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IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION REPORT

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION PROJECT
(GEF GRANT 28644)

April 28, 1999

Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Sector Unit
Europe and Central Asia Region

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(as of April 26, 1999)

Currency Unit	=	Slovak Koruna/Koruny (SK)
1SK	=	US$0.0238
US$1	=	42.091 SK

AVERAGE EXCHANGE RATES

1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
30-77	32.05	29.71	30.65	33.62	36.08

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Metric System

SLOVAK REPUBLIC'S FISCAL YEAR

January 1–December 31

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DAPHNE	-	DAPHNE- Center for Applied Ecological Research
EU	-	European Union
FD	-	Forest Department
FECBC	-	Foundation for Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Conservation
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	-	Global Environment Facility
GET	-	Global Environment Trust Fund
GIS	-	Geographic Information System
IBRD	-	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
MaB	-	Man and the Biosphere Program
MLM	-	Ministry of Land Management
MOE	-	Ministry of Environment
MOF	-	Ministry of Finance
NGO	-	Non-governmental organization
PHARE	-	European Union Program in Restructuring Economies
PMCU	-	Project Management and Coordination Unit
RAMSAR	-	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar 1971)
SEA	-	Slovak Environmental Agency
TANAP	-	Tatras National Park
WWF	-	World Wildlife Fund/World Wide Fund for Nature

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BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION PROJECT

(GEF Grant TF028644)

PREFACE

This is the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) for the Biodiversity Protection Project in the Slovak Republic, for which the GET Grant TF028644 in the amount of SDR 1,700,000 (US$ 2.3 million equivalent) was approved on September 16, 1993, and made effective on October 20, 1993.

The grant was closed on June 30, 1998, compared with the original closing date of December 31, 1996. The grant was almost fully disbursed (99%). The last disbursement took place on October 6, 1998, at which time a balance of less than US$1,000 was left undisbursed. The Special Account was fully recovered in November, 1998.

The ICR was prepared by Mr. Andrew Bond, EASEN, together with Ms. Kerstin Canby, Mr. Martin Fodor, ENV, and Dr. Stephen Berwick (Biodiversity Specialist). It was reviewed by Mr. John A. Hayward, Sector Leader for Natural Resources Management in ECSSD, Mr. Gottfried Ablasser, Portfolio Manager, ECSSD. Mr. Mahesh Sharma, ENVGC, collated comments on the draft from colleagues in ENVGC. The Project Management and Coordination Unit (PMCU) provided information essential for the preparation of the ICR and comments on the ICR which are included as appendices.

Preparation of this ICR was begun during the Bank's final supervision mission in April 1998 and completion mission in November 1998. It is based on materials in the project file and discussions with relevant World Bank staff, the Director and staff of the PMCU, officials and staff of the Ministries of Environment, Finance and Land Management (Forest Department), meetings with NGOs, contractors, consultants and representatives of the administrations of each of the protected areas supported by the project.

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION REPORT
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION PROJECT
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EVALUATION SUMMARY

Introduction

1. The Slovak Republic Biodiversity Protection Project, supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), was the second World Bank-GEF biodiversity project in the Eastern European region and one of the first operations implemented by the World Bank in the Slovak Republic. Designed as a project for the former Czechoslovakia, it was first identified in late 1992 with WWF-Austria and supported a transboundary nature conservation program "Ecological Bricks for the Common House of Europe." In 1993, it was divided into two related but separate projects, recognizing the establishment of the independent Czech and Slovak Republics. The project was approved on September 16, 1993, and declared effective on October 20, 1993.

Project Objectives and Components

2. The project objectives were to protect and strengthen representative ecosystem biodiversity of global significance in the Slovak Republic, in particular in transboundary areas. To implement these objectives, the following activities were planned:

(a) a **Biodiversity Protection Program** to initiate a range of activities including the development of management techniques for key biotypes (forest, wetlands and alpine meadows), the development of community support for the reserve system and particularly for the sustainable management of contiguous forest systems adjacent to the protected areas, specific *ex-situ* conservation measures where ecosystem protection and restoration were unlikely to succeed, and biodiversity research and management;

(b) a **Conservation Program** to develop revenue generation mechanisms for the protected area system, to examine the feasibility of using economic mechanisms to manage visitation levels, to foster interactions with local communities and land management and uses in adjacent forest systems, and to institute demonstration activities to be used as models both nationally and internationally (particularly in the ecosystems of the transborder areas); and

(c) an **Institutional Infrastructure Improvement Program** to provide support for project management coordination at the national level and at the three selected sites, for professional development and training, for a small grants program for the development of environmental NGOs and particularly support for the new Foundation for Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Conservation (FECBC) in the Slovak Republic, Poland and Ukraine.

Implementation Experience and Results

3. *Achievement of Objectives* Overall, the project produced satisfactory results and some novel solutions to common regional issues, in particular in the Eastern Carpathian and the Morava Floodplain project areas. However, in the Tatra National Park, expectations were not fully met due to institutional weaknesses during implementation.

4. The project leveraged financing from the MacArthur Foundation and a number of strategic partnerships particularly between protected area managers, local communities and NGOs. However, planned funding from the Austrian Eco-Fund was not forthcoming due to changes in their funding program priorities.

5. Nearly all the work planned was pursued, with highly satisfactory results in the restoration and management of meadows at the Morava floodplain, capacity-building for nature conservation data management, international cooperation and the results of applied research. Components such as the assessment of carrying capacity[1] or planning for sustainable development did not meet expectations, but represent valuable exercises with lessons learned. Although more time is needed to assess final results, the project has already achieved a number of significant milestones: establishment of the Poloniny National Park, introduction of economic assessments into conservation planning, partial restoration of natural meanders of the Morava River, the tri-national Foundation for the Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Conservation, and support to partnerships between nature conservation authorities and local communities. Enhanced institutional capacity has also been an important outcome, as it builds the foundation for future activities beyond the life of the project.

6. *Major Factors Affecting the Project* Being one of the first Bank operations in Slovakia, a number of activities and approaches were new to the Recipient, including Bank/GEF procedures and international practices in biodiversity conservation. In addition, institutional arrangements and change caused delay and/or were detrimental to the realization of the project objectives. This included the reform and re-organization of the environment sector early in the project, unresolved issues surrounding respective responsibilities of the Ministry of Environment (MOE) and the Ministry of Land Management (MLM) for forest management in the Protected Landscape Areas (PLAs), frequent staff changes within the MOE, and weakening of the Project Management and Coordination (PMCU) position within the MOE organizational structure. In addition, the on-going re-privatization of land, forest land in particular, prevented forest restoration activities within the Morava floodplain and attempts to establish a Central Forest Nursery at TANAP. Project co-financing from the Austrian EcoFund never materialized and caused a re-organization of Project components and budgets.

7. Nonetheless, the commitment of many staff within the relevant organizations, NGOs and the PMCU was able to circumvent these difficulties and significant progress was achieved during the course of the project. It is this type of commitment which will carry the results of the Project into the future.

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[1] Generally an area's carrying capacity can be qualitatively described as the level of visitation tourism without causing unacceptable degradation of the environment Refer para 2 59 of the original Project Document (1993)

Summary of Findings, and Future Operations

8. *Bank and Recipient Performance:* Overall Bank and Recipient performance has been rated as satisfactory.

9. *Future Operations:* Unlike Bank experience in Poland, the grant project did not secure an effective partnership with the forestry sector for a subsequent Bank financed loan. The Biodiversity Action Plan adopted in August 1998 contains a number of activities to continue operations initiated under the project. Many activities will continue, such as the restoration and management of the Morava Floodplain meadows (EUPHARE support for three years and agreements with farmers); further restoration of Morava River ecosystem (commitment by water management authorities in both Slovakia and Austria); waste treatment in Eastern Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (local communities); cooperative sheep keeping in Vychodna village (local people interest in job opportunities and revenue generation); and monitoring and management of meadows at the Poloniny National Park/ Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve.

10. The Recipient would be interested in further support through a GEF Enabling Grant and has supported a project idea submitted to the World Bank GEF program from the NGO DAPHNE (Center for Applied Ecology), aimed at mapping of natural and semi-natural meadows nationwide and their sustainable management. Last year, under the medium-size project window (climate change focal area), the Recipient explored possibilities of financing a project aimed at the mitigation of climate change on Central European ecosystems.

Key Lessons Learned

11. Based on discussions held during the completion mission and regional workshops, the key lessons learned from the Recipient and Bank's perspective are:

- *institutional stability* is a key condition for project success. The Bank should be notified of institutional changes that the Recipient decides to implement, and their implications on the Project. Also, clear terms of reference for the PMCU are desirable to minimize outside negative influences on the PMCU work;
- *in-situ conservation* remains a primary approach to Biodiversity conservation in Slovakia (supported by *ex-situ* conservation measures as needed). In changing social and economic conditions, more players' behavior can now be influenced, as the Project proved, through proper incentives. Nature-based tourism is becoming an important source of revenue for remote communities, and the economic value of nature areas is beginning to be recognized. Participation through the formal surveys and consultations during the development of the Sustainable Development Strategies provided a new approach for reserve managers to interface and work with local communities, a key lesson to be maintained and indeed expanded by the protected area managers in the future;
- *professional development* is a vital step in building human capacity, but a needs assessment should occur early in the project in order to better design the component and to provide more focus to these activities to ensure new skills/knowledge are better integrated into design and implementation. It was also apparent that issues such as budget constraints, understaffing, etc. constrained the full application or transfer of knowledge obtained in the training process;
- *GIS training* should be expanded so that more than one staff member per site are trained, which reduces the risk of subsequent loss to the private sector. Biologists (users), who best

understand its applications, also need to be given such training as they are more likely to remain in the job and justify such expensive training investments.

- *involving NGOs* during implementation and through the Small Grants Program were keys to project successes. Such involvement also made a significant contribution in increasing public awareness of general biodiversity conservation issues;
- *explicit targets and indicators for measuring progress* against the implementation plans and project objectives help managers identify the success, cost-effectiveness and basic usefulness of most components throughout implementation. These, as is now common practice in World Bank projects, need to be established at the outset. However, long term success or impact of a project activity relative to its stated goal(s) cannot be fairly assessed at project completion. For example, professional development and training enables the immediate prosecution of some project tasks such as GIS use, but will not be fully realized for at least several years when the long-term influence can be better evaluated. Nonetheless, the absence of indicators can at best be characterized as a short coming of project design. The fundamental changes that occurred in the country during the implementation of the project created both opportunities and constraints. In this context, the projects objectives can be seen as somewhat ambitious;
- the *initial timescale (3 years) was overly ambitious,* due to a combination of slower than envisaged progress in implementation and an over optimistic implementation schedule. With regard to the latter, a number of causative factors were identified and include: (i) the fact that this was one of the initial GEF operations; (ii) GEF projects are inherently comprehensive and thus complex; and (iii) institutional capacity building or attitudinal shifts take time. These early projects of the GEF Pilot Phase uniformly required longer implementation timeframes (circa 5 years) as witnessed by the value of the extensions which all the regional projects requested. Nonetheless, an over optimistic implementation schedule is a design flaw and a critical lesson learned and should be taken into account in preparing subsequent operations. Much of the value and achievement of project objectives were realized in the final 18 months. Slower than envisaged progress in implementation was due to the steep learning curves for new and often advanced concepts (sustainable development), technical tools (GIS) and approaches, and the PMCU's accession of capability, working style and real understanding of agreed project activities;
- the *establishment of a successful and permanent financial mechanism (a trust fund)* to support biodiversity conservation requires, at the outset, an assessment of conservation needs, the production of an agreed funding plan and identified commitments to finance these needs.

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION REPORT

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION PROJECT

(GEF Grant TF028644)

PART I: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ASSESSMENT

A. PROJECT ORIGIN AND OBJECTIVES

1. The Slovak Republic Biodiversity Protection Project, supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), was the second World Bank-GEF biodiversity project in the Eastern European region and one of the first operations implemented by the World Bank in the Slovak Republic Designed as a project for the former Czechoslovakia, it was first identified in late 1992 and early 1993, but was then divided into two related but separate projects for the newly independent Slovak and Czech Republics. The Slovak Biodiversity Protection Project was approved on September 16, 1993, and declared effective on October 20, 1993.

2. A key objective of the GEF Pilot Phase was to seek innovative and replicable solutions responsive to global environmental challenges. The project was one of five Bank-managed GEF projects in the region to provide assistance in conserving forest biodiversity to countries making the transition from centrally planned to market-based economies. The other four projects were in Poland, Belarus, the Czech Republic and Ukraine. All five projects were designed to improve the management and protection of transboundary ecosystems, and with focus on international collaboration.

3. Given the changes in Central Europe, opportunities existed in 1993 for the development and implementation of scientific management plans for three unique areas: Eastern Carpathians Landscape Protected Area (LPA), Tatra National Park and the Morava LPA, each contiguous with protected reserves in neighboring countries (Ukraine, Poland, Austria and the Czech Republic). Collectively, the three areas selected contain an internationally significant diversity of plant and animal species. They were selected as they: (i) contain three different regionally important representative ecosystems (wetlands, forests and alpine) under threat; and (ii) provide the opportunity to directly link with protected areas in other countries and therefore become important demonstration areas for the region.

4. A national park in the eastern Carpathians (*Poloniny National Park*) was to be established under the project with the passage of new legislation. More importantly, it is one of three MaB Biosphere Reserves where tri-country management and the establishment of a tri-national Trust for transboundary coordination was possible. The *Slovak Tatras National Park (TANAP)* is contiguous with the Polish Tatranski National Park, both forested mountain systems with high visitation, alpine and sub-alpine vegetation and sites of specific biodiversity in the mountain meadows These meadows are species rich sites for endemic plants and are particularly important as an ecotone where they adjoin the forest. The *Morava Floodplains* contain wetlands of international importance (RAMSAR) relatively untouched as a result of 50 years of military border access restrictions until 1990. Recent *ad hoc* development and agricultural intrusions threatened the area, however, and immediate action was required to protect the wetlands and isolated remnant floodplain forests.

5 All three areas were theoretically protected by their status as national park or PLA, but were being degraded by pollution, overuse by visitors, impacts from adjacent land uses and/or pressures for short-term production of the protected areas' natural resources to compensate pre-socialist landowners or provide income to the unemployed. Although the threat from air pollution was expected to diminish with economic reconstruction (within Slovakia and neighboring countries), tourism pressures were increasing, as were pressures from agriculture and production forestry development.

Project Objectives

6. The project objectives were to protect and strengthen representative ecosystem biodiversity of international importance in the Slovak Republic. Specifically, the project was designed to:

(a) foster systems of financially sustainable biodiversity protection by introducing user fees, charges for visitors and concessions to manage the areas within determined "carrying capacities;" and to evaluate the role that economic mechanisms might play in keeping visitation to levels within identified carrying capacities;

(b) establish a three country mechanism (Ukraine, Poland and the Slovak Republic) -- the Foundation for Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Conservation -- whose income would be used to protect the biodiversity in this transboundary area;

(c) protect three zones of representative threatened ecosystems: alpine meadows (Tatras), wetlands (Morava Floodplain) and mountain forests (Eastern Carpathians);

(d) support the activities of three *transnational* biodiversity protection networks: Eastern Carpathians Mountain Reserves (Poland, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine); the High Tatra Reserves (Poland and the Slovak Republic); and the Morava Floodplain forests and wetlands (Slovak and Czech Republics and Austria); and

(e) develop a conservation program to address priority issues such as unplanned forest privatization within National Park boundaries.

1 To implement these objectives, the project planned to involve the following activities:

(a) a **Biodiversity Protection Program** to initiate a range of activities including the development of management techniques for key biotypes (forest, wetlands and alpine meadows), community support for the reserve system and particularly for the sustainable management of contiguous forest systems adjacent to the protected areas, *ex-situ* conservation measures where ecosystem protection and restoration were unlikely to succeed, and biodiversity research and management;

(b) a **Conservation Program** to develop revenue mechanisms for the protected area system, to analyze potential economic mechanisms to manage visitation levels, to foster interactions with local communities and land management and uses in adjacent forest systems, and to institute demonstration activities as models ,particularly in the ecosystems in the transborder areas; and

(c) an **Institutional Infrastructure Improvement Program** to provide support for project management coordination at the national level and in three selected zones, for professional development and training, for an NGO small

grants program, and for the new FECBC in the Slovak Republic, Poland and Ukraine.

1. *Evaluation of Objectives* The initially agreed objectives proved to be quite ambitious given the subsequent fundamental changes within the country which created both opportunities but also some constraints. For example, the changes in administration at the Tatras National Park resulted in slow implementation and some difficulty in the introduction of new forest management practices to achieve biodiversity conservation. The objectives also did not enumerate measurable and verifiable indicators of achievement which would have greatly assisted with devising mid-project adjustments and management responses to changing conditions (adaptive management). It should be noted that a requirement of subsequent GEF biodiversity projects (i.e., the Operational Phase) has required the identification of monitorable indicators.

B. Achievement of Objectives

2. Overall, the project produced satisfactory results, particularly in light of the effects of the period of rapid change in the newly created Republic at the early stages of project implementation This had resulted not only in a division of an already-designed project, but also in changes in ministry leaders and staff who had been involved in project preparation and who would ultimately be responsible for the implementation of the project. It was a time of on-going changes in legislative, administrative and institutional arrangements, principally the new Nature Conservation Law of 1995. Most activities were vigorously pursued and fulfilled their objectives within the project's expected life, while others proceeded more slowly. The project's closing date was postponed twice, ultimately for 18 months.

3. The project undoubtedly laid the groundwork for future activities -- a knowledge base, institutional and human capacity. Certain project activities have only recently been finished, including the sustainable development strategies (SDS), which make it hard to assess the longer term achievements.

4. Many sub-components will most likely continue and positively affect future activities beyond the life of the project. Among the highlights are advances in international cooperation and coordination for transboundary conservation (E. Carpathians Conservation Strategy), demonstration activities (Water Catchment / Erosion and Morava Floodplain Restoration), support for non-governmental, small-scale conservation efforts (NGO Small Grant Program), and some very original applied research (Tatras Research Station).

5. Less satisfactory components such as the assessment of carrying capacity (mixed results), the assessment and piloting of revenue generating mechanisms or planning for sustainable development did not meet their expectations, but represent valuable exercises with lessons learned. These elements did not fulfill original expectations due to the inherent complexity of integrating economic, social and environmental objectives into regional planning, and the reality that such approaches were a quantum change in methodology for existing institutions. The lack of cooperation between the Slovak Ministry of Environment (MOE) and Ministry of Land Management (MLM), Forest Department (FD) proved detrimental to effective conservation efforts in the Tatras.

6. *Project-wide,* international cooperation and coordination for trans-boundary conservation that developed among Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine in managing the protected areas of the East Carpathians MaB was a highlight of the project. The project elevated trilateral cooperation from

sporadic personal contact to more formalized institutional arrangements: (i) the FECBC, (ii) a Conservation Strategy for the Eastern Carpathians (awaiting tri-national government endorsement) which has been presented as a model in several fora including the recent IUCN World Congress in Montreal; and (iii) easing of border restrictions between Ukraine and Slovakia to facilitate tourism.

7. The general awareness of the importance of biodiversity conservation has increased, primarily as a result of the project management personnel being able to influence the government to officially host the fourth Conference of Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity in 1998, thus turning a national and international spotlight on biodiversity and its conservation in the region.

8 The ***Biodiversity Protection Program*** component of the project is judged to have had mixed results, with implementation in the Eastern Carpathians and Morava Floodplain successful, but within TANAP hostage to tensions between the MLM Forest Department and MOE. The project funded the planning activities for the Eastern Carpathians, restoration of forest and riparian ecosystems, management alternatives for alpine meadow management, professional development and training, and research and monitoring activities.

9 In the *Eastern Carpathians,* three countries developed the framework conservation strategy for the International Biosphere Reserve (not yet under legally binding status). The Slovakia Poloniny National Park was established in 1997 and a management plan will be taken to Government by the MOE in 1999. E. Carpathian forestry issues were examined using economic cost-benefit analysis for the first time; and demonstrations showed the benefits of conservation-ecology based restoration (200 ha) and soil erosion control techniques in forest operations. While resulting recommendations for silviculture are now reinforced by the Biodiversity Strategy/Action Plan (BSAP) which has been endorsed and supported by the government and the GEF, it is expected that new paradigms of forest management will not be widely accepted unless financial support for the incremental cost or regulatory incentives are developed. The mowing of meadows was done by NGOs and, while not self-financing, is expected to continue due to the high historic, cultural and biodiversity value of this traditional modified landuse practice.

10. The *Morava Floodplain* component was also highly successful (refer Box 1), although management options should cover the whole project area, rather than single ecosystems (forests, meadows, freshwater). Flooding regimes were expanded and, with the help of restoration activities, floodplain ecosystems are now returning.

11. The project used both vertical (national to local) and horizontal (cross-sectoral and inter-disciplinary approaches to biological diversity conservation). An example of the former is the first effort to solicit local desires in drafting the eastern Carpathians plan and sustainable development alternatives where there is 40% unemployment during the winter. The latter resulted in altering the timing of hay meadow mowing to accommodate nesting birds at Morava. There has been interest on the part of the Austrians, the Slovakian Water Authority and DAPHNE (NGO) to duplicate the water management and meadow restoration activities elsewhere, and EU PHARE has provided the financing to continue certain activities. DAPHNE will also be supported through a GEF Medium Grant to extend restoration not only from a scientific perspective but also by harnessing farmer and local community support to implement the required management regimes.

Box 1 - MORAVA RIVER FLOODPLAINS

This transboundary riverine flood plain near Bratislava and Vienna provides a relict forest and farm environment for increasingly rare native species of a widely modified and now rare European ecosystem The forests have been cut, water table reduced, and spring floods interrupted Native meadows have been converted to cropland About 20% of the plant and animal species are listed as endangered The study site is a remnant inadvertently protected as part of the border control area during the Cold War

Goals of the project were the development of scientifically informed, sustainable floodplain forest uses and restoration, water regime management, agriculture and tourism management in the regional context The area was chosen for its high biodiversity, the acute threat of unplanned development following the recent political transition, the globally widespread nature of such threats to wetland complexes, and as a complement to the other two project areas in the Tatra and Eastern Carpathians, which together offer a coherent and country-wide conservation initiative for the major wildland environments of the Republic In cooperation with Austrian managers, the annual cycle of flows in the Morava River and its tributaries was to be restored in three sites leading to restoration of the wetland biotic complexes and movements between fragments of habitat isolated by land use

The project funded the expertise, equipment, civil works, and revegetation to achieve a normative river, as well as land use planning and the professional development and training needed to secure the restored ecosystems The project restored 4 of the 17 river oxbows over 19 km of the flood plain thereby reconnecting the river and original floodplain environments which it creates and maintains This has led to over 200 days of water in these sites leading to measurable restoration of riparian vegetation, fish and breeding birds Over 250 ha of arable land is being restored to native meadow outside of the dike Such tools as the GIS developed by the project are used to train scientists from institutions around the country Current issues which need to be addressed to secure these gains in biodiversity include mitigation of the effluent input from a sugar plant in the Czech Republic, revised engineering and expansion of the sites to reduce silt loads, and clarifying land ownership to facilitate dispersion of project initiatives which appear successful The Austrian river managers are using the results of the project work to develop their program, and the EC is funding monitoring and evaluation, also to document and leverage the results in similar environments These connections with Austria, the Czech Republic, and the European Community underline the regional and transboundary nature of the Morava flood plain restoration component of the Slovak Biodiversity Protection Project

12. The project brought to light early in project implementation the importance of cooperation between agencies responsible for the stewardship of the Slovak Republic's forests: the MOE and MLM, where there continues to be unresolved negotiations regarding the division of property, powers over territory and related staff transfer at the TANAP. While the Nature and Landscape Protection Act No. 287/94 effective since January 1995 stipulated that all *national parks* were to be supervised by the MOE, at that time TANAP was under the jurisdiction of the MLM, which promptly changed the status of existing institutional arrangements from principally nature conservation oriented to forest management ones. The situation has already resulted in the lowering of staff morale at the Research Station of the TANAP and resistance to the sharing of equipment provided by the project to the MLM. The purchase of equipment (seed dryers, field radios), useful for commercial forest practice as well as conservation oriented restoration did not result in native forest restoration during the course of the project. Resolution of this tension would have to come through national policy clarifying the role of the respective institutions in forest management operations within National Park boundaries.

13. The project also funded a significant amount of high-quality biological, ecological and economic research and training activities, intended to provide knowledge and expand the human capital base with which to construct and implement plans for future conservation and sustainable use. However, it is unclear if all the research conducted had direct relevance to the management planning process. More than 60 staff participated in high value national and international professional development training programs. In retrospect, the training program could have been more effective – a needs assessment may have targeted the appropriate skills and courses needed and assisted in getting training programs underway earlier in the project. Whether those trained were able to train others appeared to be dependent on personal commitment as well as management decisions that would allow trainees to devote staff time to training.

14. Some leakage of trainees occurs because of salary inequities. The GIS effort at TANAP suffered the loss of its staff who could double their salary in the private sector.

15. The ***Conservation Program*** included three subcomponents: (i) development of models for buffer zone management, evaluation of the inventory of endangered species, support for evaluating the impacts of land restitution; (ii) determining carrying capacities of selected environments and examining the use of economic measures to maintain the carrying capacity and generate revenue for of protected areas management; and (iii) the establishment of a permanent financing mechanism for biodiversity protection activities in the tri-lateral biodiversity protection program in Eastern Carpathians -- the FECBC.

16. The establishment of the international FECBC achieved significant international cooperation and collaboration. Its subsequent operation has provided some valuable lessons. The initial endowment of $0.6 million has yielded a modest $30,000 net per year. This income has been used to support a tri-national NGO small grants program largely based on the success of the small grants program supported under the Slovakia project. The small grants have generally been matched by substantial in-kind contributions from implementing organizations. Start-up and recurrent costs of the FECBC have proven costly, due to expensive establishment and Swiss banking fees, and the administrative burden of convening a 14-person committee with quorum requirements of nine country representatives (out of 12 country representatives) and either WWF or the MacArthur Foundation present. At the outset, further donations to the capital of the FECBC were expected, but donors awaited an analysis of conservation needs and a comprehensive plan (the Strategy) to fund these needs which was expected to be completed very early in the project. Although the assessment has now been completed and a plan/strategy produced, the governments have yet to cohesively approach the donor community for further capitalization. It is hoped that this initiative will proceed forthwith.

17. Activities carried out under the buffer zone and carrying capacity subcomponents appear to have delivered less significant results than expected, but valuable lessons were gained. Early in the project, research and pilot projects for identifying carrying capacity and revenue-generation mechanisms (user fees, etc.) stipulated as a separate sub-components were integrated into the development of the Sustainable Development Strategies (SDS) for each project area. This combination of program elements was welcomed, as the issues of carrying capacity and sustainable development are intimately related, and the development of revenue mechanisms one of the key instruments available to support protected areas in the long-term. However, the overall development of the SDS programs in all three areas proceeded slowly with mixed results most likely due to the complexity of the issue, lack of understanding of the underlying social customs, the changing land ownership context and local/national budget law which prevented the

implementation of many internationally implemented revenue-generating mechanisms. For example, charging admission fees to local communities proved difficult due to numerous entryways to the National Parks and historical expectations of free access to a public resource. Lease-licensing agreements, successful in many Western countries are not applicable since most commercial tourism activities are conducted on private land within the National Park. Finally, local budget law currently allocates existing income streams to benefit local communities, a difficult transaction to modify especially in light of current economic difficulties. A few alternative livelihood pilots were supported with seed money, such as the successful sheep-dairy enterprise in the eastern Carpathians. The mission is hesitant to make a final judgment on the success of the SDS activities, since the strategies were completed so close to the closing date. However, it does wish to recognize the progress of the work that was completed in the last 18 months of the project, the improved communication with local communities and their understanding of sustainable development concepts, and the interest by many to continue the work, focussing on only one region.

18. The ***Institutional and Infrastructure Program*** sub-components have fulfilled their objective, mostly within the original timeframe of the project and without implementation difficulties. The subcomponents funded improvement of the protected area facilities and equipment such as a new radio communication system, computerization, monitoring and data management including GIS capabilities. In addition, the activities under this program supported operation of a Joint Scientific Advisory Committee established under the project for all three project areas, launching of a Small Grants Program for environmental NGOs and design and operation of the Project Management and Coordination Unit (PMCU).

19. Particularly successful was the Environmental NGO Small Grant Program, which awarded, on a competitive basis, grant funds to a significant number of NGOs. This element represented a nationally important source of financing for NGOs during a time of general lack of funding for the non-government sector and tax laws that did not encourage sponsorships of NGOs. Despite deficient funding, Slovak NGOs possess competent and flexible staff, and in many cases employ qualified young scientists who had much to offer in attempting innovative, practical conservation projects. In supporting the best environmental NGOs during this time, this program contributed not only to the immediate objective of biodiversity conservation but also to a broader strengthening of the civil society in Slovakia. It should be noted, however, that a minor proportion of the small grants were criticized by supervision missions with respect to their technical integrity.

20. Establishment of the Joint Scientific Advisory Committees proved useful for providing guidance to the project activities and especially for increasing awareness of the project among the national and international scientific and academic community, but may not have lived up to its potential as an effective system of peer review. Eventually this sub-component evolved into national, if not local, committees diminishing accession of international state-of-the-art approaches, tools, and networks. The infrastructure improvement activities were relatively straightforward and well implemented. The most complex was the implementation of a GIS which has not yet developed to its full capacity. In TANAP, the GIS, remote sensing and a focussed study tour supported under the project, have produced radical models for change in forest practice to more adequately attain conservation objectives and mitigate the effects of pollution and visitor pressure. These results will take some time to be integrated into the management of TANAP. The future of this GIS facility seems dependent on the amount of time

the single technician will be permitted to devote to GIS analysis, particularly to non-forestry related research, such as wildlife, and the degree to which other biologists can acquire capability with the technology to interact with the analytic results to modify the research. Currently, the GIS appears to be used for scientific and research purposes, and users have not yet made the leap to using it for managerial and planning decisions. In Morava, the PLA management has encouraged students from various institutions to train on and use the equipment which, while training future researchers and managers, has the side effect of providing the administration with free data and analysis. The effective implementation of such sophisticated tools was not fully appreciated in the project design and greater capacity and institutional building is required in the successful implementation of such a system.

21. *Project Management* was entrusted to a Project Management and Coordination Unit housed at the MOE. As needed, additional management officers were appointed in each of the three project areas. The PMCU performed well although the organizational conditions in which it operated were not always optimal -- in particular with computer and communication systems which were less than satisfactory. The commitment and capability of the PMCU staff, together with the experience in international donor procedures of the director, was a principal driving force. The Slovak PMCU provided assistance to the Czech PMCU, and in 1994 was designated as the National Biodiversity Secretariat which, while increasing the workload of staff, ensured the integration of the project into the national biodiversity process (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan) and continuity after project completion.

22. *Global Benefits* Project support for the various studies and plans successfully confirmed all the protected areas' biological value at the genetic, species, association and ecosystem levels and furthered their protection in numerous ways. It also had the more diffuse global benefit of introducing to national levels through the BSAP new paradigms of forest management, which should have a positive long-term impact on all the biodiversity contained in Slovak state-owned (managed) forests. This project directly contributed to the production of the National Biodiversity Strategy and associated documents and laws – part of a mosaic of such documents enacted in a cumulative regional commitment to ensure the maintenance of biological diversity under conditions of sustainable development.

23. *Innovation* The project demonstrated that for "innovation" to be a meaningful criterion, it must be understood as locally innovative while transferring international good practices. Most aspects of the current project were innovative for Slovakia, but not for biodiversity conservation in general. The project was innovative in: (i) the introduction of transboundary integrated conservation approaches, and improved collaboration with neighboring country counterparts, exemplified in the first tri-national conservation trust and a tri-national Conservation Strategy; (ii) experiments and demonstrations in ecologically sound and sustainable land uses, e.g., agricultural practices in areas adjacent to protected areas; (iii) support to NGOs via competitive small grants; (iv) truly innovative research such as documentation of bird and chamois ecology employing telemetry; and (v) unique efforts at hydrologic restoration by reopening oxbows which is now being replicated in neighboring countries.

24. *Demonstration Value and Replicability* The project did this through oxbow reconstruction now being employed in Austria and the Water Authority, and PHARE will fund monitoring of the activities. Watershed conservation demonstrations showed high benefits, although it may not be replicated until it becomes financially attractive. Also a considerable body of publications,

many of which were peer-reviewed and two workshops, one including principals of adjoining GEF projects dispersed the results.

25 *Incremental Costs* The project does not provide insight into defining eligible GEF incremental costs by today's standards. However, the Slovak Republic could not have funded such activities on its own at the time.

26. *Influence on Bank Operations* Unlike Poland, the project did not secure an effective partnership with the forestry sector to implement a Bank financed loan. Although considerable Bank and government effort was expended in preparing such a project, it was canceled due to: (i) an inability to achieve a common understanding and agreement on the technical issues to be addressed with the NGO and the forestry research communities; and (ii) ultimately the emergence of higher government priorities. It is disappointing that the project did not leverage a Bank-financed program to more adequately address biodiversity conservation within the forestry sector.

C. Major Factors Affecting the Project

1. On-going re-privatization of land, forest land in particular, prevented forest restoration activities within the Morava floodplain and attempts to establish a central forest nursery. National regulations had restricted major investments on land with possible ownership claims by non-state entities, as the Grant Agreement stipulated that Project activities can only be carried out on land on which the Recipient had long-term rights.

2 Institutional changes caused delays in implementation of parts of the project Major project activities in Eastern Carpathians, including those concerning development of management plans, were affected by institutional reform and reorganization within the environment sector which took place in 1993 when the Slovak Environmental Agency (SEA) was established and which subsumed responsibilities and resources of several other government agencies. In this process, much of the capacity for nature conservation of the former Slovak Institute for Nature Conservation, referred to in the original Project Document, was lost. This might have contributed to delayed establishment of the Poloniny National Park in East Carpathians – 1997 instead of 1993 – and delayed the affirmation of the management plan by the Government.

3. Frequent staffing changes at the highest levels of the MOE were another cause of delay in project implementation, with government commitment fluctuating during periods of staff reshuffling The position of the PMCU was consistently degraded within the MOE organizational structure, from reporting directly to the Deputy Minister to later becoming subordinated to the Nature and Landscape Conservation Department, one of three departments of the Nature and Landscape Conservation Section of M0E, and, as of May 1, 1998, disappearing from the Ministry organizational chart altogether.

4. The appointment of highly qualified and highly committed professionals within the PMCU ensured a smooth and successful implementation of the project and consistency of its activities with the original design and objectives.

D. Project Sustainability

5 Accepting that the true test of sustainability is whether the momentum begun under the project will exist many years later, the following is an early indication of potential project sustainability.

6. The long-term *biological* integrity of the three national park/reserve areas selected is undeniably better protected than prior to the project, although one cannot say definitely if it is adequately protected for perpetuity. This depends on one's time scale, and whether the state of biological resources is monitored. The *technical* equipment and processes acquired or introduced were all reported to be in operation, but will require a) continued support in the future and b) resolution of outstanding issues in the Tatras.

7 The administrative arrangement at TANAP merely masks the current divergence of the goals of forestry and nature conservation. Project accomplishments such as the identification of local pollutants and quantifying the decline of the chamois seemed to be constrained by the current administration and cannot currently be translated into policies and management interventions. This is not because of a shortfall in capability of those currently managing the park, but the current reward system. Sales of forest products generate revenues and career enhancement, whereas few incentives are seemingly attached to nature conservation or promotion of alternative sustainable use.

8 *Institutionally,* the capacity-building elements of the project were successful and built a solid ground from which future operations can be based. Investment in information systems and human capital is considered an important aspect of institutional capacity-building. The National Park administration remains committed to the protection of biological diversity and fragile ecosystems. The project did create the *financial* means to continue selected activities initiated under the project. The project has attracted additional funds (PHARE) to continue restoration of the Morava floodplain meadows and the implementation of the management plans, and the Eastern Carpathian forest management and meadow monitoring will continue, the Tatras component will depend on the ability to implement changes in forest management more focussed on conservation objectives and like Poland, less reliant on direct revenues deriving from silvicultural operations purportedly designed to maintain forest health and integrity

9. The project was successful in initiating momentum to bolster the *social* sustainability of the program. The project exposed local communities to the value of the Slovak natural heritage through public education and awareness programs. Restoration activities, such as in Morava, received high attention from stakeholders (farmers, water management authorities) who now show commitment to sustaining these activities after project completion. The new field station in Nova Sedlica village is a favorite venue for local and national events, including training and education programs. As such it provides the opportunity for on going dialogues between protected areas staff and local communities, assists with conflict resolution and addresses the need for communities to directly benefit from the protected area itself.

10. As in many government sectors, however, the salaries for staff are low. Despite these problems, there has been good continuity of staff and consultants at the local and central level, which has contributed to maintaining the benefits of the project's investments in human resources. State budgets remain constrained. Nonetheless, with some reprioritization within the responsible agencies budget envelope, project investments are expected to be sustainable in the mid- to long-term.

E. Bank Performance

1 The Bank's overall performance was satisfactory and the Recipient appreciates the innovation and ambition evident in project design. Communication between the Bank and Recipient was considered intensive and Bank staff proved open to provide advice as needed. From time to time, delay was observed from the Bank, critical when Bank approvals were needed. The Bank provided additional training in project management and Bank procedures, albeit too late into project implementation. Although Bank task management changed four times, the Bank's core team remained essentially the same and the Recipient did not view these changes as detrimental to the overall project.

2. Less satisfactory was Bank performance with respect to formal management reporting. Even though the ICR mission was able to ascertain that aide-memoires were completed for most missions, these, even when mandatory, did not necessarily result in requisite Back to Office Reports and Form 590 completions.

3 Most Bank missions included biodiversity and/or economic specialists who were considered highly qualified, although the Recipient noted that they were not from Europe and had not experience with Central European ecosystems and local management traditions. This may have contributed to weaker design elements which required a solid understanding of underlying social, political and budget processes. On the other hand, the task of introducing GEF calls for innovation, and international best practice modified to the Slovak context at the time was unlikely to have been generated by Eastern European specialists alone.

4. The ICR mission was not in a position to ascertain the influence of project activities directly from local communities or people affected by the project. The Bank's appreciation of project results comes from discussions held with various officials and institutional staff, NGOs and interlocutors with whom the mission interacted during the short mission.

F. Recipient Performance

5. The Recipient's performance was satisfactory. Project management experienced a slow start because of the division of the country, changes in ministry leaders and staff and little experience (beneficiaries as well as government departments) in dealing with international donors and understanding of the GEF mission. The commitment of the PMCU director and her staff to the Project objectives has been a principal driving force. In 1994, the PMCU was designated as National Biodiversity Secretariat which, while increasing the workload of staff, ensures the integration of the project into the national biodiversity process (BSAP) and continuity after project completion. Project area staff were also invaluable for their technical input and engaging local stakeholders, as were the NGOs, research institutions, universities and other local entities. In general, project consultants and contractors were satisfactory, however in certain cases researchers found difficulty in translating academic results into on-ground solutions. While all main legal covenants were met, at times weakened Government commitment was observed in relation to conflict resolution, such as in TANAP.

G. Assessment of Outcome

6 Overall, the project produced satisfactory results and in some regions novel solutions to common regional issues, in particular in the Eastern Carpathian and the Morava Floodplain project areas However, in the Tatra National Park, expectations were not fully met due to institutional weaknesses during implementation.

7. Nearly all the work planned was pursued with highly satisfactory results in the restoration and management of meadows at the Morava floodplain, capacity-building for nature conservation data management, international cooperation and the results of applied research. Weaker or innovative components such as the assessment of carrying capacity or planning for sustainable development did not meet expectations, but represent valuable exercises with lessons learned. Although more time is needed to assess final results, the project has already achieved a number of significant milestones: establishment of the Poloniny National Park, introduction of economic assessments into conservation planning, partial restoration of side-arms of the Morava River, the tri-national Foundation for the Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Conservation, support to partnerships between nature conservation authorities and local communities. Institutional capacity has also been an important outcome, as it builds the foundation for future activities beyond the life of the project.

H. Future of This and Future Operations

8 The Biodiversity Action Plan adopted in August 1998 contains a number of activities to continue operations initiated under the project, for which some foreign financing will be needed due to serious constraints on the national budget.

9. Certain activities will continue as beneficiaries have a direct interest in pursuing them, such as the restoration and management of the Morava Floodplain meadows (EUPHARE for three years and agreements with farmers); further restoration of Morava River ecosystem (commitment by water management authorities in both Slovakia and Austria); waste treatment in Eastern Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (local communities); cooperative sheep keeping in Vychodna village (local people interest in job opportunities and revenue generation); and monitoring and management of meadows at the Poloniny National Park/ Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve.

10. The Recipient would be interested in further support via a GEF Enabling Grant and has supported a project idea submitted to the World Bank GEF program from the NGO DAPHNE (Center for Applied Ecology), aimed at mapping of natural and semi-natural meadows nationwide and their sustainable management. Last year, under the medium-size project window (climate change focal area), the Recipient explored possibilities of financing a project aimed at the mitigation of climate change on Central European ecosystems.

I. Key Lessons Learned

11. Based on discussions held during the completion mission and regional workshops, the key lessons learned from the Recipient and Bank's perspective are:

- *institutional stability* is a key condition for project success. The Bank should be notified of institutional changes that the Recipient decides to implement, and their implications on the Project. Also, clear terms of reference for the PMCU are desirable to minimize outside negative influences on the PMCU work;
- *in-situ conservation* remains a primary approach to Biodiversity conservation in Slovakia (supported by *ex-situ* conservation measures as needed). In changing social and economic conditions, more players' behavior can now be influenced, as the Project proved, through proper incentives. Nature-based tourism is becoming an important source of revenue for remote communities, and the economic value of nature areas is beginning to be recognized. Participation through the formal surveys and consultations during the development of the Sustainable Development Strategies provided a new approach for reserve managers to

interface and work with local communities, a key lesson to be maintained and indeed expanded by the protected area managers in the future;

- *professional development* is a vital step in building human capacity, but a needs assessment should occur early in the project in order to better design the component and to provide more focus to these activities to ensure new skills/knowledge are better integrated into design and implementation. It was also apparent that issues such as budget constraints, understaffing, etc. constrained the full application or transfer of knowledge obtained in the training process;
- *GIS training* should be expanded so that more than one staff member per site are trained which reduces the risk of subsequent loss to the private sector. Biologists (users), who best understand its applications, also need to be given such training as they are more likely to remain in the job and justify such expensive training investments.
- *involving NGOs* during implementation and through the Small Grants Program were keys to project successes. Such involvement also made a significant contribution in increasing public awareness of general biodiversity conservation issues;
- *explicit targets and indicators for measuring progress* against the implementation plans and project objectives help managers identify the success, cost-effectiveness and basic usefulness of most components throughout implementation. These, as is now common practice for World Bank projects, need to be established at the outset. However, long term success or impact of a project activity relative to its stated goal(s) cannot be fairly assessed at project completion. For example, professional development and training enables the immediate prosecution of some project tasks such as GIS use, but will not be fully realized for at least several years when the long-term influence can be better evaluated. Nonetheless, the absence of indicators can at best be characterized as a short coming of project design. The fundamental changes that occurred in the country during the implementation of the project created both opportunities and constraints. In this context, the projects objectives can be seen as somewhat ambitious;
- the *initial timescale (3 years) was overly ambitious,* due to a combination of slower than envisaged progress in implementation and an over optimistic implementation schedule. With regard to the latter, a number of causative factors were identified and include: (i) the fact that this was one of the initial GEF operations; (ii) GEF projects are inherently comprehensive and thus complex; and (iii) institutional capacity building or attitudinal shifts take time. These early projects of the GEF Pilot Phase uniformly required longer implementation timeframes (circa five years) as witnessed by the value of the extensions which all the regional projects requested. Nonetheless, an over optimistic implementation schedule is a design flaw and a critical lesson learned and should be taken into account in preparing subsequent operations. Much of the value and achievement of project objectives were realized in the final 18 months. Slower than envisaged progress in implementation was due to the steep learning curves for new and often advanced concepts (sustainable development), technical tools (GIS) and approaches, and the PMCU's accession of capability, working style and real understanding of agreed project activities;
- the *establishment of a successful and permanent financial mechanism (a trust fund)* to support biodiversity conservation requires, at the outset, an assessment of conservation needs, the production of an agreed funding plan and identified commitments to finance these needs.

PART II. STATISTICAL TABLES

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENTS

A	Achievement of Objectives	Substantial	Partial	Negligible	Not applicable
	Macro Policies				(✓)
	Sector Policies		(✓)		
	Financial Objectives		(✓)		
	Institutional Development	(✓)			
	Physical Objectives	(✓)			
	Poverty Reduction				(✓)
	Gender Issues				(✓)
	Other Social Objectives		(✓)		
	Environmental Objectives	(✓)			
	Public Sector Management		(✓)		
	Private Sector Development			(✓)	
	Other (specify)				

B	Project Sustainability	Likely (✓)	Unlikely	Uncertain

C	Bank Performance	Highly Satisfactory (✓)	Satisfactory (✓)	Deficient (✓)
	Identification		(✓)	
	Preparation Assistance		(✓)	
	Appraisal		(✓)	
	Supervision		(✓)	

D	Borrower Performance	Highly satisfactory	Satisfactory	Deficient
	Preparation			(✓)
	Implementation	(✓)		
	Covenant Compliance	(✓)		
	Operation (if applicable)			

E	Assessment of Outcome	Highly satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Highly unsatisfactory
			(✓)		

TABLE 2: RELATED BANK LOANS/CREDITS

Loan/credit title	Purpose	Year of approval	Status
Preceding operations			
1 Environmental Strategy for Czechoslovakia	Facilitate Bank assistance in environmental programming	n/a	Completed (1991)
Following operations	n/a		

TABLE 3: PROJECT TIMETABLE

Steps in Project Cycle	Date Planned	Date Actual/ Latest Estimate
Identification (Draft project Document)	2/93	2/93
Preparation (pre-Appraisal Final Executive Project Summary)	5/93	5/93
Appraisal	7/93	7/93
Negotiations	9/93	9/93
Board Presentation	9/93	9/93
Signing	9/93	9/93
Effectiveness	10/93	10/93
Project Completion	6/96	6/98
Grant Closing	12/96	6/98

TABLE 4: LOAN/CREDIT DISBURSEMENTS: CUMULATIVE ESTIMATED AND ACTUAL
(US$ thousands)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99
Appraisal estimate	500	1,500	2,300			
Actual	211	1,022	1,655	1,990	2,189	2,456
Actual as % of estimate	42.2	68.1	72			
Date of final disbursement	October 6, 1998					

TABLE 5: KEY INDICATORS FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

No implementation indicators were defined in the project document

TABLE 6: KEY INDICATORS FOR PROJECT OPERATION

No operation indicators were defined in the project document

TABLE 7: STUDIES INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT

Study and Consultant/Provider	Purpose as defined at appraisal/redefined	Completed	Impact of Study
1 Biotype Mapping within the Morava Floodplains Institute of Botany of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia	Assessment of biotypes and appropriate land uses for their maintenance	November 1995	Key species and associations and ecological management responses identified
2 Biological Survey of the Selected Side – Arms of the Morava River Palacky University, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Czech Republic	Initial step in restoration of water regime	August 1995	Priority feasible sites identified; proposed restoration techniques and associated environmental impacts assessed
3 Management of Forests within the Morava Floodplains Institute of Zoology and Ecosozology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia	Identification of current status, management issues and issues	November 1995	Changes in management and identification of optimal water regime for restoration
4 Management of Meadows within the Morava Floodplain Daphne Foundation, Slovakia	Identification of management and sustainable development practices	January 1996	Technical assessment of impacts of present practices and opportunities for implementation in the study area and in the region
5 Ex-situ Protection - Lindernia procumbens Daphne Foundation, Slovakia	Ex-situ conservation of an endangered specie.	June 1998	Priority species protected form techniques developed as a result of the study
6 Management of Meadows at the Eastern Carpathians Institute of Landscape Ecology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia (in two phases)	Examination of existing practice and issues for biodiversity conservation	November 1995 and November 1996	Significant input into Poloniny NP management plan and conservation strategy

7 Assessment of Forest Management at the Eastern Carpathians (i) Jozef Benko, Slovakia (ii) Rudolf Midriak, Slovakia (iii) Ctibor Greguš, Slovakia (iv) Štefan Korpel, Slovakia (v) Tibor Lukac, Slovakia	Rehabilitation and restoration of forest with natural forest compositions and resolution of competition for forest resources.	September 1995	Proposed silvicultural changes in forest management detailed in subsequent management plan and major consultation with forest users, researchers and managers.
8 Waste Management at the Eastern Carpathians EKOCONSULT, Slovakia	Identification of the severity of waste impacts and resolution of identified issues.	November 1996	Recommendations included in the management plan and conservation strategies
9 Catchment Protection at the Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve Faculty of Ecology and Environmental Sciences of the Technical University in Zvolen, Slovakia	Examination of the nature and solutions with respect to major erosion problems threatening biodiversity conservation in the long term	June 1996	A number of practical field measures were implemented and demonstrated indicating techniques for effective erosion reduction during silvicultural and associated operations in forest ecosystems
10. Management Plan for the Poloniny National Park (i) Viliam Klescht, Slovakia (ii) Ivan Vološeuk, Slovakia (iii) Ladislav Martinský, Slovakia (iv) Jozef Petricko, Slovakia	Planning process to achieve conservation of the Poloniny National Park	June 1998	Plan produced with technical and consultative input – yet to be implemented Impact to be monitored after project completion
11 Financial and Economic Analyses of the Forest Management at the Eastern Carpathians Forest Research Institute, Slovakia	Additional study required for carrying capacity/ and sustainable strategies components merged mid –project	June 1998	Implications for ongoing forest extractive industries included in Sustainable Development and Conservation Strategy; used in development of Polininy National Park management plan
12 Conservation Strategy for the Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve Maria Hajnalova, Slovakia	Sustainable development, to guide and support transboundary cooperation in conservation in E. Carpathian ecosystem	June 1998	Strategy to be implemented in the future
13 Financial and Economic Analyses of Sheep Breeding Eduard Michalko, Slovakia	Model project of sustainable use	January 1997	Model implemented Long term impact to be assessed as part of implementation of Conservation Strategy
14 Inventory of Seed Sources Association of Friends of the Poloniny Meadows, Slovakia		June 1998	
15 Analyses of the Heavy Metals Content in Organic Tissues Commenius University, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Slovakia	Applied research program.	October 1996	A new methodology was proven to provide indications of the significance of ex and in park pollution, significant results for management of various wildlife populations and visitor use of the park

16 Ex-situ Protection - Umbra krameri Commenius University, Slovakia		June 1997	
17 Analyses of Sedimentary Rocks Slovenská geológia, š. p Spišská Nová Ves, Slovakia	Applied research program	December 1996	Research activity providing further understanding of park geology. Impact confined to increasing knowledge
18 Assessment of Carrying Capacity Institute of Landscape Ecology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia	Identification and determination of appropriate carrying capacities (ecological, tourist and social)	May 1997	Report completed and methodologies and recommendations embodied in sustainable Development Strategies
19 Sustainable Development Strategies (i) Vladimír Ira, Slovakia (ii) Mikuláš Huba, Slovakia (iii) Ivan Tirpák, Slovakia (iv) Daphne Foundation, Slovakia (v) Ivan Wolf, Slovakia	Definition of sustainable development strategies and identification of approaches for sustainability within and outside protected areas	June 1998	Key issues affecting sustainability identified and innovative consultation and consensus building achieved Impact of implementation to be assessed (after) the project through the implementation of the National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan

TABLE 8A: PROJECT COSTS

Item	Appraisal estimate (US$ '000)			Actual/latest estimates (US$ '000)		
	Local costs	Foreign costs	Total	Local costs	Foreign costs	Total
1 Biodiversity Protection Program	564.0	165.8	729.8	539.9	152 8	672.7
2 Conservation Program	239.5	630 5	870 0	172 5	772 6	945 1
3. Institution and Infrastructure	440.3	445.5	885.8	626 5	612 6	1,239 1
Total including contingencies	1,370.8	1,298.2	2,670 0	1338 9	1538.0	2,876.9

* Appraisal does not include Austrian EcoFund co-financing

TABLE 8B: PROJECT FINANCING

Item	Appraisal estimate (US$ million)			Actual/latest estimates (US$ million)		
	Local costs	Foreign costs	Total	Local costs	Foreign costs	Total
1 GET Grant	0.000	2.3	2 3	1 279	1 167	2 45
2. MacArthur Foundation	0.010	0.300	0 310	0.000	0 345	0 35
3 Austrian EcoFund	0.000	0.500	0 500	0 000	0 026	0.03
4. Slovak Government	0 060	0.000	0 060	0.060	0 060	0 06
Total	0.060	3 110	3 170	1.339	1 538	2 87

TABLE 9: ECONOMIC COSTS AND BENEFITS

Not applicable for GEF Projects

TABLE 10: STATUS OF LEGAL COVENANTS

Agreement	Section	Covenant Type	Present Status	Original Fulfillment Date	Revised Fulfillment Date	Description of Covenant	Comments
Grant	3 01(a)	5	C	Continuous		The Recipient declares its commitment to objectives of the project as set forth in Schedule 2 to this Agreement, and, to this end, shall (i) carry out the Project through Ministry of Environment with due diligence and efficiency and in conformity with appropriate administrative and financial practices and with due regard to ecological and environmental factors, (ii) maintain in real terms the current level of funding from its own resources for biodiversity protection activities in the Project Area, and (iii) shall provide, promptly as needed, the funds, facilities, services and other resources required for the Project	CP
Grant	3 01(b)	10	C	Continuous	10/95	The Recipient shall make available the equivalent of $300,000 of the Grant to the Foundation for purposes of supporting its activities under terms and conditions which shall have been approved by the Trustee	C
Grant	3 01(c)	5	C	Continuous		Without limitation upon the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Section and except as the Recipient and the Trustee shall otherwise agree, the Recipient shall carry out the Project in accordance with the Implementation program set forth in Schedule 4 of this Agreement	CP
Grant	3 02	5	C	Continuous		The Recipient shall establish a PMCU within the Ministry of Environment, under terms of reference satisfactory to the Trustee with qualified and experienced staff in adequate numbers, under the supervision of a Project coordinator, whose qualifications and experience are satisfactory to the Trustee	C
Grant	3 03	5	C	10/31/93	3/10/94	The Recipient shall make appropriate administrative and financial arrangements for carrying out Project activities at the Tatras National Park	CP
Grant	3 04	5	C	10/31/93		The Recipient shall establish a Joint Scientific Advisory Committee in each Biodiversity Zone, under terms of reference satisfactory to the Trustee, comprised of members whose qualifications and experience are satisfactory to the Trustee, to meet and review on a semi-annual basis the scientific progress of Project implementation in the respective Biodiversity Zone	C
Grant	3 05	13	C	Continuous		The Recipient shall ensure that Project activities are carried out only on land owned by the Recipient or on land to which the Recipient has rights under long-term contractual arrangements consistent with the objectives of the Project	C
Grant	3 06	5	C	Continuous		Except as the trustee shall otherwise agree, procurement of goods, works and consultants' services required for the Project and to be financed out of the GET Grant shall be governed by the provisions of Schedule 3 to this Agreement	C
Grant	4 01(a)	1	C	Continuous		The Recipient shall maintain or cause to be maintained records and accounts adequate to reflect in accordance with sound accounting practices the operations, resources and expenditures in respect of the Project of the departments or agencies of the Recipient responsible for carrying out the Project or any part thereof	C

Grant	4.01(b)(i)	1	C	Continuous	The recipient shall have the records and accounts referred to in paragraph (a) of this Section including those for the Special Account for each fiscal year audited, in accordance with appropriate auditing principals consistently applied, by independent auditors acceptable to the Trustee,	C
Grant	4.01(b)(ii)	1	C	Continuous	furnish to the Trustee as soon as available, but in any case not later than four months after the end of each such year, the report of such audit by said auditors, of such scope and in such detail as the Trustee shall have reasonably requested, and	C
Grant	4.01(b)(iii)	1	C	Continuous	furnish to the Trustee such other information concerning said records and accounts and the audit thereof as the Trustee shall from time to time reasonably request	C
Grant	4.01(c)(i)	1	C	Continuous	For all expenditures with respect to which withdrawals from the GET Grant Account were made on the basis of statements of expenditure, the Recipient shall maintain or cause to be maintained, in accordance with paragraph (a) of this Section, records and accounts reflecting such expenditures,	C
Grant	4.01(c)(ii)	1	C	Continuous	retain, until at least one year after the Trustee has received the audit report for the fiscal year in which the last withdrawal from the GET grant Account was made, all records (contracts, orders, invoices, bills, receipts and other documents) evidencing such expenditures,	C
Grant	4.01(c)(iii)	1	C	Continuous	enable the Trustee's representatives to examine such records, and	C
Grant	4.01(c)(iv)	1	C	Continuous	ensure that such records and accounts are included in the annual audit referred to in paragraph (b) of this section and that the report of such audit contains a separate opinion by said auditors as to whether the statements of expenditure submitted during such fiscal year, together with the procedures and internal controls involved in their preparation, can be relied upon to support the related withdrawals	C

Covenant types

1 = Accounts/audits
2 = Financial performance/revenue generation from beneficiaries
3 = Flow and utilization of project funds
4 = Counterpart funding
5 = Management aspects of the project or executing agency
6 = Environmental covenants
7 = Involuntary resettlement
8 = Indigenous people
9 = Monitoring, review, and reporting
10 = Project implementation not covered by categories 1-9
11 = Sectoral or cross-sectoral budgetary or other resource allocation
12 = Sectoral or cross-sectoral policy/ regulatory/institutional action
13 = Other

Present Status

C = covenant complied with
CD = complied with after delay
CP = complied with partially
NC = not complied with

TABLE 11: COMPLIANCE WITH OPERATIONAL MANUAL STATEMENTS

No lack of compliance was observed

TABLE 12: BANK RESOURCES: STAFF INPUTS

Stage of project cycle	Planned		Actual	
	Weeks	US$ ('000)	Weeks	US$ ('000)
Preparation through Appraisal	n/a	n/a	8	22 8
Negotiations through Grant Signing	n/a	n/a	7 1	20 7
Supervision FY 94 - 95	n/a	n/a	8	22 8
Supervision FY 96	14 6	45 9	15 4	41 9
Supervision FY 97	13 3	42 5	11 2	34 8
Supervision FY 98	9.5	24.8	8 3	14.8
Completion FY 98 - 99			8 8	22 6
Total				

NB: Bank Resources planning only started in FY 96

TABLE 13: BANK RESOURCES: MISSIONS

Stage of project cycle	Month/ Year	No. of Persons	Days in Field	Specialization[1]	Performance Rating[2] Implem status	Performance Rating[2] Developm objectives	Types of Problems[3]
Through appraisal							
Pre-appraisal	3/22-26 1993	3	5	E, B			
Appraisal through Grant signing							
Post-appraisal	7/29-8/1 1993	3	3	E, B, B			
Supervision							
Supervision 1	11/3-5, 11/14-16 1993	3	4	E, B, B	S	S	
Supervision 2	3/6-9 1994	2		E, B	S	S	
GIS technical assistance	5/26-27 1994	2	1	C			
Supervision 3	6/9-13 1994	4		B, B, B, B			
Supervision 3 follow-up	6/20-21 1994	1	2	E			
Supervision 4	10/4-6 1994	1	2	B			
Supervision 5	1/30-2/2 1995	1	3	B			F,T
Supervision 6 (midterm review)	12/13-21 1995	5	6	E/B, B, B, B, B	S	S	T
Supervision 7	9/9-15 1996	3	5	B, B	S	S	
Supervision 8	2/10-15 1997	3		E/B, B, B	S	S	
Supervision 9 (Mikulov workshop)	9/30-10/1 1997	1		E/B	S	S	
Supervision 10	2/8-12 1998	1	5	B	S	S	
Supervision 11	4/20-24 1998	1	2	E/B	S	S	
Completion	11/22-29 1998	3	5	B,B,E/B	S	S	
Total							

1 - Key to Specialized staff skills
E, economist, F, forestry/biodiversity specialist, C, computer specialist

2 - Key to Performance Ratings
HS, highly satisfactory, S, satisfactory

3 - Key to Types of Problems
F, financial, M, management, T, technical

APPENDIX A: ICR MISSION'S AIDE MEMOIRE

1. A World Bank mission consisting of Messrs. Andrew Bond, Environmental Specialist (ENV), Stephen Berwick (Consultant) and Mme. Kerstin Canby, Environment Specialist (ENV), visited the Slovak Republic from November 22-29, 1998, to carry out the Implementation Completion Mission for the GEF Biodiversity Protection Project. The mission also supervised the GEF financed Enabling Activities for the Preparation of the National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan, and the National Report for the Congress of Parties Meeting held earlier in the year. The mission held discussions in Bratislava and at the High Tatras National Park to discuss project achievements and the operational plan with all the implementing agencies, many of the involved scientific institutions involved with the project and with a cross section of the NGO and local communities affected by the project.

2. The mission expresses its' appreciation to the Project Management Coordinating Unit (PMCU) in Bratislava, the administrations of the Tatras National Park, Morava and Carpathians Protected Landscape Areas and the Minister and staff of the Ministry of Environment for their considerable cooperation and courtesies extended to it and all previous missions during the projects' implementation.

3. The GEF Protection Project closed on June 30, 1998. The GEF Enabling Activities are 83% disbursed.

4. The objectives of the mission were: (i) to discuss with the government the contributions to the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) prepared by them; (ii) to complete the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) for the Slovak Biodiversity Conservation Project; and (iii) to supervise the GEF Enabling Activities Grant.

5 This Aide Memoire which was discussed with the Minister of Environment, Mr Lazlo Miklós before departure from the Slovak Republic, records the views of the Recipient and the Bank on the implementation of the GEF Protection Project and assesses its' sustainability during the operational phase. The Mission's findings are subject to confirmation by World Bank management.

GEF Biodiversity Project Implementation

6. **Project Closing and Disbursements.** The last disbursement took place on October 6, 1998, at which time a balance of SDR 990.9 was left undisbursed. The final project audit for 1998 expenditures will be carried out by Audit Slovakia (an independent Slovak auditor) and will be made available to the Bank by December 31, 1998.

7 **Formulating and Attaining Objectives.** The project objectives were to protect and strengthen representative ecosystem biodiversity of global significance in the Slovak Republic, in particular in transboundary areas. To implement these objectives, the project planned to involve the following activities:

(a) a *Biodiversity Protection Program* to initiate a range of activities including the development of management techniques for key biotypes (forest, wetlands and alpine meadows), the development of community support for the reserve system and particularly for the sustainable management of contiguous forest systems adjacent to the protected areas, specific *ex-situ* conservation measures where ecosystem protection and restoration were unlikely to succeed, and biodiversity research and management;

(b) a *Conservation Program* to develop revenue generation mechanisms for the protected area system, to examine the feasibility of using economic mechanisms to manage visitation levels, to foster interactions with local communities and land management and uses in adjacent forest systems, and to institute demonstration activities to be used as models both nationally and internationally (particularly in the ecosystems in the transborder areas); and

(c) an *Institutional Infrastructure Improvement Program* to provide support for project management coordination at the national level and at the three selected zones, for professional development and training, for a small grants program for the development of the Slovak Republic environmental NGOs and particularly support for the new Foundation for Eastern Carpathian Biodiversity Protection (FECBC) in the Slovak Republic, Poland and Ukraine.

8. The initially agreed objectives were quite broad, although the activities supported by the project were quite specific. They did not enumerate objective, measurable and verifiable indicators of achievement, causing difficulty in assessing the success of some project elements and in many respects should more appropriately be considered goals.

9. **Achievement of Objectives.** Overall, the project produced satisfactory results and in some regions novel solutions to common regional issues, in particular in the Eastern Carpathian and the Morava Floodplain project areas. However, in the High Tatras National Park, expectations were not fully met due to institutional weaknesses during implementation.

10 Nearly all the work planned was pursued with highly satisfactory results in the restoration and management of meadows at the Morava floodplain, capacity-building for nature conservation data management, international cooperation and the results of applied research. Weaker or innovative components such as the assessment of carrying capacity or planning for sustainable development did not meet expectations, but represent valuable exercises with lessons learned. Although more time is needed to assess final results, the project has already achieved a number of significant milestones: establishment of the Poloniny National Park, introduction of economic assessments into conservation planning, partial restoration of side-arms of the Morava River, and the tri-national Foundation for Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Conservation, support to partnerships between nature conservation authorities and local communities. Institutional capacity has also been an important outcome, as it builds the foundation for future activities beyond the life of the project.

11. **Project Sustainability.** The Biodiversity Action Plan adopted in August 1998 contains a number of activities to continue operations initiated under the project. Certain activities will continue, such as the restoration and management of the Morava Floodplain meadows

(EUPHARE for three years and agreements with farmers); further restoration of Morava River ecosystem (commitment by water management authorities in both Slovakia and Austria); waste separation in Eastern Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (local communities); cooperative sheep keeping in Vychodna village (local people interest in job opportunities and revenue generation); and monitoring and management of meadows at the Poloniny National Park/ Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve.

12. **Contribution of the Recipient to the ICR.** A detailed report was supplied by the PMCU to the mission as the contribution to the ICR This material was used extensively by the mission and was very useful.

13. **Key Lessons Learned.** Based on discussions held during the completion mission and regional workshops, the key lessons learned from the Recipient and Bank's perspective are:

- *institutional stability* is a key condition for project success. The Bank should be notified of institutional changes which the Recipient decides to implement, and their implications on the Project. Also, clear terms of reference for the PMCU are desirable to minimize outside negative influences on the PMCU work;

- *in-situ conservation* remains a primary approach to Biodiversity conservation in Slovakia (supported by *ex-situ* conservation measures as needed). In changing social and economic conditions, more players' behavior can now be influenced, as the Project proved, through proper incentives. Nature-based tourism is becoming an important source of revenue for remote communities, and the economic value of nature areas is beginning to be recognized. Participation through the formal surveys and consultations during the development of the Sustainable Development Strategies provided a new approach for reserve managers to interface and work with local communities, a key lesson to be maintained and indeed expanded by the protected area managers in the future;

- *professional development* is a vital step in building human capacity, but a needs assessment should occur early in the project in order to better design the component and to provide more focus to these activities to ensure new skills/knowledge are better integrated into design and implementation. It was also apparent that issues such as budget constraints, understaffing, etc. constrained the full application or transfer of knowledge obtained in the training process;

- *GIS training* should be expanded so that more than one staff member per site are trained which reduces the risk of subsequent loss to the private sector. Biologists (users), who best understand its applications, also need to be given such training as they are more likely to remain in the job and justify such expensive training investments.

- *involving NGOs* during implementation and through the Small Grants Program were keys to project successes. Such involvement also made a significant contribution in increasing public awareness of general biodiversity conservation issues;

- *explicit targets and indicators for measuring progress* against the implementation plans and project objectives help managers identify the success, cost-effectiveness and basic usefulness of most components throughout implementation. These, as is now common practice, need to be established at the outset. However, long term success or impact of a project activity

relative to its stated goal(s) cannot be fairly assessed at project completion. For example, professional development and training enables the immediate prosecution of some project tasks such as GIS use, but will not be fully realized for at least several years when the long-term influence can be better evaluated. Nonetheless, the absence of indicators can at best be characterized as a short coming of project design. The fundamental changes that occurred in the country during the implementation of the project created both opportunities and constraints. In this context, the projects objectives can be seen as somewhat ambitious;

- the *initial timescale (3 years) was overly ambitious,* due to a combination of slower than envisaged progress in implementation and an over optimistic implementation schedule. With regard to the latter, a number of causative factors were identified and include: (i) the fact that this was one of the initial GEF operations, (ii) GEF projects are inherently comprehensive and thus complex; and, (iii) institutional capacity building or attitudinal shifts take time. These early projects of the GEF Pilot Phase uniformly required longer implementation timeframes (circa 5 years) as witnessed by the value of the extensions which all the regional projects requested. Nonetheless, an over optimistic implementation schedule is a design flaw and a critical lesson learned, and should be taken into account in preparing subsequent operations. Much of the value and achievement of objectives were realized in the final 18 months of the Slovak Project. Slower than envisaged progress in implementation was due to the steep learning curves for new and often advanced concepts (sustainable development), technical tools (GIS) and approaches, and the PMCU's accession of capability, working style and real understanding of agreed project activities;

- the *establishment of a successful and permanent financial mechanism (a trust fund)* to support biodiversity conservation requires, at the outset, an assessment of conservation needs, the production of an agreed funding plan and identified commitments to finance these needs.

GEF Enabling Activities

14. In general, the Enabling Activities have proceeded very well. The PMCU provided a detailed report to the mission (Progress Report No. 2 June 1997 to November 1998) which indicates that the National Biodiversity Strategy has been published and the Biodiversity Action Plan was endorsed through Government resolution No. 515 of August 4, 1998. The National Report has also been endorsed by the government and was officially submitted to the CBD Secretariat during October 1998.

15. The mission endorsed the proposal to use the remaining Enabling Activity funds for the development of two sets of indicators, which will enable the government to measure: (i) the status of implementation of the governments' obligations with respect to the Convention on Biological Diversity; and (ii) the status of biodiversity and the effectiveness or otherwise of measures implemented as part of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. As such, a joint Czech and Slovak workshop on indicators is proposed for early January 1999. The deadline to develop appropriate indicators, specified in resolution #15, is February 28, 1999, the expected completion date for the Enabling Activities.

APPENDIX B: BORROWER'S CONTRIBUTION TO ICR

PREFACE

1. This report represents the contribution of the Slovak government to the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) for the Biodiversity Protection Project. It was developed to relate the experiences of the Slovak government and counterparts and in response to the formal World Bank communication dated March 9, 1998. As requested the report includes: (a) an assessment of the project objectives, design, implementation, and operation experience; (b) an evaluation of the Slovak performance during the evolution and implementation of the project, with special emphasis on lessons learned that may be relevant in the future; and (c) an evaluation of the performance of the Bank during the evolution and implementation of the project, including the effectiveness of the relationship between the Slovak Government (Ministry of Environment) and the Bank, with special emphasis on lessons learned.

PROJECT CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

2. The Slovak Biodiversity Protection Project supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) was prepared in the period of geopolitical changes taking place in the Central and Eastern Europe. Former socialist (communist) systems were collapsing and the respective countries of the region entered transformation to development of new economies ruled by principles of market.

3. In 1989, important co-operative efforts were greatly stimulated by the Initiative "Ecological Bricks of Our Common House of Europe" which was co-ordinated by the WWF Austria and supported by a large group of European NGOs. The Initiative identified 24 internationally significant areas in Europe needing conservation attention to address the threats generated by the said geopolitical changes as well as to mitigate at those areas, damage caused to natural environment by pollution and/or inappropriate land management/use practices in the past.

4 In Slovakia, forests cover 1,930,000 ha, which represents approx. 41% of the country's total area (ploughed land represents 49%, building areas 5%, waters 2% and others 3%). Of these forests, 40 to 45% are semi-natural, but what sets them apart is that they have a composition of species that only slightly differs from the original forests This is very special compared to most of the countries of central and western Europe. There are also over 70 fragments of natural and virgin forests with a total area of 20,000 ha that have been preserved.

5. Wetlands and inland water ecosystems, the occurrence of which is undermined mainly by the accessibility of water, can be found from the lowlands to the alpine zone. They feature a wide range of types including, inter alia, willow-poplar forests, oak-elm-ash forests, riparian alder wood, ecosystems of stagnant and slow flowing water, tall-herb floodplains, bogs and fens and mountain lakes.

6. Meadows, except for alpine and floodplain meadows, are secondary - human activities formed - ecosystems. However, if appropriately managed some mountain meadows are among the most species diverse European ecosystems.

7. Alpine and sub-alpine ecosystems encompasses a varied palette of biotypes including alpine meadows, rocky walls and cracks, snow beds and dwarfed pine growths. They were less affected by human activities in the past because of their inaccessibility and harsh climatic conditions.

8. In 1993, biodiversity had been recognised as one of the five priorities of the State Environmental Policy. In 1997, Slovakia become one of the first countries within the region, which had National Biodiversity Strategy completed and approved by the Government and subsequently endorsed by the Parliament.

9. The protection of biodiversity *in-situ* has been traditionally connected with the protection of nature. In Slovakia, the protection of nature and creation of conditions for the legal existence of protected territories dates back to the time of feudal ownership. In 1993, when the GEF Project started to be implemented, the 1955 State Protection of Nature Act was still in force. However, a new legal framework to ensure more effective protection of biodiversity in changing social-economic conditions was needed. In 1994, the National Council of the Slovak Republic passed the Act No 287 on Nature and Landscape Protection, which became effective from January 1, 1995. The new Act has introduced a comprehensive concept for the protection of nature based on the territorial system of ecological stability and the classification of the entire territory to five levels of protection and utilisation. Besides the clearly determined territorial protection, the new Act on Nature and Landscape Protection also defines the principal rights and duties in respect of general protection of nature and landscape, of protected flora and fauna species and of protected minerals and fossils. It also defines sanctions for the violation of the conditions for the protection of nature and landscape, and the competencies of nature protection authorities.

10. As of May 31, 1998, there were 7 national parks, 16 protected landscape areas, 347 nature reserves, 229 national nature reserves, 214 nature monuments, 45 national nature monuments and 174 protected sites. The total area protected in Slovakia, including buffer zones, covers more than 22% of the country territory.

11. Despite the long tradition in nature protection and some positive achievements in this field, many negative developments had been observed with regard to biodiversity. Gradual deforestation, intensive agriculture, development of settlements, draining of wetlands, regulation of rivers, and pollution of the water and air have resulted in changes in distribution of ecosystems and the extinction of several species of plants and animals, while others have become rare or endangered.

12. Lacking domestic funds and not wanting to borrow at market interest rates, the Government turned to GEF to help protect its biodiversity. Three areas were selected for the direct support under the Project. The Tatra National Park, which has been a flag park not only of the country but of the whole Carpathians Arch as well, has been suffering from severe pollution which induced decline of forests and also affected populations of the fauna species, as well as from "ill"-controlled development of tourism. Morava Floodplain with its wetland ecosystems both not well inventoried in the past and yet well preserved thanks to the "iron curtain" which had prevented public access and restricted the economic use of the area have become endangered from potential recreational and other economic use. Last but not least – Eastern Carpathians represents within Slovakia a unique area with remnants of beech and fir-and-beech primeval forests and specific mountain meadows – "poloniny" featuring both Eastern and Western Carpathians species. Both ecosystems required rapid assessment and urgent actions to prevent biodiversity loss from inappropriate management practices.

13. Besides the above mentioned problems issues of privatisation and/or re-privatisation had to be addressed which put biological resources including those in protected areas to risk from pressure for rapid short term production to compensate losses to owners from the whole socialist history of the country, when they were not allowed to use they resources, and to bring income to families facing unemployment.

14 All the three areas were not only identified as belonging to the most important Slovak's biological resources, but were also internationally recognised (Morava Floodplain was a Ramsar site, Tatras and Eastern Carpathians were UNESCO MaB biosphere reserves) and thus appropriate for GEF assistance.

15. The preparation of the GEF Biodiversity Protection Project started in co-operation with the Environmental Committee of the former Czech and Slovak Federative Republic in 1991, with simultaneous involvement of the respective republic's ministries of environment and agriculture. Completion of the pre-implementation period was delayed by splitting of the country and formation of the two independent states, the Czech and Slovak Republics, in 1993. Final stages of preparation of the Slovak Biodiversity Protection Project were handled by the national Ministries of the Environment and Agriculture.

16. The Project was complemented by the GEF financed Poland (FY 92),Ukrainian (FY 93) and the Czech Republic Biodiversity Protection projects (FY 93) and joint Poland-Slovak-Ukrainian-WWF and Mac Arthur Foundation initiative to establish an international Foundation for the Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Protection. It was the first World Bank project to be prepared and implemented with the MoE, and so it required both parties to become acquainted with each other's objectives and business style.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. The Project was to realise Pilot Phase GEF objectives, namely global environmental benefits, innovation, demonstration value and replicability, contribution to the GEF portfolio (that is, testing of particular methodologies or protection of particular biodiversity not covered elsewhere in the GEF portfolio) and sustainability. On a national level, the Project also aimed to develop institutional and personal capacities which would ensure continuation of the relevant activities initiated under the Project.

2 The Project was designed in a series of workshops in the Slovak Republic with staff of the project areas and Slovak Institute for Nature Protection, scientists and the Slovak Ministry of the Environment Department of Nature and Landscape Protection. To meet the objectives, the project had a complicated design and its full implementation required longer period than was planned for on the date of signing the Grant Agreement (closing date was extended twice, totally by 18 months).

MAJOR FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROJECT

3. As one of the first Bank operations during the phase of transformation from planned to market economy in Slovakia and its first environmental operation, the Project came in the first year of the country's existence following the separation of the former Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, e.g., in a period which was marked with on-going changes in legislative, administrative and institutional arrangements. Some of them had also impacted the Project implementation.

4. Paradoxically, the major influence on the Project originated from entering into force of the Nature and Landscape Protection Act No. 287/94 on January 1, 1995. The new law says that all national parks in Slovakia are supervised by the Ministry of the Environment and that MoE establishes their administration offices. At that time, it was not the case for both Tatra and Pieniny National Parks (their were supervised by the MoA and administered through joined administration office – the Administration of the Tatra National Park). The said provision found the MoE not ready to take speedy and effective actions. However, MoA promptly changed the statuses and the name of the former Tatra National Park Administration and on its basis established the State Forests of the Tatra National Park, an organisation which delegated, on an interim basis, the functions of the nature conservation organisation. Negotiations were conducted between the two Ministries on the division of property, powers over the territory and related transfer of staff into the supervision of the MoE. This resulted in lowering of staff morale at the Research Station of the Tatra National Park. Job uncertainty and restrictions in financing nature conservation activities in TANAP further aggravated the situation. As yet, negotiations have not been finalised, nevertheless a small administration office for TANAP has been in operation since the spring 1996, but without access to the equipment procured under the Project, which is still kept by the State Forests.

5. Ongoing re-privatisation of land, forest in particular, prevented forest restoration activities within the Morava river floodplain (transformation of American poplar plantations into forests with site specific species composition) and the establishment of a central forest nursery, including a greenhouse in support of pollution affected forests in Tatra National Park. The were two reasons. First of all, national regulations restricted major investments on land with possible ownership claims by non-state entities and the Grant Agreement bound the Recipient to ensure that the Project activities were carried out on land owned by the Recipient or on land to which the Recipient had rights under longer-term contractual arrangements.

6 Project activities in Eastern Carpathians which included major management planning component under the project - development of a management plan were affected by institutional reform within environment sector which took place in 1993, when Slovak Environmental Agency was established headquartered in Banská Bystrica. As a result, a full capacity for nature conservation management planning concentrated in the former Slovak Institute for Nature Conservation, which was referred in the Project Document disappeared. Also late designation of the Poloniny National Park (Eastern Carpathians) in 1997 instead of 1993 as it was foreseen in relevant Government resolution has resulted in delay of the whole process with the management plan still in draft and not yet to be dealt with by the Government.

7. Somewhat weakened government commitment to the project was observed from time to time in the course of the Project. Frequent changes in high position MoE officials in Nature Conservation section of the Ministry (3 times change in Director of the Section of Nature and Landscape Conservation, Inter-sectoral Relations and EIA, Director of Nature and Landscape Conservation Department was replaced twice), 4 times replacement of State Secretary of the Environment as well as a transfer in 1995 within the MoE organisation scheme of the PMCU, from the direct supervision by the State Secretary as agreed during the negotiation of the Grant Agreement to the Nature and Landscape Conservation Department.

8. On the positive side, the appointment of qualified and very committed professionals within the PMCU ensured smooth implementation of the project, relatively consistent with the original design. The added advantage was that the Project Manager had previous experiences with

managing PHARE projects and thus had a good understanding for strictly following rules and procedures of international donors.

9. It is necessary to add that the bilateral financing foreseen at project appraisal (an amount of 500,000 USD via Austrian EcoFund) did not come through in its entirety and still remains unclear to both the PMCU and the MoE. Nevertheless, the study on sustainable tourism in Morava Region was financed out of this source.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Morava

1. The Project provided for the substantial increase of knowledge of the biodiversity of the area, using GIS, which had been closed to the public for a couple of decades in the past, and established a basis for ecologically more sensitive management of floodplain meadows, forests and the river itself. Restoration activities implemented in this project area have received high attention of the stake holders, whether they were farmers or water management authorities and they all show the commitment to sustain the activities started under the project.

2. The project attracted additional funds from the PHARE to continue in restoration of the floodplain meadows and to develop ecologically sound meadows management plan for the area.

3. Restoration of the two Morava river meanders from the main flow when the river was being channelled through this century, possibly the most controversial component of the Project, was and continues to be discussed by both the Slovak and Austrian water management authorities to identify common follow-up actions, which would contribute to the highest possible revitalisation of the downstream section of the river while ensuring integrity of the state border.

4. The technical equipment acquired under the Project is in the operation, while the full use in the future will depend on the Government staff policy towards nature conservation authorities.

5. The component was successful in initiating a mechanism to generate a modest revenue in support of biodiversity protection of the floodplain through guiding services and selling the small goods to visitors of the area , which both has been operated by the local NGO and has developed an effective co-operation with local communities as well

Tatry

6. Institutionally, the capacity-building elements of the component did not go as far as intended. The technical equipment was reported to be in operation, however its effective use in the future will depend on division of the property and substantive staff between the local state forest administration and the administration of the National Park. Its continued use for biodiversity protection in the Tatra National Park is uncertain as move of the certain equipment into different nature conservation workplaces has been indicated.

7 The scientific capacity to study and monitor the biological resources of the Tatras, and to collaborate with Polish counterparts, is strong and has been even strengthened in the course of the Project; but the will and financial resources to translate this research into *in-situ* action are not currently present.

8. From the biological standpoint, no *in-situ* conservation took place whose sustainability can be assessed. Technologically, *ex-situ* conservation facilities acquired under the Project can contribute to safeguarding the biological integrity of the Tatra Mountains. However, effective

measures have to be taken in the future to stop continuous deterioration of the area through pollution and tourism development.

9. Without a doubt there are good prospects for sheep farming supported in one of the local villages of Vichodna. It provides job opportunities for local people and helps to maintain biodiversity and aesthetic values of the Liptov basin, which were developed there as result of traditional human activities in the past and but threatened by intensive agriculture during the period of the socialist history and in recent times by decline of agricultural activities in sub-mountainous areas.

10. The component did not create the financial means to continue limited project activities. Thus they will solely depend on allocation of Government resources or future fund-raising activities

Eastern Carpathians

11. The long-term biological integrity of the Eastern Carpathians ecosystem is now better protected than prior to the project, although one cannot say definitively if it is adequately protected for perpetuity. A part of the territory has received the higher conservation status (national park – IUCN category II instead of protected landscape area – IUCN category V). The international co-operation has increased and its effective continuation is likely, in particular, through the Foundation for the Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Conservation which provides both the institutional framework and the financial mechanism, to support actions for conservation of biodiversity.

12. The effects of in situ conservation actions which took place on the forest land will continue as well as management and monitoring of meadows communities.

13. The new field station in Nova Sedlica village has become a favourite venue for local as well as national events and training and education programs GIS and other equipment is in operation and represents a valuable asset for the future work of the administration office.

14. Although certain aspects of public involvement were not as constructive as they might have been, the exercise undertaken under the Project gave a good start to new ideas regarding decision-making and participatory planning.

BANK PERFORMANCE

15. The Bank's performance in preparation and appraisal was satisfactory. The Bank's missions were staffed with professionals having appropriate technical expertise to address both the country and GEF's priorities in protecting biological diversity. The Bank provided the Recipient with a (general) training in procurement prior to signing the Grant Agreement, which was positive and useful and allowed the Recipient ("although at the last minute") to have a foundation for consideration of procurement procedures proposed by the Bank (which was particularly important in the absence of national procurement law at that period). However, there was no training on financial issues, disbursement and project accounting until the advanced stage of project implementation. The project was designed in an innovative and pioneering way; having included integrated conservation and development program, its design was seen both ambitious and comprehensive, but as reality has shown not easy to implement.

16. Bank performance during implementation was highly satisfactory. Communication between the Bank and the Recipient was quite intensive, seven main supervision missions took place between November 1993 and February 1997, and several small missions and consultations took place in between and after February 1997. The Bank staff, both technical and operational, was

always open to provide the Recipient with consultation or advice as it was needed. However, from time to time, delay was observed in certain responses from the part of the Bank, which was particularly critical when required approvals were involved. The Recipient's opinion is that it may have been caused partly by the Bank's staff being over-loaded with work and simultaneously involved in GEF and lending operations of the Bank, while later given their importance for respective countries economies were putting more demands on the Bank staff. The supervision missions were, again, staffed with experienced professionals, mostly biodiversity specialists (unfortunately, with one exception only, which was the second task manager, they all came from continents different from Europe and had no previous field experiences with Central European ecosystems and local management traditions). The main co-operating team was kept stable in composition, however task managers were changed 4 times in the course of the Project implementation plus in summer 1994 there was only a contact person designated for a period of two-tree months until a new task manager took over the Project early in October 1994. From a general point of view, the Recipient deems it not to be very practical for keeping continuity of project implementation. However, each of the four task managers were viewed by the Recipient as dedicated and competent people and the changes which happened did not affect the Project negatively.

RECIPIENT PERFORMANCE

17. In early stages

(a) low experience (of both beneficiaries and government departments) in dealing with international donors, including the World Bank, and lower understanding of the GEF mission which resulted in less effective co-operation from the part of the Recipient,

(b) establishment the Slovak Republic as a sovereign country instead of being a republic within a federation caused delay in finalising the Project details and preparation of the Grant Agreement (counter- partners of the Bank had changed, one more Project area – Morava Floodplain included under the project in final stages of the project preparation to provide for trans-national co-operation in protection of the Morava -- Dyje Rivers ecosystems with the Czech Republic).

1 In the Implementation phase

(a) The Government - all main legal covenants were met in a timely fashion, however somehow weakened commitment of the Government was observed and low support to resolutions of conflicts which have affected the Project's effective implementation for instance Tatra National Park

(b) PMCU - commitment of the PMCU director and her staff to the Project objectives had been a principal driving force for the Project implementation. Designation in 1994 of the PMCU as National Biodiversity Secretariat had both positive and problematic aspects. Of this, certainly positive side was that the Project had not remained isolated from the national biodiversity processes, including development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and through later continuity and sustainability of certain Project components were ensured. A problematic aspect of that development could have occasionally been work load and time constraints put on the PMCU.

1. In addition to the above, Project Areas staff provided a valuable technical input to the Project and was engaged in co-ordinating local stakeholders. Local managers were appointed only for certain periods of the Project implementation and provided support to activities implemented in the Project areas. In recruitment processes, lack of proper candidates available locally in remote areas of Slovakia was observed (reluctance to temporary jobs, unsatisfactory language skills) . Participation of NGOs, research institutions, universities and other local entities gave visibility to the project and ensured its social sustainability.

2. The performance of project consultants and contractors was in general satisfactory, however in certain cases a too academic approach and lack of sense for practical solutions had been observed in carrying out the studies.

3. Reluctance towards using foreign consultants was justified considering the language barrier and lack of experiences in working within the region. On the other hand, there was frequent contact and sharing of experiences with Czech Republic PMCU, managers and experts.

4. The grant was almost fully (over 99%) disbursed; the undisbursed amount corresponds to gains on the exchange rate between SDR and dollar which were not utilised by the Recipient.

ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOME

5 Overall, the project produced satisfactory results, in particular at the Eastern Carpathians and the Morava Floodplain Project Areas. However, as far as the Tatra National Park is concerned, the expectations were not fully met due to institutional weakness occurred in the course of the Project implementation.

6. Nearly all the work planned was pursued and some results have been highly satisfactory (restoration and management of meadows at the Morava floodplain, building of capacity for nature conservation data management in support of relevant decision making, international co-operation and some research). Weaker or innovative components like assessment of carrying capacity or planning for sustainable development did not meet all its real targets, however both represent valuable exercise from which lessons for future activities can be learnt. Although more time is needed to assess its final results, the project already achieved a number of significant milestones: establishment of the Poloniny National Park, introduction of the certain economical assessments into the conservation planning, partial restoration of meanders of the Morava River, tri-national Foundation for the Eastern Carpathians Biodiversity Conservation, and support to partnership building between nature conservation authorities and local communities. Last but not least, contribution of the project is human capacity which has been built through training activities along with strengthening of institutional capacities which both will remain as assets to the Recipient.

7. With regard to the complexity of the Project objectives and a broad scope of activities which were carried out under the Project, it has been so far the most comprehensive biodiversity project in the Slovak Republic, and was fully supportive to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular to the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of its components.

FUTURE OPERATION

8. The Recipient has not prepared a formal operational plan covering the Project per se, however there is a detailed Biodiversity Action Plan adopted through the Government resolution No. 515 of August 4, 1998, which contains a number of activities to continue with operations

started under the Project. Due to the serious constrains in the state budget for some of them foreign financing will be needed.

9 Besides, a draft Management plan which is available for the Poloniny National Park/ Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve, some of the recommendations made on how to manage forests in the Eastern Carpathians and on the Morava Floodplain have been accepted by the forest management authorities and have been incorporated into forest management plans through which they are going to be implemented. Certain activities started under the Project will naturally continue, as the beneficiaries have a direct interest in pursuing them, like restoration and ecological management of the Morava Floodplain meadows (EU via PHARE finances next three year activities, relevant agreements with farmers concluded), further restoration of the Morava River ecosystem (water management authorities both in Slovakia and Austria show a deep commitment to that) waste separation at the Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve (driven by local communities), co-operative sheep keeping in the Vychodna village (Tatras) (provides job opportunities and generates revenue for local people), monitoring and management of meadows at the Poloniny National Park/Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve.

10. The Recipient would be interested in support through GEF Enabling Activities of the CBD CHM (biota data management) and has supported a project idea submitted by the Daphne – Centre for Applied Ecology for financing by the GEF, aimed at mapping natural and semi-natural meadows nation-wide and their sustainable management. Last year, under the medium size projects window /climate change focal area/ it explored possibilities of financing a project aimed at mitigation of climate change on the Central European ecosystems.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

11. The project was intended to assist the Slovak Republic's effort to conserve its significant variety of ecosystems and plant and animal species, to contribute to the on-going international efforts to conserve biodiversity *in-situ* and to test approaches to integrated conservation and development planning for the buffer zones of the protected areas, including development of revenue generation mechanisms.

12. Institutional stability is one of the key conditions for Project success. In the future, it should be included among legal covenants of the Recipient, or clear rules should be defined on how the institutional changes, which the Recipient would decide to implement in the course of the project, would have to be notified to the Bank and which implications they could have on the Project as a whole or its single components. Also, clear terms of reference for the PMCU are desirable.

13. *In-situ* conservation remains a primary approach to biodiversity conservation in Slovakia, which is as needed, supported by proper *ex-situ* conservation measures. In changing social and economic conditions it has now more players, whose behaviour can be influenced, as the Project has proved, through proper incentives.

14. It has become apparent that the potential economic value of natural or well preserved nature areas is becoming more and more recognised by the local communities. Notwithstanding that is does not provide solution to all problems, nature conservation based tourism is viewed as an important, source of revenue generation for the communities living in remote areas (especially in mountains and valleys), which, in addition, feature higher rates of unemployment as it is in the cities or village communities in fertile lowlands.

15. Training represents only a first step in the general human capacity building process. But if the conditions are not created (for instance due to budget constraints, understaffing of the protected areas administrations) for the full use/application of the knowledge obtained in the training process, the usefulness of the training is jeopardised. Also training, especially cost demanding ones which generate highly demanded skills (and highly paid for) by the private sector, has to be followed with proper staff stabilisation policies.

16. Involvement of NGOs into Project implementation whether through the NGO Small Grants Program, or through the main Project activities, proved to be very useful. It not only gave larger publicity to the Project but contributed to the cost effectiveness of certain activities by avoiding spending grant funds to pay high overhead costs of the larger academic and research institutions.

17 In addition, the NGO Small Grants Program represented sn important source of financing of the NGOs activities on the national level, particularly in the situation of general shortage of funds for the non-governmental sector and weak tax and other policies to encourage the emerging private sector to provide funds in support of environmental activities. This was especially important in light of the fact that some NGOs in Slovakia posses competent and flexible staff, which in many cases is represented by young scientists eager to have a possibility to apply modern methods of scientific research and data processing. Such NGOs, if the support for their activities continues can represent a beginning of formation in Slovakia of non- governmental /private/ non-profit environmentally oriented institutions, which can be found in many countries of the developed world, can become a valuable contribution to both the national and international consultants markets.

18. The project was best designed for the Eastern Carpathians, as it included different actions from stock-taking and assessments through a management plan for the National Park and framework conservation strategy for the International Biosphere Reserve. However, both have not yet received legally binding status. Also well designed was the Morava Floodplain, although development of management options was not done in a comprehensive plan covering the whole Project area, but rather as recommendations for single ecosystems (forests, meadows, freshwaters), which however have not decreased their quality.

19 For Tatras, the Project seems to be under-designed, because it lacked sufficient *in-situ* actions to follow through on what it initiated.

20. The lack of explicit targets and indicators for measuring progress against implementation plans and project objectives prevented a clear assessment of success, cost-effectiveness and basic usefulness of most components throughout implementation. Also specific guidance for project progress reporting if provided at the project start, could contribute to better analysing the Project partial achievements or failures in the course of the implementation phase and possibly help to avoid omissions.

21. The project was able to generate important support through PHARE (the Morava Floodplain), Man and the Biosphere Program and provided input to other initiatives (Trialog).

APPENDIX C: BORROWER'S COMMENTS ON ICR

GEF Biodiversity Protection Project (SK - GEF 28644)
Remarks to the Implementation Completion Report

Preface:

Paragraph 2: as shown at the monthly disbursement summaries which came after the date of the last disbursement (October 6, 1998) SDR 990.90 has remained undisbursed at the Grant Account as well as USD 163.10 representing undisbursed balance of advance to the Special Account, which counting together is more than USD 1000.- .

Evaluation summary:

Paragraph 6: we strongly recommend to make reference to the Tatra National Park when central forest nursery is mentioned to make it clear that the intention was to establish the Central Forest Nursery located at the Tatra National Park and serving to the park.

We do not feel that unavailability of funds from the Austrian Ecofund caused significant re-organisation of Project components and budget. As indicated earlier, co-financing coming from this source was never clear to the Recipient neither it was clearly reflected in the Project budget.

ICR Part I.

Paragraph 5: We kindly request to replace the world „reserve" with expression „protected landscape areas" which reflects the status of the two project areas in accordance with national nature conservation law at the time of the project preparation and at the early stages of its implementation.

Paragraph 7 (c) :support via the Project was intended for an NGO Small Grants Program at the national level, not for the Foundation NGO Small Grants Program, which later was established by the decision of the Foundation Board. Accordingly, the paragraph should reed as follows:
„. . for professional development and training, for an NGO Small Grants Program and for the new FECBC in the Slovak Republic, Poland and Ukraine." (In addition, the establishment of the Foundation was originally budgeted for under the Conservation program)

Paragraph 17: We request the last sentence be deleted or amended. Floodplain with its typical regimes existed before the project, only its area was decreased as result of introducing flood control arrangements in the past. Certain project activities (restoration) allowed for certain ecosystems to return gradually.

Paragraph 19 : The second sentence should read as follows : While the Nature and Landscape Protection Act No. 287/94 effective since January 1995 stipulated that all national parks were to be supervised by the MOE, at that time TANAP was under the jurisdiction of the MLM, which promptly changed the status of existing institutional arrangements from principally nature conservation oriented to forest management ones. (please note that the status of the area has remained unchanged, in addition in Slovakia, we do not recognise State Forests as provided for by the relevant U S. legislation)

Paragraph 22: editorial : „of „ in the 5th line should be deleted.

Paragraph 23: from the text it is not clear how many Board members represent a quorum. Therefore, please note, that to have a quorum 9 country representatives (out of 12) and 1 (out of 2) institutional representative (either of WWF or Mac Arthur Foundation) have to be presented at the meeting.

Paragraph 28 : The first sentence requires revision, it seems to be a combination of the two ideas: Project Management was entrusted to a Project Management and Co-ordination Unit housed at the MOE. As needed, additional management officers were appointed in each of the three project areas.

Paragraph 51: Please note that more appropriate is to refer to a state budget or national (?) budget as current Slovak Republic has no arrangements which can be referred to as federal.

Paragraph 52 : „.../ Eastern Carpathians MaB" should be replaced with „...../Eastern Carpathians Biosphere Reserve"

ICR Part II.

Table 3 : Project Time Table

Please no that :

- we have no data on when the project was apprised, but was it only in 7/95 ?
- grant agreement negotiations took place in 9/93 not in 7/93
- original closing date was 12/96 not 06/97, while project completion was expected by 06/96.
- extended closing date was 06/98 with additional grace period till October 31, 1998.

Table 4 : Loan/Credit Disbursements: Cumulative Estimated and Actual
Figure indicating the actual cumulative disbursements in FY 98 should be revised to correspond with figures in respective tables 8A and 8B.

Table 7 : Studies included in the Project :

Table does not include indication that the studies were completed on the date indicated at the „status column"

Study 7 was not delivered in 5 parts, but it was developed by five named consultants.

Study 11 was also used for developing a management plan for the Poloniny National Park

Study 12 primary purpose was to support and guide a trans-boundary co-operation in conservation of the Eastern Carpathians ecosystem.

spelling notes:

Study 7 Mr. Korpe should spell Korpel
Mr. Lukáé should spell Lukac

Study 10 Mr. Vološéuk should spell Vološcuk
Mr. Petričko should spell Petricko

Table 10 : Status of legal covenants

Revised fulfilment date for covenant included in section 3.01(b) of the Grant Agreement should be 10/95 (not 4/94).
Revised fulfilment date for covenant included in section 3.03 is 3/10/94 (understand March 10,1994)
Revised fulfilment date for covenant of section 3.04 is the same as was original e.g. 10/31/93!

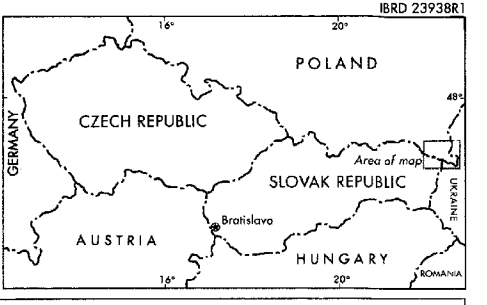
Appendix A : ICR Mission's Aide Memoire

Paragraph 1 : „Congress of the Parties Meeting" should be replaced with „Conference of the Parties Meeting"

Paragraph 4 : Please note that Slovak GEF project was always named Biodiversity Protection Project not Biodiversity Conservation Project.

Paragraph 15 : spelling - in line 2 .."he" (government) should be replaced with „the"(government)

IBRD 23938R1



POLAND, SLOVAK REPUBLIC AND UKRAINE
GEF BIODIVERSITY PROJECTS
EAST CARPATHIAN BIOSPHERE RESERVES

- PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL BIOSPHERE RESERVE BOUNDARY
- BOUNDARY OF "STUZICA" NATIONAL RESERVE

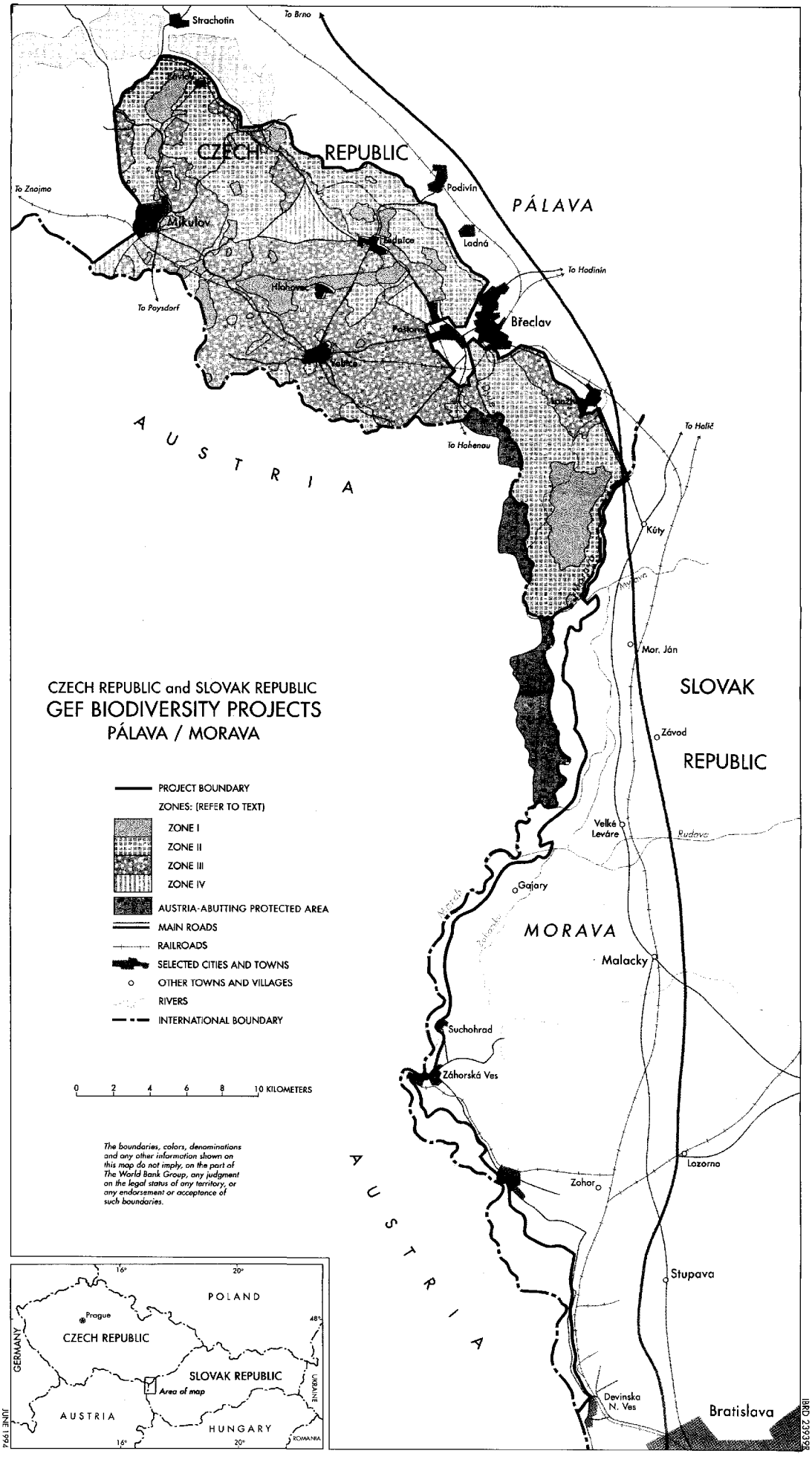
ZONES:
- CORE
- BUFFER
- TRANSITION

- MAIN ROADS
- RAILROAD
- SELECTED CITIES AND TOWNS
- OTHER TOWNS AND VILLAGES
- RIVERS
- INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES

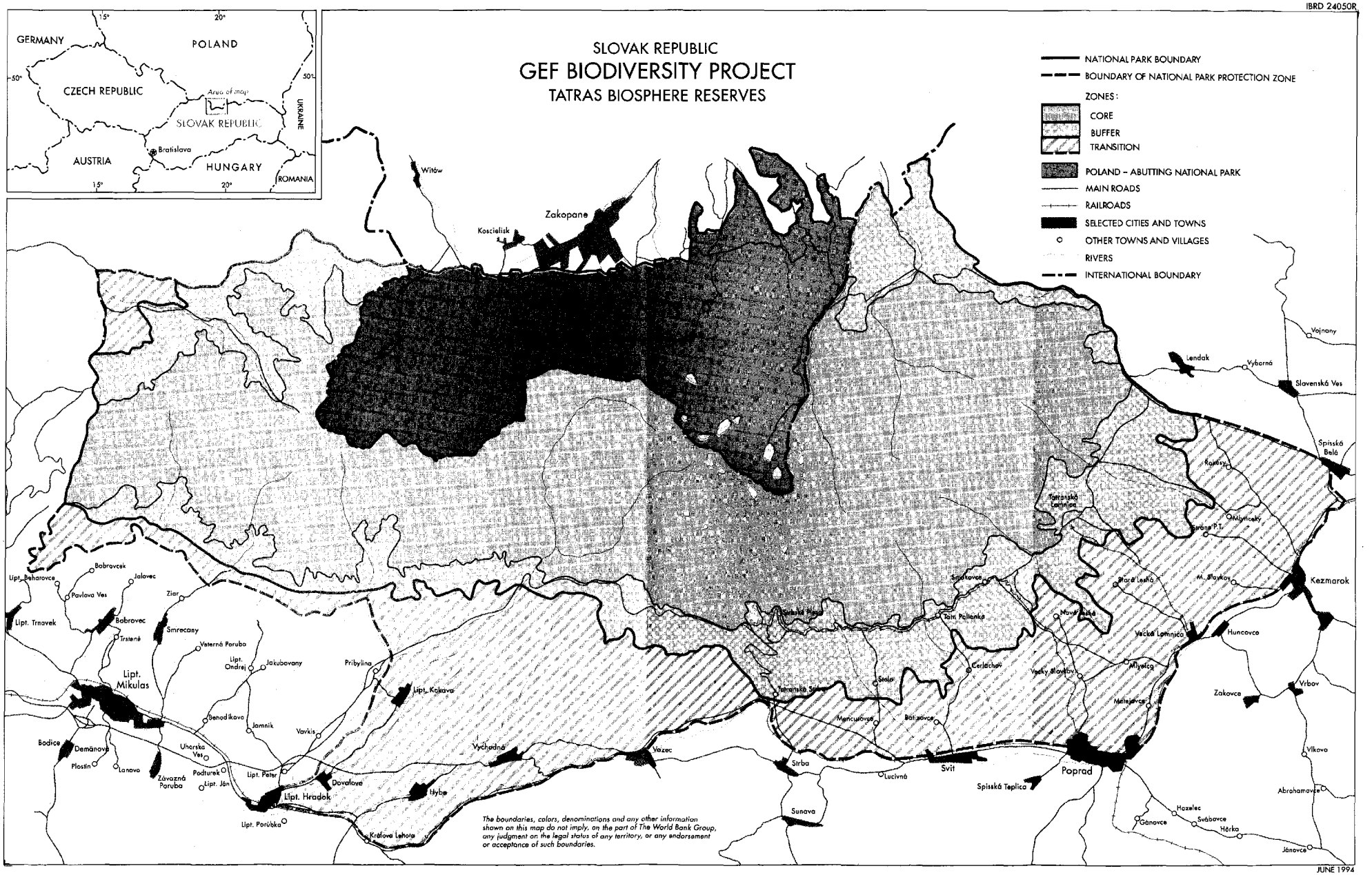
0 2 4 6 8 10 KILOMETERS

The boundaries, colors, denominations and any other information shown on this map do not imply, on the part of The World Bank Group, any judgment on the legal status of any territory, or any endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.

JUNE 1994


Strachotin
To Brno
Znojmo
CZECH REPUBLIC
To Znojmo
Mikulov
Podivín
PÁLAVA
Ladná
Lednice
To Hodonín
To Poysdorf
Hlohovec
Břeclav
Poštorná
Valtice
To Hohenau
AUSTRIA
To Holíč
Kúty
Mor. Ján
SLOVAK
Závod
REPUBLIC
Velké Leváre
Rudava
Gajary
MORAVA
Malacky
Suchohrad
Záhorská Ves
Lozorno
Zohor
Stupava
Devinska N. Ves
Bratislava
AUSTRIA
CZECH and SLOVAK REPUBLIC
GEF BIODIVERSITY PROJECTS
PÁLAVA / MORAVA
PROJECT BOUNDARY
ZONES: (REFER TO TEXT)
ZONE I
ZONE II
ZONE III
ZONE IV
AUSTRIA-ABUTTING PROTECTED AREA
MAIN ROADS
RAILROADS
SELECTED CITIES AND TOWNS
OTHER TOWNS AND VILLAGES
RIVERS
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
0 2 4 6 8 10 KILOMETERS
The boundaries, colors, denominations and any other information shown on this map do not imply, on the part of The World Bank Group, any judgment on the legal status of any territory, or any endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.
16° 20°
POLAND
Prague
48°
CZECH REPUBLIC
GERMANY
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
Area of map
UKRAINE
AUSTRIA
HUNGARY
ROMANIA
16° 20°
JUNE 1994
IBRD 23928

IBRD 24050R



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