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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Office for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

AD HOC WORKING GROUP FOR PHYSICAL AND REGIONAL
PLANNING

First Meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group for
Physical and Regional Planning

Project entitled:

DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF THE CAPABILITY OF
THE NATIONS OF THE REGION TO PREPARE ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT ANALYSES OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND
PLANS IN ORDER TO INCORPORATE THE DIMENSION OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE PLANNING
AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMMES



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean

DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF THE CAPABILITY
OF THE NATIONS OF THE REGION TO PREPARE ENVIRON-
MENTAL IMPACT ANALYSES OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS AND PLANS IN ORDER TO INCORPORATE THE
DIMENSION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL
RESOURCES IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION
OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

OBJECTIVES

To review the manpower situation in the environmental planning sector of all countries in the Region and as appropriate to design training programmes for planning officials and engineers in charge of reviewing and/or implementing plans for major development projects.

To promote environmentally-sound development through application of engineering techniques which reduce environmental deterioration to the lowest possible level.

To identify the most prevalent negative environmental impacts of typical major projects on the ecosystems of the Region and the determination of practical measures that would result in a reduction of environmental damage.

To create or strengthen an interdisciplinary capability within the Region on a national and/or subregional basis to assess the environmental impacts of major projects.

To develop suitable training materials.

BACKGROUND

Many of the environmental problems of developing countries result from the type of development process pursued. It is not development per se that has caused environmental problems. Sustainable development must be based on environmentally-sound development policies, i.e. policies that account for the rational utilization of available resources and the natural capacity of a given ecosystem to support the utilization of those resources, non-renewable and renewable.

In their legitimate quest to improve the socio-economic standards of their people and to satisfy the most basic human needs, the countries of the Wider Caribbean must vigorously pursue the implementation of development activities in many economic sectors.

It has been found however that when serious consideration is not given to the interaction of particular major projects with the surrounding environment, other economic options and even the benefits that may have accrued from the project itself are either impaired or eliminated.

There exists a great need to provide environmental management training to the professionals and public officials in charge of designing, reviewing and constructing these major development projects, and to develop an interdisciplinary capability at a national subregional or regional level to assist the Governments in assessing the environmental impact of major developmental activities.

ACTIVITIES

1. A survey of the principal environmental impact problems of major developmental activities in the Region will be carried out based on existing documentation and selected consultations with Government and industry.
2. Inputs from APCEP projects 1 and 3 will be used to determine the planning and review process currently applied in the Region for major projects.
3. Environmental impact analysis methods in use in other parts of the world and the experience gained from their application will be reviewed and approaches suited to the characteristics and needs of the Region will be suggested.
4. A two-week training seminar on environmental planning for planning officials and engineers will be held. The seminar will focus on problems specific to the Region and will highlight, with the use of specific examples, the environmental and economic cost of poorly planned projects and the benefits that can be accrued from incorporating environmental criteria in the project's design. Special attention will be devoted to the implementation phase of development projects and plans in order to identify difficulties and obstacles to the attainment of environmental objectives with a view to determining appropriate strategies and more successful approaches. The seminar will form the basis of the establishment of a regional network of institutions, which could serve for co-operation and exchange of experience and technical expertise, thereby providing the basis for long-term action.
5. Training activities at the managerial and technical levels will be undertaken as necessary in environmentally related fields where expertise is lacking in the Region. Special short-term training courses in beach protection, coastal mining, coastal engineering, solid waste management, tropical ecology and coastal zone management will be conducted in the Region. These activities will be carried out in

conjunction with APCEP projects 6,13/3,14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 29, 30 and 35.

In addition, individual fellowships will be arranged for attendance at existing medium and long-term courses. Arrangements will also be made for exchange programmes between governmental institutions to provide on-the-job training in environmental management fields.

OUTPUTS

(a) First Phase

1. Report identifying the principal environmental impacts of development projects by means of matrices showing the relationship between different types of projects and effects on the environment.
2. Report analysing the existing mechanisms for developmental project review and recommending practical measures to develop or strengthen such inclusions in the form of standard handbooks for environmental impact assessment.
3. Seminar for public officials (planners) and engineers in environmental planning and impact assessment.
4. Programme for short-term training courses in environmentally related fields of priority to the Region such as:

health protection;
coastal mining;
coastal engineering;
solid waste management;
tropical ecology;
coastal zone management.
5. Programme for fellowships in medium and long-term training in environmental sciences.
6. Programme for intercountry exchange of professionals engaged in planning and environmental management for on-the-job training.

(b) Second Phase

1. Publication and development into audiovisual teaching-aid packages and standard manuals of the subject matters discussed and developed for the short training courses in environmentally related fields.
2. Award of fellowship.

3. Implementation of intercountry exchange programmes for on-the-job training of public officials in charge of environmental management and planning.
4. Short-term training courses held in specific subject areas of high priority for environmental management in the Region.

WORKPLAN AND TIMETABLE

Activities	Starting and ending (from month 0)	Supporting Organization
Survey of principal environmental impact problems	0 - 3	ECO/PAHO/UNDIESA
Analysis of environmental review process	0 - 3	UNEP (RCU)
Preparation of two-week training seminar for planning officials and engineers	0 - 6	(UNESCO)/UNDIESA/ ECO/PAHO
Training seminar for planning officials and engineers	6	(UNESCO)/ECO/ PAHO/UNDIESA
Development of programme for specialized short courses in the environmental sciences	0 - 10	Various agencies
Specialized short courses in the environmental sciences held	8 - 24	Various agencies
Preparation of standard manuals and audiovisual packages for short-term training on environmental impact assessment	8 - 16	ECO/PAHO/IUCN/ UNDIESA
Fellowships on environmental studies (medium and long-term) awarded	8 - 24	
Development and implementation of inter-country exchange programme	8 - 24	UNEP (RCU)

The project is estimated to cost US\$235,000.

