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Final Report to the
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Global Biodiversity Assessment
Grant NAGW-3815

Reporting Period:
September 30, 1994 -- November 15, 1995

Background

Funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched a worldwide effort to assess the status of knowledge and experience concerning the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The aim of this work is to provide governments and other interested groups with a scientifically sound, peer-reviewed report to help guide implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Kenton Miller of the World Resources Institute (WRI) was asked by the Executive Director of UNEP to serve as Lead Coordinator for Section 13 (previously Section 10) of the Global Biodiversity Assessment (GBA), "Measures for Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Use of its Components." Co-coordinators of this section were Mary Allegretti (Brazil's Institute for Amazon Studies), Nels Johnson (World Resources Institute), and Bror Jonsson (Norwegian Institute for Nature Research). In addition to the coordinators, forty-three experts from eighteen countries served as chapter authors, co-authors, or contributors. Section 13 was reviewed by 180 peer reviewers from around the world.

Section 13 contains seven chapters encompassing a wide range of strategies, tools, technologies, and methods for conserving and sustainably using biodiversity including: strategic planning; priority-setting; sustainably using biodiversity in natural resource management; protecting ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity; using socio-economic and legal tools for conservation; and building institutional capacity to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity.

The final draft of Section 13 was completed and submitted to the GBA Executive Editor on July 25, 1995. The complete GBA was published by Cambridge University Press and released November 14, 1995 in Jakarta at the Second Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COPII).

Activities During the Reporting Period

WRI's Kenton Miller and Nels Johnson worked with the other coordinators, authors, and contributors to complete a first draft of Section 13 for peer review in September 1994. WRI submitted a list of approximately 50 individuals with expertise on the issues covered in Section 13 to UNEP for consideration as peer reviewers. UNEP added additional peer reviewers and distributed the draft to over 250 reviewers in forty countries between October and December.

In January, Nels Johnson and Kenton Miller compiled reviewer comments for each chapter of Section 13. During the next three months, Johnson and Miller revised the section based on reviewer comments, distributed comments to chapter authors for necessary substantive revisions, and researched and wrote new material for several gaps identified by reviewers.

In April, the second draft of Section 13 (which incorporated peer review comments) was sent to Vernon Heywood, GBA Executive Editor. UNEP then distributed all second draft GBA sections to other GBA coordinators, the GBA editorial group, and leading experts not previously involved with the GBA. This group was asked to review the revised GBA, meet in Panama in June to consider final revisions for each section, and review and revise a shorter GBA Summary for Policy Makers. Approximately 65 participants -- internationally-recognized scholars and practitioners in biodiversity and its conservation -- participated in the June 11-16 meeting in Panama.

At the Panama meeting, Miller and Johnson, together with coordinator Bror Jonsson, organized a working group of ten participants to help identify needed final revisions and to draft additional contributions to the section where gaps existed. A number of additions to the section -- on genetic access legislation for example -- were recommended to the coordinators of Section 13 by the Panama workshop participants. Since these were not included in the original terms of reference for the section, an intensive effort was required in June and July to research, write, and find reviewers for the final additions. At the same time, the coordinators edited, fact checked, and tracked down missing references for the final draft.

On July 25, the final draft was submitted to the GBA Executive Editor for copy editing, typesetting, and proofing. Cambridge University Press sent WRI final proofs in late August. The proofs were reviewed and returned to Cambridge the first week of September. The final publication was completed in early November and released on November 14, 1995 at COPII.