy.
Honduras	Implemented a nationwide land use management program; planned an environmental and natural resources policy project.

El Salvador	Designed a national strategy for natural resource management.
Guatemala	Funded a geographic information system. Funded a policy analysis program. Supported the National Forestry Initiative and led the Tropical Forestry Action Plan; planned the Maya Biosphere Reserve.
Belize	Developed nature-based tourism (coastal zones and tropical forests).

Bilateral USAID resources obligated to these and similar initiatives are likely to exceed $200 million over the 1989-1995 period. Funding from private and non-USAID public donors is expected to be at least that amount.

Impact

Ample precedent exists for long-range strategic planning by very different processes. For example, strategies and programs can be prepared internally by small groups, and not approved at bureau or regional levels. Programs such as RENARM are frequently prepared by a team of external technical consultants, with limited consultation of intended users or constituents, and little writing by persons outside the consultant group. The advantages to this approach are faster speed, lower cost (at least on the front end), and less revising and rewriting. These advantages are important to the normal operations of A.I.D. as well as other assistance agencies.

By contrast, the A.I.D. Strategy and the RENARM Program seek to make a difference in resource use, and to mitigate, if not overcome, the institutional constraints outlined earlier. For both of these to occur, the strategy and the RENARM Program needed to define an accepted common agenda that would be implemented with enthusiasm. With this in hand, the missions can have a significant impact in attacking the ENRM constraints to regional income growth. Commitment of resources to the common agenda by non-ROCAP institutions, especially the bilateral missions, and by the heightened awareness and acceptance of the problems they define, all attest to this impact.

In preparing the A.I.D. Strategy, the drafting process also led to a heightened awareness within A.I.D. of the significance and relevance of ENRM to the long-term development assistance objectives of equity and growth.

The constant barrage of meetings, workshops, consultations, drafts, reviews, and revisions led to a broad consensus on the problem and the solutions proposed for it. The process of consultation and revision also led to a more complete strategic plan, and this in turn made it appealing to a large cross-section of field and Washington-based USAID staff, both technical and administrative.

Finally, the completeness of the strategy, and the consensus that has developed around it, make its use likely: its agenda already appears to have become common among the more than 10 internal USAID actors in Central American ENRM. As the A.I.D. Strategy advocates large amounts of development assistance to be programmed on a common agenda, it promises to buttress major future resource management programs that will be proposed for the region.

On the negative side, the cost of this process was several times more than the cost of normal program development, and the process took a great deal more time. Since production of this kind of a strategy is outside the usual A.I.D. program development process, the process may also be questioned on these grounds.[5]

In the case of the A.I.D. Central America ENRM Strategy and RENARM Program, the planning process, although more expensive and lengthier than normal, resulted in a strategy and a program based on consensus and cooperation; also, it defined a standard ENRM agenda for the region. True, the process had greater costs, significant delays, extensive reviews, and cumbersome numbers of people and institutions. However, it was successful in raising awareness of the ENRM program, recognizing the legitimacy of ENRM in development assistance, and encouraging inter- and intra-institutional interaction. The RENARM Program events since 1989 attest to the efficacy of this planning process.

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[5] A normal program development cycle in USAID may be described as follows: Country Development Strategy Statement, followed by Action Plan, followed by Concept Paper, followed by Project Implementation Document, followed by Project Paper, followed by project. A long-range strategic plan based around a theme, such as Natural Resources or Agriculture, is not a part of this cycle.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

RESULTS

The Saint Kitts - Nevis South East Peninsula Conservation and Development Program has built GOSKN capability to guide and regulate top-end tourism and recreational development. Its constituencies are the development ministries of GOSKN and the investors who will develop the SEP. After initial drafting by professional expatriate planners, GOSKN, at ministerial and staff levels, and the peninsula's developers have internalized the planning process. They continue to define, modify, and adapt these plans, now in daily use.

The Honduras National Environmental Management Program continues as a pedagogic planning process. Through learning by doing, it develops individual and institutional Honduran recognition of the causes and consequences of resource degradation by developing a national capability for environmental analysis. Its constituencies are resource planners and their GOH institutional employers. With external assistance, more than 250 Hondurans from 30 institutions have participated in workshops and in writing three long-range planning documents.

The Central America ENR Strategy and RENARM Program were planned by A.I.D. The planning process achieved substantial consensus on regional ENR constraints to sustainable development and coordinated the use of A.I.D.'s development resources in the elimination of those constraints. Its constituencies — those who direct the use of A.I.D. resources in ENR programs — are the regional and bilateral missions and the several A.I.D. Washington bureaus that have jurisdiction over these programs. With external assistance, strategy and program planning were done by A.I.D. staff from the concerned A.I.D. offices.

If lengthy and iterative, the highly participatory processes have had continuing impact in all three cases. In Central America, broad regional and more specific national agendas are now set. To a large degree, they mesh, providing for coordinated actions. The plans have resulted in large amounts of foreign assistance — currently exceeding $120 million — programmed toward the coordinated agendas.

In Honduras, professionals from 30 institutions have been trained in environmental analysis through the preparation of three main documents. The largest of these, the 1990 Honduras Environmental Profile, defines ENR problems, constraints, and priorities through the eyes of the Honduran planners who program the use of the country's resources. The process, the documents, and their contents are known at ministerial and staff levels, and among the foreign assistance community.

In Saint Kitts-Nevis, an initially nascent planning board and an embryonic body of land use legislation have been transformed. An empowered board now uses a comprehensive set of development guidelines to gauge the adequacy of multimillion dollar resource use proposals. The board makes available to interested developers the plans before or during the planning process. The developers may know what types of rules they will be judged by before formulating their development plans. Proposals are channeled to relevant GOSKN institutions with detailed analysis showing how the proposed resource uses meet or are deficient in the use criteria.

The legal and policy frameworks for the three programs were explicit and well articulated in Central America, implicit and only generally articulated in Honduras, and nascent in St. Kitts - Nevis. In all three cases, an intentionally deliberate pace fully incorporated the constituencies for planning, the anticipated users of the plans. Painstaking process encouraged the exchange of views. A meshing of criteria coopted agendas and viewpoints. This gave a vested interest to those who crafted the plans, and also their users.

In all three case studies, the participatory planning process has had continuing impact on program design and effectiveness as well as policy formulation. However, this process is lengthier and more costly than the procedures typically followed in ERNM strategic planning.

The St. Kitts - Nevis South East Peninsula Conservation and Development Program built GOSKN capability to guide and regulate top-end tourism and recreational development. The constituencies (the development ministries of GOSKN and the investors who will develop the SEP) internalized the planning process. They continue to define, modify, and adapt these plans, now in daily use.

The Honduras Environmental Profile is actively being used by scientists, teachers and trainers. The most important result from the planning process thus far has been the impact on human and institutional development. Preparation of the profile and the National Environmental Program have strengthened networks within the Honduran government and with NGOs. SECPLAN is actively working with other institutions through the ministry and local NGOs.

In the case of the A.I.D. Central American ENRM Strategy and RENARM Program, the planning process, albeit more expensive and lengthier than normal, resulted in a strategy and a program based on consensus and cooperation by the constituents. Thus far, both the strategy and the program are having a strong and comprehensive impact, just as hypothesized.

In these case studies, an intentionally deliberate pace fully incorporated the constituents (the anticipated users of the plan) in the planning process. Painstaking processes encouraged participants to exchange the views and criteria of their respective institutions. This gave a vested interest to the crafters of the plans, who have now become their users.

CONCLUSIONS

A lengthy, iterative, participatory process contributes greatly to the awareness of problems associated with degrading ENR use. The process also helps planners to recognize the relevance of those problems to equity and growth and to accept the idea that care must be taken to ensure sustainable ENR use. Thus, the planning process results in more complete plans whose rationale and content are better

understood and therefore actively implemented by their users. Interests become entitlements, as the participant-users find themselves with a stake in implementing the results of their own planning efforts.

Pedagogy, often a fundamental development objective, is well served by participant planning. Throughout the process, participants are made more aware of the linkages between ENRM use and development assistance. In preparing ENRM plans, they are forced to recognize the legitimate need to strengthen these linkages through technical policy changes, environmental analysis, and resource-using project activities. In human resource development, participants learn to compromise and cooperate through a constant barrage of meetings, workshops, consultations, plenary discussions, and review sessions. Quiet, patient, behind-the-scenes constituency building occurs during these types of planning activities. By working together with representatives from organizations with different agendas, participants learn to negotiate and reach consensus on ENRM plans. Thus, plans do not remain external consultant documents, but become internal working documents.

Participation of this type results in high-impact, extensively used plans that set boundaries on debate, set priorities, coordinate agendas, and result in concerted action, especially including the programming of financial resources.

On the negative side, constituent participation in program development costs several times more than external program development and takes a great deal more time.

Since it is outside the usual development planning process, participant strategic planning may be resisted. However, the notion that externally prepared program planning documents will be quickly accepted and effectively used ignores political and behavioral reality. Nor can an external process have pedagogic impact. Our cases suggest that planning constituencies understand, accept, and use plans precisely insofar as the plans are prepared by the constituents themselves.

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