



EVALUATION:
CENTRAL AMERICA REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM
(PROARCA)
ANNEX A

Implemented by:
ASSOCIATES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Contract No.: LAG-I-00-99-00013-00
Task Order No.: 520-99-P-034

January 15, 2000

Prepared by:
Carlos Rivas (Team Leader)
Paul Dulin
Sergio Zelaya
Jurij Homziak

Submitted by:
Associates in Rural Development, Inc.
P.O. Box 1397
Burlington, VT 05402
Tel: (802) 658-3890
Fax: (802) 658-4247
Contact: Rebecca Butterfield
Contact E-mail: rbutterfield@ardinc.com

Table of Contents

Comments on the Draft Report	A.1-1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	A.1-2
2.0 GENERAL COMMENTS	A.1-2
3.0 COMMENTS ON EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	A.1-4
4.0 COMMENTS ON CAPAS	A.1-4
5.0 COMMENTS ON COSTAS	A.1-7
6.0 COMMENTS ON LEPPi	A.1-9
7.0 COMMENTS ON PROARCA II DESIGN	A.1-11
 Field Notes	 A.2-1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	A.2-2
2.0 PANAMA	A.2-3
3.0 COSTA RICA	A.2-11
4.0 NICARAGUA	A.2-15
5.0 HONDURAS	A.2-16
6.0 EL SALVADOR	A.2-22
7.0 GUATEMALA	A.2-27
8.0 BELIZE	A.2-29

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT EVALUATION PROARCA REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

ARD shipped 14 copies of the draft final report to USAID/G-CAP and to the three component implementers one week before the final oral presentation held in Guatemala City on December 15th, 1999. Comments on the draft report were submitted in writing to USAID who forwarded the comments to ARD and the evaluation team. Revisions were made to the draft report based on these comments. Errors in facts were corrected. Two sections of the report that were translated INTO Spanish were reviewed and revised by the Team Leader to improve the quality of the Spanish. Other comments related to observations, opinions, and perceptions are recorded here as they provide valuable points of view, especially in consideration of the pending design for the second phase of PROARCA II.

Comments have been compiled into this single document. No words have been changed in the comments. They have been organized into major headings: general comments on PROARCA, comments on the executive summary, comments on CAPAS, Costas, LEPPi and the design of PROARCA II.

2.0 GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall I feel that the evaluation was well carried out and the team did a good job especially considering the number of components and the number of countries that had to be covered.

Regarding content, we note that the Evaluators are not necessarily substantiating their sources of information. That carries the inherent risk of interpreting comments out of context, and of not scaling observations in their proper dimensions and magnitudes. If possible, we request that the document show citations (of persons and documents) that substantiate the points that are being asserted.

The Evaluation Team observed that few decision-makers in Central America recognize CONCAUSA, or the commitments within it. But does that mean that those commitments are no longer useful, or that USAID and SICA/CCAD have to work harder at making them known? Alternatively, what is the possibility of a post-Mitch environmental summit and agreement?

The Evaluation Team focused considerable attention on the different definitions of regionality, the extent to which these definitions are not shared, and the implications this has for program coherence and management (Section 5.1). There are many alternative concepts of regionalism that can be valid and useful, even at the same time. Yet we certainly agree that for program design and management, USAID and SICA/CCAD will need to arrive at firm understandings about a definition of regionality that will be acceptable for all parties.

En términos generales estamos satisfechos con la parte descriptiva del informe pues identifica las principales fortalezas del PROARCA/Costas así como sus mas evidentes debilidades . Si embargo, nos parece que el documento no refleja la calidad del trabajo realizado, requiriendo de una revisión de forma y de un poco mas de análisis integral, en particular en lo referente a las recomendaciones generales para el futuro del programa.

Section 1.2.2; Section 10.1.5. Institutional capacity building. Much ado is made about the failure of PROARCA to capacitate institutions. This statement has to be qualified. At least in the case of CAPAS considerable effort was dedicated through the small grants program to building the capacity of small grass roots organizations. In fact, the selection of grant recipients divided organizations into two categories: those that were well-established and needed limited supervision; and those that were relatively "weak" and in need of grant management assistance proposal development and financial management. Capacity was indeed provided in the most effective manner: hands-on.

Section 1.2.5; Section 5.8; Section 9.6 – Relationship USAID-CCAD. On this topic the evaluation report contradicts itself. In Section 1.2.5 it states that CCAD should participate at the highest level of management and supervision and be involved in a broad spectrum of other functions related to project implementation. In Section 5.8 it is stated there is consensus that CCAD is a political entity and that such an institution should not be involved in project implementation. This position is re-stated in Section 9.6. Apparently there is lack of agreement within the evaluation team.

It must also be clarified that CCAD/DGMA's distancing from PROARCA/CAPAS was largely voluntary. The report makes it sound as if USAID excluded CCAD. This is incorrect. For example, CCAD participated in the 1998 internal evaluation of CAPAS. Contractually this exercise is to be conducted by USAID alone. IRG agreed to CCAD's involvement and the PROARCA team created the space for its participation. USAID and IRG proposed to increase participation by DGMA/CCAD (then located in El Salvador) in the 1999 evaluation. This invitation was declined because the evaluation panel's composition was not acceptable to DGMA (2 PROARCA, 2 USAID bi-lateral, 2 CCAD). There has also been a tremendous amount of effort on the part of IRG to inform and involve DGMA/CCAD in the project, short of changing its contractual agreement with USAID. Finally, CAPAS actually coordinated the development of the regional environmental strategy at the request of DGMA/CCAD and CCAD is involved in the approval of CAPAS annual workplan.

The point is that CCAD/DGMA was not excluded from a partnership with PROARCA, but chose to selectively extricate itself. In fact, at times excessive CCAD involvement (e.g. ministerial-level approval or annual workplans) has undermined the effectiveness of project implementation. In my opinion the mission did not make an objective or balanced analysis of the USAID-CCAD relationship. This imbalance should be corrected.

Given the political nature of CCAD and its nebulous institutional status, PROARCA was looking towards the evaluation team to suggest alternative regional partners. This is especially important in light of the recommendations that PROARCA be centered in particular transnational watersheds, a model that would require participation of entities with mandates that go beyond CCAD's functions. On the other hand, I recognize the high quality of the answers provided to the questions in Section 9.6 that pertain to the relationship USAID-CCAD.

The recommendation on page 10 that USAID investigate the possibility for core financing by other donors is troubling. The unwillingness of Central American nations to provide core funding to CCAD is a de-facto statement of the level – or lack thereof- of commitment the region has towards integration from an environmental perspective.

Section 5.1 Regionality Context. The definitions of the three different “concepts” of regionality are unnecessarily confusing. This section needs to be re-written.

Simply, there are issues that repeat themselves throughout the region (deforestation, mangrove management), there are shared ecosystems (Gulf of Honduras) and resources that cross boundaries (water, migratory species, illegal trade), and there are ecosystems that do not straddle boundaries but repeat themselves (mangroves). These are the aspects that should form the basis for the definitions of regionality. Some require regional collaboration, others need to be tackled at the national level or local level.

Finally, the dispersion of PROARCA activities is not so much due to different concepts of regionality, but to the design of the program.

3.0 COMMENTS ON EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1.1 PROARCA Achievements. Would like to see a short section here highlighting or giving examples of major achievements rather than just saying achievements are summarized following each major component.

Section 1.2.4: Monitoring and Evaluation Systems. I would like for the report to address and recognize the cost of a in-depth biophysical monitoring system. I believe mention should be made that PROARCA was not designed as a research/science activity but something much different. It should also recognized that of all the components only COSTAS is site specific and lends itself to in-depth monitoring. Finally each year the cost of data and monitoring is getting cheaper and may be appropriate for PROARCA Dos and should be considered by the design team.

Section 1.2.5 Relationship between USAID/G-CAP. The CCAD move to Salvador should be noted here and the small size of staff in SICA Direccion Ambiental.

4.0 COMMENTS ON CAPAS

We are of the opinion that the T.O.R. for the Evaluation Team did not adequately address the scope of the CAPAS component. The single best indication of that is the section of the special questions (Section 9.1). Five of the six questions for CAPAS relate to small grants. Yet the grants activity is only about 20% of the total CAPAS effort.

The Evaluation Team did its best to widen its inquiry for CAPAS, which they correctly estimated as almost 40% of PROARCA (i.e., excluding funds retained within GCAP). However, the requirements for the Evaluation Team's travel and overall orientation were less than ideal with respect to reviewing and reflecting on the single largest part of PROARCA.

The histograms in Section 5.4 lead the uninformed person to believe that CAPAS has favored some countries over others. Also, the implicit comparison with another component is misleading, since the structure and thematic composition of that component is totally different. The Evaluation Team provides sufficient controversy here to reinforce the importance of a thorough discussion of resource allocation across countries.

We have to begin by remembering the scalar differences across the seven countries. Some countries have considerably more environmental NGOs than others, with Guatemala and Costa Rica apparently in the lead. Some countries have larger human populations than others (e.g., ratio of 40 to 1 in the case of Guatemala compared with Belize). Some countries have a greater number and surface area of protected areas than others (e.g., surface area of protected areas in Costa Rica compared with El Salvador is approximately 700 to 1).

On top of that, internal political factors enter into the equation. For example, the management of protected areas in El Salvador has been held back by a bitter dispute between two competing ministries, making it difficult for a project like CAPAS to form viable partnerships with the government authorities. The "low" participation of El Salvador in CAPAS events is not unrelated to the struggles between those two ministries.

Moreover, one country (Belize) has turned down invitations to several CAPAS events and activities, even when invited as a full partner. It is not simply the question of language and small population, as postulated by the Evaluation Team. Rather, we have been facing a deeper and more fundamental question about regional commitments. Belize divides its loyalties between Central America and the Caribbean, and has chosen not to participate as widely in PROARCA/CAPAS as have other countries.

Finally and most importantly, CAPAS works to achieve results, theme by theme. That has produced the so-called "discretionality" (p. 71) that some observers criticize. It has to be accepted that a performance-based team--such

as we are in CAPAS--is not going to invest its project resources in everything and everywhere, and in equal proportions.

In light of the scalar differences previously identified, an equal division of the pie would be highly unfair to several countries, as well as highly inefficient for the Central American system of protected areas as a whole.

Another way to view this -- we have been careful with USAID's funds, investing them where they have the highest probability to produce positive outcomes over the long term. In the next regional environmental program, USAID/GCAP should be clear that an equal division of program resources across countries is not necessarily a fair arrangement, and is certainly not an efficient one.

The first part of Section 5.4 presents a breakdown of the commitment of funds in CAPAS by functional area. However, the figures are incorrectly reported. Implicitly, the information portrays CAPAS as an expensive component, with most funds going into salaries and administration. That is a false representation, and the "lesson learned" for a future program is that a large component also can be a cost-effective component by holding down administrative costs (i.e., fixed costs) as a proportion of total costs.

The correct figures that we presented in the table for CAPAS are: (i) technical assistance, 42.4%; (ii) administrative salaries and office expenses (at all levels, including Washington), 24.3%; (iii) small grants, 15.2%; (iv) workshops, 14.2%; and (v) communications unit, 3.9%. These data are for July 1998 through June 1999, when CAPAS had just barely begun to disburse its grants. By project completion in 2000, we can anticipate that the proportion of funds for grants will be higher, and proportions for all other categories will be lower. The important point is: administrative costs can be reasonable in a large component, with the large majority of funds available for operational (i.e., field) aspects due to internal economies of scale.

The perceptions about the many parts of a single component like CAPAS are exactly that: they are perceptions from the outside. Most persons contacted by the Evaluation Team know only one or two activities of CAPAS, and are not in a position to intelligently comment on cohesiveness and integration.

Two themes that are repeated by the Evaluation Team as missing in the current CAPAS are (i) land tenure, and (ii) environmental services.

In a future environmental program, land tenure can be addressed if and only if the project horizon and budget are sufficiently ample to consider treating this topic with the seriousness it deserves. Regarding environmental services, we have the same response: this will require a lengthy time horizon and sizable budget to move the agenda forward.

Moreover, PROARCA already has taken big steps forward in its activities in (i) forest certification; (ii) ecotourism standards, certification, and marketing; and (iii) coffee standards, certification, and marketing. PROARCA has become a leader in Central America in these thematic areas, and in some cases, without rival. Thus a pragmatic strategy for the next environmental program should build on the foundations that have been laid, and that show possibilities for ready expansion.

We believe such an approach will have greater practical payoff for the region than starting up entirely new lines of work on environmental services. To be remembered is that very few countries to date, including the countries of the industrialized world, have moved beyond the academic stage regarding environmental services. To date this field is dominated by many studies and few applications. Certain diagnostics and awareness building may be helpful for Central America, but in pragmatic terms, the application of environmental incentives and taxes in green and blue themes will be a very long-term undertaking. Instead, our practical suggestion would be to extend what PROARCA already has underway regarding "eco-friendly businesses." That then becomes the base upon which to selectively move towards newer and more experimental topics.

CAPAS accepts that they have not monitored the changing state of the biophysical resources they affect (Section 5.7). We ascribe this to the short time horizon in which we operate, the purposely-diffuse locations of our activities and sites, and the considerable expense which genuine monitoring would entail. Nor was it ever expected that we would engage in biophysical monitoring, as can be confirmed by studying our contract.

On the other hand, each grant recipient in CAPAS has had to prepare and submit an analysis of environmental impact. We are using that information to determine cases in which environmental impact assessments and subsequent environmental monitoring may be required. These details seem to have been missed by the Evaluators.

In a future regional environmental program, one way to approach monitoring would be to assign a special unit to handle this across the whole program, thereby achieving a certain economy of scale, and harmonizing the monitoring across components.

The Evaluation Team states that CAPAS established a publication office that provides support to the other components (section 6.1.1). That is not entirely correct. Rather, we have provided a consultant who examined communications needs in Costas, LEPMI, and CAPAS. Also, one of our communications specialists has been working part-time for LEPMI to help that component with a one-page monthly bulletin similar to the bulletin we produce in CAPAS.

The Evaluation Report makes the statement that some interviewees mentioned limited access to the materials we produce (Section 6.6.2). Yet CAPAS reaches several hundred key persons in the public and private sectors of Central America via a combination of mail, electronic media, and our website. Our materials are provided "free" to users.

There is also a statement about an Information Clearinghouse (Section 6.2.3). However, CAPAS has not entertained that concept. In CAPAS, our documents are by-products of our technical assistance. We have not looked at the production of guides and reports as a lead activity. That could change in a future regional environmental program, but for the present we should not be measured against a standard that was never intended.

The Evaluation Team incorrectly interpreted that CAPAS has developed a critical mass of experts in Costa Rica and Guatemala (section 6.2.2). The actual situation is that we have drawn upon expertise that is already resident in Costa Rica (especially) in the role of CAPAS staff and consultants to attempt to build up knowledge and skills in the other countries. For CAPAS this has been a successful strategy of horizontal transfer, so long as we do not attempt to characterize Costa Rica as "the model." We believe that intra-regional horizontal transfer is well worth continuing into the future, and that it is generally preferable to bringing in experts from the U.S. and elsewhere outside Central America.

An erroneous statement in the Report is that our Training Manager does not integrate his work with the other CAPAS professionals. The Training Manager's activities are developed in close consultation with each of the other team members, sometimes with the Training Manager in a lead role, sometimes in a supporting role. This is how we believe that institution building should continue into the future. We agree with the Evaluation Report that training should be aimed at "in service" professionals and technicians, which is basically what we do.

CAPAS has funded two rounds of competitive grants for conservation NGOs, first in 1996-1998 and then again in 1998-2000. The Evaluation Team focused on this second round, which is also the bigger effort.

The Evaluation Team defined the main issues as: (i) appropriateness of the grants criteria and selection process, (ii) adequacy of announcing the availability of the grants, (iii) the extent of regionalism in the grants, and (iv)

distribution of the grants by country. We perceive a largely favorable view of the grants program in Section 9.1, but this view is occasionally contradicted in other parts of the Evaluation Report.

Regarding equity among countries (section 5.4), our response is that some countries submitted more and better grant proposals than others. The Evaluation Team suggests that, in the future, one design option should be quotas by country, and with themes for the grants defined by each country (p. 72). We strongly disagree on both points, since that would completely undermine the reasons to have a regional environmental program.

The Evaluation Team proposes another option, which is to tie the grants subcomponent with protected areas that are being supported in other parts of PROARCA (p. 72). That option may or may not be feasible, depending on several situational factors (e.g., the existence or not of viable NGOs in those places, and the calendars of project activities). To some extent, CAPAS is already following this approach, although more by coincidence than by planning.

Important is that our grants program had to defend itself against political pressures in both rounds, since high-level interests endorsed certain grant proposals. The Evaluation does not fully describe those pressures, and does not cite them as an explanation for many of the "questions" about the CAPAS grants program. The competitive framework for the CAPAS grants is consistent with the performance-based nature of our component. Five losing proposals were generated for every grant proposal which won. Regarding grants in a future regional environmental program, the tradeoff between merit and political pressure is a very real dimension of any merit-based grants program.

Section 3.1.1 (p.14) -- CAPAS Results. This section tries to summarize what CAPAS should accomplish under its contract. The description bears little resemblance to what CAPAS is actually tasked with doing and has to be re-written.

Section 3.1.2, Section 6.2.4 The Small Grants Program. The evaluation indicates that there are 11 steps to approve a small grant and that CCAD is involved only in the last step (CCAD approval). This is inaccurate. The evaluation team should clarify with the CAPAS Small Grants Program administrator how grants were made. Certainly, as a full member of the selection committee, CCAD plays a key role in the selection of proposals. USAID/G-CAP, in contrast, acts only as an observer.

Section 6.1 Componente CAPAS – logros y fortalezas. This section does not do justice to the accomplishments of CAPAS. I understand that the emphasis was to be placed not on the past but on an analysis that would serve to guide the PROARCA team as it designs the next phase.

Future actions cannot be divorced from past accomplishments. Furthermore, the evaluation becomes part of IRG's performance record. It would be unjust not to at least recognize some key accomplishments. Key actions that were missed include: production of the first regional-level standardized vegetation map for the region, the first regional assessment of the mahogany situation in Central America, development of the first bio-economic model of the fisheries resources in a trans-boundary coastal-marine ecosystem in Central America (with COSTAS), a web site, the establishment of organic coffee certification capacity in Honduras, market development for certified coffee, eco-tourism, facilitation of several co-management agreements etc., etc. CAPAS has also contributed greatly to synergies between PROARCA components (development of Regional Environmental Strategy, development of coastal marine policy, small-grants that support COSTAS activities (TIDE/ANAI), economic model of fisheries and so on. In short, there is a lot there that was missed.

5.0 COMMENTS ON COSTAS

El análisis del presupuesto de Costas es bastante inapropiado pues reúne todos los gastos de asistencia técnica y logística regional que presta servicios a nivel de sitios. Se adjunta un gráfico con una separación de estos valores

para tener una visión mas precisa de la inversión del proyecto. Los montos correspondientes a operación, viajes , administración y asistencia técnica brindan servicios a todos los sitios.

Sugerimos usar este análisis en lugar del presentado por la misión.

La distribución de pequeñas donaciones o participación a talleres realizada para CAPAS no parecería ser un parámetro de comparación con la inversión por sitio en COSTAS, estos análisis deberían hacerse por separado y no bajo el titulo propuesto.

La selección de ONG's socias se basa en los criterios siguientes:

Presencia en el sitio de trabajo.

Experiencia en temas claves de manejo o interés en el manejo de áreas protegidas claves.

Capacidad administrativa y capacidad de seguir los requerimientos administrativos de AID y/o de las organizaciones implementadoras.

En algunos casos esta coincide con experiencias previas de los socios con las organizaciones implementadoras del Componente Costas.

Estamos muy de acuerdo con la importancia de ampliar la gama de socios con que se trabaja, como se ha hecho. Sin embargo, es una realidad que no hay muchas ONG's a nivel de sitio y por tanto otras alternativas deberían incluir invitar ONG's nacionales que no trabajan en los sitios con las ventajas y limitaciones que esto implica. La misión no ofrece una alternativa para lograr mejorar este aspecto.

La misión analizó el trabajo con ONG's pero no menciona la política de no financiar actividades a agencias gubernamentales. Solicitamos una recomendación al respecto pues esto ha sido interpretado en muchas oportunidades como una limitación.

Las limitaciones del Trabajo de los RSTA's no parece ser posible de eliminar, una recomendación concreta parecería ser combinar dos estrategias como:

Disponer de recursos para contrapartes nacionales que trabajen con los RSTA's en los países en que no están residenciados.

Esta debería ser una recomendación concreta que impacta el presupuesto y la estrategia de trabajo.

Parece haber una contradicción en el análisis de los sistemas de donaciones (sub acuerdos), mientras en una sección se destaca la flexibilidad del mismo en otra se critica por ser "laxa". La Misión debería asumir una opinión mas concreta y hacer una recomendación mas clara para mejorar la gestión de los sub acuerdos.

Estamos en desacuerdo con la observación de que no se han abordado temas de políticas relacionados a la pesca o a la conservación de manatí. El proyecto ha realizado capacitaciones y talleres para promover homologación de políticas, sin embargo no es función del proyecto escribirlas o aprobarlas. Se esta pidiendo al proyecto hacer cosas para las cuales no esta diseñado.

Estamos totalmente de acuerdo con la importancia de tener indicadores biológicos para monitoreo y evaluación. Sin embargo, diferimos de la idea de que sea la única manera de evaluar el impacto. El proyecto tiene fuertes limitaciones de presupuesto y estructura para lograr hacer ambos tiempos de monitoreo. Estos elementos de decisión no parecen haber sido considerados por la misión, por tanto no parece muy realista al no confrontar lo ideal con lo posible.

Por otra parte, la posibilidad de evaluar el impacto del proyecto es dudosa debido al reducido nivel de intervención de PROARCA/Costas con los recursos disponible. En otras palabras parámetros biofísicos podrían estar reflejando acciones de manejo diferentes de las del proyecto y por tanto no medirían el impacto de nuestras actividades, siendo inútil con el propósito de medir el impacto.

Por ello se requiere de una recomendación mas concreta sobre la estructura y presupuesto del proyecto que permita lograr hacer lo propuesto por la misión. Otra opción es dimensionar la propuesta en función de la importancia de medir riesgos ambientales y reducción de amenazas a través de bases de datos mas que medir únicamente el impacto de las acciones de PROARCA/Costas, en este caso tendría mucho sentido lo propuesto coincidiendo con las prioridades regionales identificadas por CCAD.

Las actividades productivas no son parte del enfoque original del proyecto, se propusieron con carácter demostrativo y como complemento a las acciones del proyecto en temas claves de manejo y en manejo de áreas protegidas. Aumentarlas y comunicarlas como propone la misión implica cambios en asistencia técnica y presupuesto, sobre todo si se requiere validar y transferir estas experiencias. Esta es una labor muy diferente de las establecidas por PROARCA/Costas en sus objetivos.

Una vez mas se plantea el caso particular de Guatemala como ejemplo para generalizar la falta de coordinación con los gobiernos. Las dificultades de coordinación se produjeron al principio del proyecto pero hoy en día la relación es excelente en todos los casos excepto en Guatemala donde los cambios políticos y la complejidad institucional interna dificultó esta coordinación para la declaratoria de Punta Manabique.

La Coordinación con proyectos y programas extrarregionales se ve limitada por los recursos financieros y los mandatos regionales. En resumen se coordina con todas las iniciativas de Centroamérica pero no con iniciativas del Caribe u otras regiones. Una recomendación de fondos destinados a esta coordinación seria importante.

Diferimos del comentario de que "el proyecto enfoca sus acciones en áreas protegidas y no en recursos o temas regionales significativos". El enfoque en áreas protegidas es parte de la gestión del proyecto con base en sus objetivos. El otro énfasis se da en temas claves de manejo (pesquerías, turismo, producción sostenible, contingencias portuarias, conservación de tortugas marinas, manatí, etc.). Este comentario no parece tener sustento y contradice el comentario sobre "diversificación de los temas en los sitios", presentado en el capítulo de éxitos y fortalezas (7.1.2).

Las observaciones sobre monitoreo y evaluación se presentan repetitivamente en diferentes partes del análisis. Se sugiere que la misión ubique este punto bajo el título correspondiente facilitando la lectura y la comprensión del texto.

6.0 COMMENTS ON LEPPi

Section 10.4.3. Harmonization and Application of Env Leg and Biodiversity. Pls give examples of any examples of progress made under international conventions mentioned in (c.)

En el inciso 8.2.1 referente a Participación se menciona lo siguiente: "En algunos casos, las instituciones nacionales responsables de reglr los reglamentos de evaluación de impacto ambiental de los proyectos no fueron involucradas en el proceso de gestión hasta muy tarde en el ciclo del proyecto, resultando en una mala selección de los sitios y demoras en el procesamiento de los expedientes de certificación ambiental y la iniciación de las obras de saneamiento"

A este respecto, LEPPi para el desarrollo de cada uno de los talleres de participación comunitaria ha involucrado a representantes de las instituciones relacionadas con los temas de saneamiento ambiental en el desarrollo de todos los proyectos, así como también estos representantes en algunos casos forman parte de los Comités de Por otro lado, la selección de los sitios ha sido resultado en algunos casos de la contratación de un equipo de expertos, para evaluar los posibles sitios de ubicación de los proyectos a través de matrices de evaluación de impactos. Si bien es cierto, en algunos casos ha habido alguna demora en la aprobación de los Estudio de Impacto Ambiental como en el caso de Usulután y La Unión, esto se debió a que el Ministerio del Ambiente al momento

de la realización de estos EIA, no tenía a disposición de los interesados los requerimientos técnicos para la realización de este tipo de estudios.

"En varios de los proyectos atendidos bajo LEPPI, el proceso participativo resultó en la priorización de una actividad bajo los planes de acción ambiental que, al fin y al cabo, no fue la acción ultimamente seleccionada para desarrollar con los recursos proveídos LEPPI. Aunque la selección final se hizo a final de cuentas de acuerdo a una comparación de costos entre las distintas acciones, de no proceder con la acción elegida, tiende a restar validez del proceso mayor y confundir a los participantes en el proceso."

En efecto, como resultado del proceso participativo se jerarquizó una actividad bajo los planes de acción ambiental, que al final no fue la seleccionada para ser desarrollada por LEPPI. Esto obedeció a que en algunos casos, el problema resultante de la priorización ya había sido abordado por otras instituciones o bien la comunidad prefirió desarrollar algún problema del cual no tuvieran apoyo institucional. Cabe mencionar que para tomar una decisión de tal naturaleza, LEPPI convocó a un V Taller, y fue la comunidad la que de común acuerdo tomó tal determinación.

"En otros casos, hacia falta flexibilizar y adaptar el proceso de acuerdo al nivel organizativo de los grupos y la etapa de desarrollo de un proyecto: por ejemplo, se insistió en pasar por todas las etapas del proceso participativo (tres o cuatro talleres), aun cuando la comunidad ya tenía uno o más años gestionando el proyecto de saneamiento."

La metodología del proyecto LEPPI se ha caracterizado por ser flexible. Sin embargo, en ciertos casos debió realizarse el proceso completo de los talleres, a pesar de que algunos grupos ya habían iniciado trabajando en cada proyecto, debido a que la decisión de abordar ese problema no era compartida por la mayoría, o bien no estaban involucrados en este proceso representantes de todos los sectores de la comunidad.

"Mas allá de algunas oficinas bilaterales de USAID, no se ha logrado mayores colaboraciones con otras instituciones nacionales e internacionales para financiar obras de saneamiento ambiental en los países"

El proceso participativo de LEPPI involucra la participación de las Municipalidades, miembros de las comunidades y entidades nacionales en el financiamiento de los proyectos. tal es el caso del proyecto de aguas servidas de Usulután, el cual es financiado por LEPPI, la Municipalidad de Usulután, comunidad y ANDA (Administración Nacional de Acueductos y Alcantarillados) institución nacional que rige este tema en El Salvador.

Por otro lado, existen entidades financieras que apoyan proyectos de desarrollo comunitario. Sin embargo, las municipalidades con las que LEPPI trabaja, en la mayoría de los casos no tienen acceso a estos créditos, ya que no disponen de capacidad de pago suficiente para ser acreedores a este tipo de financiamiento.

En el inciso 8.2.2 de Aspectos técnicos, se menciona: "Algunos proyectos gestionados con el apoyo de LEPPI son de una envergadura que sobrepasa el tamaño de los proyectos propuestos en el diseño original del componente "

Dado que la selección de algunas comunidades no fue responsabilidad directa de CHF/LEPPI, el proyecto debió buscar el apoyo de las bilaterales de USAID para abordar y financiar los proyectos de saneamiento ambiental, previamente priorizados con el apoyo de la comunidad en el Plan de Acción Ambiental. Asimismo no es responsabilidad directa de CHF la administración de los fondos destinados a estos proyectos, aún cuando esta institución disponga de la capacidad técnica para esta gestión.

En el inciso 8.2.3 de Planificación, Monitoreo y Evaluación se menciona lo siguiente:

"No se está recolectando datos económicos y científicos básicos (biofísicos y socioeconómicos) necesarios para

analizar los costos de los proyectos de LEPPI en comparación con sus beneficios, impactos socioeconómicos y ambientales reales, por ejemplo, sobre calidad de aguas en relación a los proyectos de aguas servidas."

A este respecto, LEPPI ha iniciado un programa de monitoreo ambiental, precisamente en el proyecto de aguas servidas de Playa Grande, Ixcán En conjunto con la Escuela de Ingeniería Sanitaria de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, se han tomado muestras de calidad de aguas para verificar el funcionamiento de las plantas de tratamiento, y medir la calidad de cada descarga en los ríos, posterior a su tratamiento primario. Se disponen de cuadros en este aspecto en particular.

En el inciso 8.2.4 de Gestión y Administración se menciona:

"Los Comités Gestores son meros organismos de hecho sin reconocimiento formal antes sus municipalidades, sujetos a desaparecer con el cambio de Alcalde"

Los Comités de Gestión Ambiental de LEPPI, han obtenido en la mayoría de los casos reconocimiento por parte de las municipalidades. Esto implica que ejercen presión social y estando formado por miembros de las comunidades con intereses genuinos en aportar algo a su país, no tienden a desaparecer con el cambio de autoridades municipales. Si bien es cierto, los representantes de las instituciones así como las autoridades de la Municipalidad van cambiando, no así los representantes de las fuerzas vivas de la comunidad.

7.0 COMMENTS ON PROARCA II DESIGN

Section 1.3.1 Design criteria for PROARCA II. Please explain how an activity like PROLEGIS AND PROBIO can be reoriented geographically as they work on national issues etc.

The Evaluation Team commented on deficiencies in interactions at several levels: (i) between PROARCA and SICA/CCAD, (ii) among the components of PROARCA, and (iii) among the components of CAPAS. This is a large topic, and it has to be examined in its various layers and manifestations.

- With SICA/CCAD:

For now, we would like to say that any gap in interactions between CAPAS and SICA/CCAD is not for lack of trying. Rather, the gap is best explained by a divergence of perspectives regarding how a regional project should operate, and to whom a regional project should report. This sensitive political point needs to be discussed and finally resolved by all parties for the sake of a viable environmental program in the future.

The Evaluation Team recommends that CAPAS and similar components develop their workplans in consultation with the governments. This raises very fundamental questions: Is the CCAD more than the sum of its seven members? Is there an identifiable CCAD agenda to guide workplan development? Does the Executive Secretariat of SICA/CCAD have the authority to act on behalf of its member ministers? Or are we in PROARCA interacting and negotiating with individual agencies in each of the seven countries? Despite ten years of CCAD existence, the answers to these questions are not at all clear.

In CAPAS, the main working-level partners in the seven governments have been officials for protected areas, forests, wildlife, tourism, and coffee. In coffee and tourism--and even protected areas and forests--CAPAS also has private-sector partners. The government officials for protected areas and forests are at the level of the CCAB-AP, while the formal counterpart for PROARCA is the political level of the SICA/CCAD. The Evaluation Team is nearly silent about tensions between the technical level and the political level in several of the countries. Nor does the Evaluation Report call sufficient attention to the fact that tourism, coffee, CITES, etc., spill outside the action domains of the ministries of environment. Yet these tensions and structural matters have been very evident to us, and have contributed to an "organizational nightmare" for the management of natural resources.

This disorganization, in turn, explains why consultation about workplans is an inefficient and time-consuming process, without any real forum for harmonizing different priorities emanating from different levels and agencies in different countries. If there is to be a PROARCA II, USAID will want to devote considerable effort to defining who the true counterpart(s) really is/are, and to insuring that consultative processes can be made workable and efficient.

- Among Components:

Regarding interactions among the components, Costas will corroborate that CAPAS and Costas have gotten together to jointly implement several activities of mutual interest. Admittedly, this was not by design or by instruction from higher levels. We did this voluntarily. The Evaluation Team is absolutely correct in recommending a design and implementation that integrates the components more formally in the future.

A highly important point about overall coordination: it was originally intended in GCAP that Component #1 would have coordination responsibilities across all the components. But due to internal budget and administrative situations in USAID/GCAP in 1994-1996, it was decided to fund only the technical function of CAPAS and not its coordination function. This history may be relevant for the design of the next regional program (this history is not in the Evaluation Report).

The Evaluation Team remarks on the possibility in a future program to establish a single communications/outreach group that would handle publications, maps, reports, etc, for the entire program. As the Team noted, this has begun informally, at an incipient level of collaboration, under existing arrangements in PROARCA. However, that cannot go very far under current structures of the components. We believe that a single communications unit for the entire program can be a sensible and cost-effective strategy.

We disagree that "permanent training" should be a feature of PROARCA. The goal should be "progressive training," in which each organization is brought to a new and higher level. In PROARCA II, this may require prior (i.e., conditionality) agreements with the governments and NGOs so that each partner organization co-supports institution building with an adequate level of its own resources. This will be one way to separate serious institutions from those which are merely opportunistic.

We accept that the ministers of environment need to be presented with "training" in the themes that the project has been advancing (section 6.2.1). To date, however, we have not found the right opening for that with SICA/CCAD. Yet a "training" for the ministers should be a goal in the next regional environmental program.

Among the Evaluation Team's leading concepts for a PROARCA II is to focus all components of the program into 4-6 transboundary geographical subregions, and to apply the Costas model of subregional coalitions as the working counterpart (section 10.5.1). This approach is presented as a strategy to reduce the dispersion of efforts in the current PROARCA, and to try to catalyze a critical mass of progress in selected areas.

We believe that this strategy may be workable. It will demand intensive intra-program planning and communication, which is currently lacking. It may cut down on the confusion that our partners and clients have about the alphabet soup of PROARCA. Moreover, if properly implemented, the strategy could indeed have a chance to build a critical minimum effort in a few subregions. Finally, a site-based strategy may be an answer to SICA/CCAD, simplifying issues of USAID/GCAP's presence and scope.

At the same time, the site-based strategy implies backing away from one of the original goals of PROARCA: to try to influence the high-level policy agenda for environment in Central America. The proposed site-based framework of PROARCA II would be able to provide bottom-up examples of cross-country cooperation in environment. Yet the site-based strategy may have to cede potential opportunities to shape regional-level agendas.

CAPAS has been engaged in several such agendas, e.g., region-wide strengthening of CITES, region-wide mahogany situation, regional marketing initiatives for sustainable tourism and coffee, region-wide monitoring of protected areas, etc. We contend that PROARCA's presence and leadership in these themes is having a significant impact for Central America. Moreover, the comparative advantage of a regional program is its economies of scale – to very widely replicate activities in important themes at low marginal costs for each new application. Those advantages will tend to disappear if the future PROARCA bases itself in 4-6 subregional sites. That is the opportunity cost.

Moreover, the coalitions being nurtured by Costas are young and still unproven in terms of being able to carry out challenging tasks. Quite possibly, they are precisely the appropriate vehicle for PROARCA II. But that would have to be assumed – the Evaluation Team has not provided sufficient support for this recommendation.

In summary, we believe that a site-based strategy for PROARCA II may be attractive, but it has important opportunity costs to be carefully identified and evaluated.

We agree with the Evaluators that there will be disruptions and a significant waste of resources if there is a break between PROARCA and the next environmental program (Section 10.5). USAID/GCAP and SICA/CCAD will have our full cooperation in working to define an appropriate bridging stage, and can count on us for inputs regarding technical and financial aspects.

Las conclusiones y recomendación respecto a los mecanismo de organización y administración no son claras. AID tiene tres mecanismos (Acuerdos de Cooperación, Contratos por Productos y Acuerdo de Donación). LA Misión propone usar dos o tres modalidades (1.3.1.e), eso no es ningún cambio a la situación actual, además parece contradecir al punto 5.3 donde se recomienda minimizar las modalidades de administración para el programa.

La misión no hace ningún aporte sobre el tema de regionalidad del programa. En el caso de Costas se manejan dos conceptos básicos:

- Regionalidad basada en el trabajo transfronterizo compartiendo lecciones aprendidas a nivel de sitio (países participantes del sitio) y a nivel regional. Cayos Miskitos es una excepción en este principio derivada de decisiones de manejo y logísticas, mas que de diseño.
- Regionalidad basada en temas de coincidencia entre sitios y en la región. Temas identificados como prioridades regionales por los actores involucrados (ejemplo, manglares, contingencias portuarias y tortugas marinas) y temas de coincidencia como la pesquería de pequeña escala.

Se espera de la Misión una posición orientadora bajo su perspectiva externa de la regionalidad y sus valores para contextualizar y enmarcar la segunda fase del programa.

Section 1.2.3 -- National financial mechanisms for payment of environmental services. The evaluation correctly asserts that PROARCA did not include activities to promoted payments for environmental services. This is not surprising since this category of activity is not part of the PROARCA strategy. The evaluators suggest that it be a component within PROARCA II. This is a valid recommendation. However, many of the suggestions made by the evaluation team are for actions that are better implemented at the national level (airport taxes, park entry fees, watershed conservation fees). It also important to note that the only environmental services program in Central America is on the verge of collapsing because governments see more urgent uses for the 'environmental' taxes it is collecting. In England, a fuel tax and a climate change tax are coming under increasing attack. The point made by the evaluators is well taken, but then there is reality. Perhaps some analytical work could be supported.

Section 1.2.4; Section 5.7; Section 7.2.2; Section 10.1.7 -- Biophysical monitoring. Much ado was made about the lack of an environmental monitoring system. In one instance (p. 44) a statement was made to the effect that biophysical monitoring is necessary to establish cause and effect between COSTAS project activities and environmental impact.

Whereas monitoring of selected indicators within well defined sites is useful for description and management, the statement that cause-and-effect can be established runs counter to the basic tenets of science. An association between two variables (e.g project activity-impact) in an open ecological system cannot be construed as cause-and-effect, unless all other variables are held constant or measured. Thus, the ongoing debate concerning the cause-and-effect links between increased atmospheric CO2 concentration and climate change. This in spite of the fact that the most sophisticated computer programs and prominent atmospheric scientists on the globe are dedicated to analyzing this relationship. Also, the multi-million dollar EPA-sponsored EMAP program in the US is used to formulate hypothesis and describe the state of the environment. This is a far cry from cause-and-effect.

I am perhaps over-stating the case, but it is important -lest PROARCA II dedicates an inordinate amount of resources to biophysical monitoring at the expense of more important activities- that the requirements and limitations of biophysical monitoring be carefully considered. It is inappropriate to suggest that CAPAS dedicate resources to biophysical monitoring to determine if it has been effective or not is in changing the condition of natural resources in Central America. As designed, that particular component of PROARCA is theme-based and process oriented. CAPAS did not know before hand where it would work. To monitor at random or the entire region is impractical.

The above notwithstanding, CAPAS produced the first regional map of vegetation cover that utilizes a standard methodology. This is a very important contribution to Central America's natural resources database. This map (and methodology) is being now used as a base for the elaboration of more detailed vegetation maps, an accomplishment overlooked by the evaluation team.

In conclusion, the strong recommendation that more resources be dedicated to biophysical monitoring must be critically analyzed. Biophysical monitoring may be appropriate for certain site-based activities and the outcome not treated as cause-and-effect statements, but rather as a tool for management. Meaningful monitoring is easier said than done. Certainly in the case of CAPAS, to introduce biophysical monitoring at this stage is not appropriate. If USAID decides to continue work in the COSTAS site, the introduction of some limited form of biophysical monitoring may be appropriate.

Section 1.3.1; Section 10.5.1 – Information Center in PROARCA II. The management, storage and management of information at a regional level should be a key CCAD (DGMA) function. Whereas PROARCA could contribute to the development of this capacity, the information base has to be a SICA initiative, created by a SICA entity (CCAD/DGMA). Its creation and existence should not depend in its entirety on PROARCA funds. To do so would guarantee that this would be an ephemeral accomplishment.

The above notwithstanding, PROARCA should maintain a data base and web site for its activities. In fact, such site does exist under CAPAS with several very useful links. It needs broadening to include PROARCA activities in general.

FIELD NOTES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The evaluation team visited seven countries in three weeks and carried out interviews with implementers and partners of the various PROARCA components. This included visits to the four COSTAS sites and four of the LEPPi municipal sites as well as numerous interviews with CAPAS partners in the field and in capital cities.

The notes taken on the field trips and during the guided interviews are collected here. Appendices 1-3 of the main report present the work plan, interview guides, and list of people contacted.

These are rough notes but they do provide part of the background material, along with the documents consulted, from which evaluators based their findings and recommendations. The field notes are organized by country. Each country has notes that cover all the PROARCA components.

2.0 PANAMA

Program disconnect with PROARCA by geography. Some LEPPi work in Portobello, not going anywhere. Good mission relations with CAPAS, COSTAS. LEPPi – regional programs support bilateral work “to the extent possible”. Panama mission focus on watershed, trying to increase complementarity. Complementarity differs from getting funds. Mission did a buy-in for LEPPi.

Watershed focus: watershed of Canal is expanding by law, increases chances of complementarity in areas like protected areas, biodiversity, and coastal protected areas.

LEPPi is the best component in terms of cooperation.

Chilibre project – mission is excited and positive. One of the most populated areas of the watershed. Problem is the limits on LEPPi put in by design and financial limits. Activities end with workshops and no implementation. Lacks a “what happens next” component. Full mission, community, and NGO cooperation with LEPPi. Mission wants to replicate in 6 watershed municipalities.

Mission would like to see LEPPi staff more often, and to see more of COSTAS and CAPAS, esp. to strategize with NGOs and Panamanian counterparts. Focus: would like COSTAS and CAPAS to help in watershed area coastal and protected areas (e.g. Ft. Sherman, collaboration with MesoAmerican Biological corridor in Panama). Saw synergy with LEPPi; can do as well with other PROARCA components.

CCAD contact is minimal. Never visited Panama, no evident interest in working with USAID/Panama, no outreach. Want more CCAD meetings, Mission knows and is influential with new Panamanian envt. Minister and CCAD are missing opportunities.

Mission wants TA from PROARCA and is willing to put “earnest money” on the table to make PROARCA more relevant to Panama. Overcome the limited connection of PROARCA to Panama. Want to expand LEPPi model of mission-PROARCA cooperation to biodiversity, protected areas, and biological corridor. Overall problem in getting corridor concept off the ground, mission can be an effective catalyst in Panama.

PROARCA needs more emphasis on institutional structures to allow USAID (G/CAP and missions) to influence how people work together (within and among govt. institutions, NGOs, and NGOs and govt., local and national) – this is USAID area of expertise. PROARCA needs to take a more proactive and advocate role for regionality, more effort to influence outcomes (not just process) in region. Focus of building regionality should be on change of policy, change of attitude, build consensus, build teams – this must be based on full bilateral mission participation and support.

PROARCA has missed strategizing with mission on regional issues, where PROARCA works at the regional level and the CA missions work within countries to influence and gain support for regional activities. PROARCA has not recognized the pivotal role of the bilateral missions in building support for regional activities. Appears to Panama mission that PROARCA is still caught up in the “money game” as the focus of regionality. Money should be removed from the table, PROARCA should provide leadership and technical contributions to change policy, change of attitude, build consensus, build teams. PROARCA has also not been effective in influencing other donors, such as “common agenda” with Japan. Not working more closely with bilateral missions misses many opportunities for influencing other donors.

Regionality. CA is too small to differentiate among regional versus national efforts. Not a great deal of difference. Missions often not thinking in regional terms or long term – job for G/CAP and PROARCA. PROARCA should not just focus on individual activities, but focus on regionality. G/CAP and missions need to think as one team for regionality to succeed. Missions are often competing, not cooperating, the result of historical differences. PROARCA should be a force to overcome this. Bilateral missions should be charged with regional responsibility.

PROARCA is trying to do too much with too little. Too scattered to be effective. Not building teams not changing institutional perceptions.

PROARCA assistance is a two-way street; mission can both gain from and add to. Problem is poor communication with mission, always learn of activities too late. Examples: CAPAS sponsored, Tropical Science Ctr. Caoba led study by country and meetings. Panama mission not informed of study and study did a poor job on Panama section in reports. Now, regional mahogany meeting in Costa Rica, informed 2 ½ weeks age, agenda not clear, leaves mission too little time to fund counterpart to attend.

Also problems with COSTAS and LEPPi – lack of forward planning and communication, too short notice to be able to respond to meetings, seminars, etc. CAPAS and COSTAS lack a buy-in mechanism, a good option for small missions. Mission wants to use the same people as CAPAS uses in other countries to ensure complementarity, wants to use a buy-in mechanism. CAPAS has good writing and production capabilities.

PROARCA appears to be contributing to building regional skills capacity. Good use of CA TA resources, but too many Costa Ricans – need to make the effort to expand the pool of TA sources to other countries.

Lack of long term training program leaves capacity building weak and limits pool of TA sources. Future PROARCA should build CA technical capacity through a) more LT training, b) work with ROCAP graduates to expand ROCAP established network, c) develop regional vision of environmental education, objectives, strategy. Assist NGOs and govt. agencies in envt. ed. Perfect focus for small grants but CAPAS has no envt. ed. component. Need a long term G/CAP commitment to LT training that goes beyond the indicator capacity of USAID, strategy that involves both G/CAP and bilaterals in LT training to build regional capacity (and thus regionality).

Small grants program in CAPAS needs to work more with smaller, less well known NGOs. Working well now under pressure to move out funds with limited staff and resources – in effect forces CAPAS to work only with established NGOs and excludes the small NGOs.

Future activity needs to have central regional themes as a center, such as mahogany: policies, procedures, demonstration plots for each country, reforestation, and silviculture. All this will both address critical environmental and economic issues on regional scale.

Opportunities lie in convergence of donors (e.g. watershed in Panama). Both mission and G/CAP need to cooperate on this. The paradigm is not trans-border but watershed.

Comité Gestor led, see LEPPi planning process as useful, primarily because of “realization” of project with follow up funding from USAID/Panama. LEPPi focus on planning, mission on execution. LEPPi planning did not address economic/financial issues, the “motor” for the project. USAID/Panama intervention maintained interest of participants.

Comité is the catalyst for the project. Comité authorized by Junta Communal, which brought in NGO (APROSAC) to provide TA to Comité. CHF/LEPPi did not play a role in the organization of the Comité. APROSAC had similar micro-enterprise activities underway in areas outside of authorized USAID area of activities (PC watershed limited).

Problems and issues: Solid waste project. Community friction over placement of recycling center. Awareness and building support are a central issue to overcome opposition. Other critical issues that still need to be addressed are how a micro-enterprise is based within a municipality, how it gains concessions, how it is to survive changes in administration. Financial sustainability is the biggest issue.

Currently project is not self sustaining, not enough contracts. Competitors collect and dump without separating and recycling. Not licensed by municipality. Project micro-enterprise is licensed, collects, separates and recycles, but it is more expensive. Issues of a) financial competition with unlicensed collectors and enforcement by municipality of licensing requirements, but dilemma in that some households will opt out of having waste collected if price rises to micro-enterprise level.

APROSAC is using environmental awareness to raise consciousness of community of need to separate and recycle. APROSAC has contract for TA to Comité and micro-enterprise. LEPPI role was to promote dialogue between provider (micro-enterprise) and client, needs to find ways to resolve issues between client and provider. Clients (and competitors) are left out of this TA process (APROSAC and LEPPI both side with micro-enterprise).

This illustrates a major weakness in LEPPI's approach of focusing all efforts on an NGO when the NGO has it's own agenda. First, APROSAC was wedded to the idea that a women owned micro-enterprise was the acceptable design for the micro-enterprise. They insisted on using poverty class, inexperienced women to operate the project. While admirable goals, this was not the focus of the activity – improved municipal solid waste management was. By supporting the APROSAC vision and excluding better off, more experienced operators, LEPPI placed in jeopardy the administrative and financial stability of the effort. It also excluded perhaps the most capable operators, the competitors, from the project. Second, APROSAC solution to price issues and competition was to suggest making municipal waste collection a monopoly, hardly reassuring for the small client household or the competition, also monopoly problems with price and service.

LEPPI role was major in technical assistance, minor in assistance to Comité. Focus of the TA process was on assistance to micro-enterprise (business management), envt. education to raise awareness, legal issues in organization, fitting into municipal structure. Did not address land issue or provide sufficient assistance to assist in acquiring land for recycling center. This was the most difficult issue.

LEPPI weakness is lack of flexibility and breadth to adequately address and resolve issues of sustainability. LEPPI needs to address how to design and provide a more complete TA package to allow for sustainability.

Sustainability depends on resolution of Comité issues, which include: role in overall project, role in micro-enterprise, relation to public, internal conflicts, questions of who owns micro-enterprise. LEPPI project not prepared to answer these. Need to better define how project and Comité interact.

Sustainability also affected by LEPPI weakness in the following:

- Needs site-specific TA (too "cookie cutter" of an approach).
- Need to better identify quantity and type of TA.
- Need to assist micro-enterprises in administration (not just business) and awareness of providing a service.
- Need to address envt. education to raise awareness of need to separate waste.
- Need to coordinate with municipality on setting collection fees, licensing.
- Need to develop markets for recyclables and compost.
- Need to better define roles of players.
- More investment of time in partners.
- Need to define timeframes for activities.
- Need to define what to expect from TA.
- Need to include competitors in the process.
- Need to focus on financial sustainability aspects of micro-enterprise earlier in the concept.

Needs to improve communication and relations with community - more emphasis on explaining mechanisms; community needs to be more clearly informed of how, by whom, etc., the project will function. Current model has information focused on leaders, without much on popular level.

Need workshop to define what does community expect and how project will meet these expectations.

Management models of solid waste – need to define model in order to allow solid waste enterprises to become sustainable. LEPPi is not designed or capable of addressing this issue.

Good relations with COSTAS, participate on planning committee for Bastimentos Marine Park. New experience with community participation in resources planning. Very positive experience.

Coastal management is new concept for Admin. Maritima recently created by government of Panama. They are learning from the Bocas experience. Also promoted communication with Costa Rica marine authorities (local and national contacts) on cross border coastal and marine reserves management issues.

Cooperation with COSTAS has strengthened Admin. Maritima presence in the region and improved their credibility and visibility among fishing communities. Park experience has had positive impacts, showing Admin. Maritima benefits of outreach efforts.

Cooperation among Admin. Maritima and TNC: TNC technically weak, esp. in fisheries, so Panamanian agencies must work closely with TNC to provide needed skills. . Also, management plan outside of park will profoundly influence what happens in park – park area limited in comparison to outside area. Fisheries management crosses park boundaries. Fisheries goal is sustainable management of fisheries in entire region, balancing artisanal and industrial fishing.

Little data available on main fisheries, esp. lobster. Bocas essentially no data available, so habitat is basis for management. For lobster, need to identify habitats, larval habitats, and food resources. Areas based management is key because of lack of data. Core for areas based management is the marine park with no fishing or limited fishing areas. Areas based fisheries management is a new view and process. It is critically important for future management to have clear indicators of impact of areas based management on extracted resources.

Key to success of areas based/limited take areas approach to fisheries management is community participation. Admin. Maritima and earlier agencies were unsuccessful in being policemen, using command and control approaches. Ownership of management and resources is the key. Education component is critical for change in community and fishers attitude. Promote “environmental self respect”, “no piracy” view is essential for fisheries sustainability.

No respect locally for laws that do not work. New areas based regulations and approach have community support. Community support for marine resources management – see it as in their own interest. Central for community support and broad support: need to define rights of use in and outside of marine park. Define fishing take zones based on community knowledge of habitats and fisheries, this is basis for protection of stocks.

Learn from these experiences to transfer areas based and limited take areas management to high conflict areas where rights of use are in conflict and undefined. Admin. Maritima wants to use areas based management with no take/limited take core protected areas as the central management tool for fisheries in areas where fisheries pressure is growing, where data is weak, difficult or too costly to collect. Inexpensive, effective community supported but need more accurate data to establish effectiveness and feasibility of use in other areas of Panama.

While habitat protection is central issue addressed by marine protected areas planning for Bastimentos, three other issues are also important and is not addressed by COSTAS. These are not in the park but in the surrounding areas:

- dumps and wastewater,
- deforestation and erosion/sedimentation, coral impacts,
- Agrochemicals.

All of these are growing as tourism grows. Need to be addressed because they are destroying the resource base and impact tourism. Need to go beyond just park borders and immediate area. Tourism impacts also include selling of coastal properties for development; mangrove deforestation by coastal development, growth of urban populations wanting access to tourist generated revenue.

Local govt. has great influence. Some cooperation with local government but there is no effort by COSTAS to make local govt. more effective in coastal management. Lack of operations, implementation capabilities. Need to strengthen to address these other outside the park issues. Local govt. is responsible for addressing these tourism and other threats to natural resources base. They are lead for these local issues but are not ready to undertake responsibility. Weak administration, need training and assistance to undertake these coastal protection functions. Need assistance in planning and organizing to undertake this. Weak municipal/local govt. human resources for coastal pollution and other mgmt. – NGOs get the training under COSTAS but local govt. gets left out. Not addressed under COSTAS – too focused on park only.

Need to involve other agencies. ANAM and IPAT are involved in park. Lack of coordination with Tourism Ministry (IPAT) with other tourism related issues that affect envt. Other agencies not assuming responsibilities for health and wastewater/water quality.

Regionality well served by PROARCA- increase cooperation with Costa Rica. Would like to see more effort to promote interchange among fisheries bodies in the region to work out differences in norms, laws and standards. Also to address regional responses to new fishing pressures (e.g. sea cucumber). Marine park and no-take fishing areas policies and rules are new to Panama, would like to have exchanges with others I CA and region to learn more about what has worked elsewhere. Need to involve resources agencies in exchange of staff.

LEPPI process identified water availability, sanitary issues with potable water, as top priorities, solid waste lower but defined as more feasible to address. Built on previous studies and work on solid waste already done. In 8 mo. planning process LEPPI provided workshops for diagnosis, identification of problems, priorities. LEPPI contributions: contract for site EA, site selection and finalization. Provided technical advice on designs of treatment plan and dump site, identified better process for planning, made link to municipality and improved information base. Comité and municipality appreciated documentation of planning process (plan to use this again).

Technical approach was the weakest aspect. Weak analysis: did not consider a semi-urban dumpsite or the realities of an island location. LEPPI did not use locally knowledgeable experts to lead the technical process. Also EA not approved by national Health Ministry.

Health evaluation/EA conflictive issue. Approval of travel request late did not meet with appropriate officials to resolve EA problem. While regional health agency support project, national does not.

Financial issues were not addressed. No idea of costs, need assistance to determine actual costs and fee structures. Some areas too poor to pay, basis for hotel industry or municipal subsidies need to be determined to see if feasible. Financial plan proposed (by whom?) but not in place.

Need assistance to design awareness program for all levels of population for waste collection. Need pilot project to test and develop awareness training for all involved.

Tourism industry did not participate in planning. Simply glad to pay to have service (should have made added effort to involve them). Hotel industry willing to pay to subsidize poor areas collection – need to know costs and mechanisms. Not done.

Main issues are: LEPPI staff needed to include the national Health Ministry in the planning process, at least coordinate with them on the EA issue. Stakeholders group was not appropriately defined to include key health

agency. LEPPi needed to make local participants aware of non-local stakeholders that have great influence on outcomes of planning process.

LEPPi needs to "own" the final product, along with Comité and partners. Just seems to advise as an outsider. Needs to ensure that the process is left in a viable state.

LEPPi is not concerned with replicability of process. There is interest in other urban sites in the region but there is no mechanism for replication.

Previous activities and experience with external funding. Basis for selection as partners, small grants recipients. Environmental education, conservation focus to raise awareness of protected area and promote participation in park planning. Community development, communications focus within protected area.

Lack of a clear vision why the COSTAS activities are in the communities.

Leverage additional funds for conservation work. Coordination of donors started as NGO initiative, not led by COSTAS, but now taken up. COSTAS is focussed on just this site, while the NGOs see this as one activity in a continuum of sites. View activity as very important to entire region of Panama and a model for other Panamanian coastal areas. View park as central to project and focus for community activities. Must go outside of parks focus to different types of use areas. Need to have plan and strategy to expand/replicate activities to other areas in northwest Panama and Costa Rica. Build geographic alliances with other region NGOs, communities, management agency offices.

Need to address issues such as industrial fishing (e.g. sea cucumber fishing) and improve information available to both NGOs and resources management agencies.

Sustainability is an issue. Admittance fee is collected but all funds return to Panama City. Little budgeted for Bastimentos. Concessions are central issue. Want to explore other funding sources in cooperation with tourism industry and municipality. No progress yet on this under COSTAS. Financial aspects of various management options (e.g. concessions) are critical issues. Financial plan is part of management plan (NOTE: financial plan was NOT included in the draft plan that was distributed at the planning group meeting 10/27).

Unknown tourism carrying capacity – need to study with baseline and monitoring of impacts of visitors on park resources to establish capacity. Dive operators willing to participate. Rapid Environmental Evaluation completed.

Benefits to NGOs of technical training in management and organization, participation in exchanges and training (only some benefited), COSTAS partnership with international NGO raised awareness and credibility of local and national NGO in region.

Marine resources management weak – Admin. Maritima outside park, ANAM inside. Coordination not strong. Admin. Maritima is used to working with commercial fisheries, ANAM with land parks. Need to improve communications and abilities of national agencies present on site to work in marine protected area and buffer zone. Need a clear role of who does what and how to communicate. Important for marine park because resources cross boundaries. Not a COSTAS focus.

Lack of effort by COSTAS to involve local govt. in park planning, just marginal.

Questions raised about actual community participation. Appear to not be consultation, park leadership and COSTAS leads the discussion. (NOTE: we observed that in the planning meeting 10/27, communities simply sat and listened. One suggestion from community representative was voted down). Actual participation is less than

reported.. Need for COSTAS to design and deliver awareness training to improve participation. Process is slow, many intangibles, results far off.

Admin issues. Slow start. One NGO report funding processes difficult and complicated, slow. Turtle funds need in February, funded in June, missed opportunity. Second NGO reports same problems at start, now resolved.

Interestingly, the NGOs involved do not usually meet or plan together. Appear to be continuing poor relations among NGOs involved. Common areas of work but they do not work together outside of the project. They said they would not work together outside of the COSTAS framework, suggesting that efforts need to be made to strengthen cooperation and coordination among local partners. Weak municipal involvement and lack of coordination among NGOs outside the project affect sustainability. Issue of work directed primarily at NGOs, with their own visions, agendas (and perhaps in competition)?

Management process benefited directly from the leadership and contributions of Eligio Binns. Funds for all planning activities from COSTAS, nothing from ANAM. COSTAS also funded Comité. Good cooperation with NGOs, and with national agencies, IPAT and ANAM. Main COSTAS areas of assistance were in the management planning process, use impact assessment and fishing pressure on park.

Park and COSTAS priorities are the same. Very satisfied with assistance. There are very limited funds for protected areas in Panama and few management plans of any kind. Lack of resources. Park management was an issue before but lacked funds and an approach. COSTAS provided the funding; vision and direction for participatory process that gave rise to mgmt. Plan. Gained active community support, communities incorporated into park planning and communities now view park expansion as the best way to preserve their resources.

Successes to date are the completion of legal issue analysis and the draft management plans for the park and buffer areas. Also COSTAS succeeded in organizing communities outside park as well, so benefit of activity extends beyond park. Recognition of the central importance of artisanal fisheries in the Bocas region and its inclusion in management plan was important as well.

It is important to replicate the process and plans. Specifically in the Gulf of Chiriqui marine park. Lack of resources is the constraint. All conservation work in Panama is based on foreign donations, as is biodiversity and other research. COSTAS funds some baseline research (Rapid Ecological Assessment).

Sustainability of Bastimentos is a constant issue. Without or after the project, park director only sees government support or use of biological corridor funds as likely revenue sources. No source of funds to implement buffer zone plan (government?). Draft management plans call for financial plans but monthly operational cost was not known. Director had not explored alternate sources of income for protected area. It is possible to self-manage co-manage park and funds. Have local control and local financing regulations in place (if so, why are admissions fees still going to Panama City?).

Some coordination with LEPPi on solid waste. This is a growing issue in the Bocas region, as tourism and urban populations grow.

Has heard of CCAD but has had no contact with either corridor or reef projects.

Follow on recommendations. Need financial plans and plans for sustainable financing, assistance with resources inventory (biodiversity, forest, marine resources), identification of impacts of management activities that would affect communities, implementation of action plan, personnel.

Recommend COSTAS establish better links between Direccion Nacional de Areas Protegidas and Direccion General del Ambiente and esp. with regional director in Changuinola. These have the authority to take needed decisions on direction that the park director cannot make.

PROARCA has had a national impact in that a) importance of integrated coastal resources management is now recognized at the national level and b) other protected areas directors are aware of and are using the participatory planning approach for protected areas.

Presentation of draft management plan to Comité. Only COSTAS, municipal and agency political leaders spoke (poderosos). Community leaders spoke only once, to have a longer period to review and comment on plan, and were quickly voted down. Interestingly, some community members attending refused to identify themselves by name during the introductions, suggesting a level of discomfort with the Comité.

Park director does not have a vision. Entire meeting was led and directed by COSTAS. Eligio Binns catalyst. Local with a lot of ability and local knowledge. The process would not have succeeded without him.

Fisheries presentation focused on use of limited access in buffer zone and core no take protected area as basis for regional lobster management plan.

3.0 COSTA RICA

PROARCA a través de CAPAS ha contribuido a establecer sistemas de Monitoreo que se está adoptando en todas las áreas protegidas del País. Tanto en las que son manejadas por instituciones de gobierno como aquellas que están en co-manejo por ONGs. El monitoreo de las áreas protegidas que se está implementando es computarizado y tiene la participación de todos los agentes sociales. El sistema de monitoreo además ha permitido el empoderamiento de los usuarios.

CAPAS ha contribuido a fortalecer el SINAC mediante cursos de capacitación para el establecimiento de un sistema de planificación estratégica, planificación financiera y ecoturismo. En el caso de ecoturismo se están realizando estudios de caso para el manejo de visitantes que podrían ser de gran utilidad en otros países.

El impacto de CAPAS ha sido a nivel nacional. En general CAPAS ha sido un buen complemento para el sistema nacional porque ha proporcionado herramientas importantes para los sistemas de manejo. Ha fortalecido las ONGs y ha servido para llenar el vacío que se está sintiendo en el país en la actualidad de parte de las nuevas autoridades.

Las herramientas de manejo que se han desarrollado son un producto que está siendo diseminado en la región y a nivel latinoamericano. El caso de las pequeñas donaciones es un ejemplo que tiene dos propósitos fortalecer las ONGs y desarrollar cosas prácticas en el terreno que sirven de ejemplo y que pueden ser multiplicadas en los diferentes países de la región.

CAPAS en coordinación y complementando las acciones de COSTAS logró establecer mecanismos para el manejo de tortugas marinas un tema regional y que ha generado mucho conflicto.

Es unánime en la reunión el pensamiento que este tipo de apoyo debe continuar tal como ha sido, de alta calidad y soportando productos concretos como lo ha hecho CAPAS y fortaleciendo procesos como el caso de COSTAS. La primera modalidad es rápida la segunda es más lenta. Lo ideal sería llegar a tener un híbrido de CAPAS y COSTAS que permita apoyar las dos modalidades.

Costas ha trabajado activamente en un proceso en Gandoca y Bocas del Toro con el apoyo de CAPAS organizando las comunidades y logrando el empoderamiento de los procesos en esas áreas y ambos se han acoplado a necesidades institucionales.

CAPAS ha contribuido también a identificar "gaps" importantes así como prioridades de conservación en diferentes países de la Región. Uno de los aspectos importantes es el trabajo intersectorial que se ha realizado con CAPAS poniendo en la misma mesa ONGs, Gobierno y comunidades. Lo mismo ha sucedido con las solicitudes de apoyo de los diferentes ministerios para el caso de fijación de carbono y la creación de bases de datos para AP. Ambos componentes han tenido una visión de apoyo y una actuación de servicio.

PROARCA se ha cimentado en lo que ya existía. Se han asociado con actores claves y han promovido democratización. 4 años no es suficiente para este tipo de proyectos.

En la actualidad se están presentando limitaciones de comunicación con Ministros. Los gobiernos y las políticas cambian. Han faltado coordinación a nivel político para aprovechar impacto positivo. Sin embargo, se ha tenido la precaución y tacto para que trabajos técnicos de PROARCA no se hayan desgastado teniendo que entrar en trabajo político. Este tipo de trabajo debería ser hecho por otra institución, este podría ser el rol de la CCAD o de la CCAB-AP últimamente ha perdido vigencia y es un buen socio potencial técnico para PROARCA.

PROARCA está promoviendo acercamiento de personas y diálogo a nivel de Centroamérica. Aspecto muy necesario para lograr difundir y capacitar a gente de campos de AP.

CCAD debe coordinar y facilitar. Ellos tienen visión regional. Ha habido falta de conocimiento del rol de CCAD y especialmente en el último año CCAD se ha perdido ya no tiene el sitio WEB y no emite el boletín.

PROARCA debe hacer pocas cosas para no diluirse. Y no debe dejar de lado el consolidar sistemas de AP en Centroamérica. No se debe confundir el role de un proyecto como PROARCA con el role de la CCAD. Especialmente ahora que hay problemas y pugna entre CCAD y AID.

PROARCA actúa local y está a nivel regional. Esta misma característica debería tener la segunda fase. Proyectos deben ser permitidos a dar participación en procesos. Esto debe estar claro en segunda fase. Tal vez CCAD no es el socio óptimo para PROARCA. AP, bosques y pesca porque por lo general estas actividades están en otros ministerios.

PROARCA no ha sido difuso o disperso. Tal vez se han manejado muchos temas diferentes en CAPAS.

La información de eventos es eficiente si el evento es coordinado por PROARCA. En casos en los que solo se financian se debe mejorar la información y convocatoria de eventos. También se debe revisar la estrategia de información y divulgación.

Se han dado casos de retrasos en aprobación de contratos y sub-acuerdos pero se entiende que es por la naturaleza de la gestion y en muchos casos requisitos que hay que cumplir entre donantes y ejecutores. Si es necesario unificar líneas de mando y respetar diferencias institucionales.

PROARCA debe continuar trabajando en organizar y contribuir a producir un marco legal regional para proteger las AP. Definición de benchmarks para monitorear especies. Romper la asistencia técnica tradicional sin participación. Esto debe continuar en PROARCA II

Solid waste and wastewater key issues in community. Interest by community, municipality, small business (hotels, tourism industries). Ministry of Tourism. Solid waste chosen as tractable problem. LEPPi funding helped a lot. Could not start without LEPPi infusion.

Production of compost, recycling and environmental education components. Private and public trash collection - use of receptacles in common areas is public effort, hotel and restaurants use collection service. Willing to pay, cheaper than self-disposal.

Good pilot demonstration, teaching facility for many others, model for other communities (e.g. Saxiola). LEPPi supported workshops (too many) and a financial feasibility study. Financial study designed and led by private sector, for profit interests in Puerto. Large business payments support collection system, cheaper than self-disposal.

Want additional LEPPi support to change demonstration project to private business, but trash collection alone not economically feasible. Working with the "whole package" of waste is the only economically feasible approach, but complex. Must have recycling and composting. Want LEPPi to give small business truck for collection and shredder (!), support environmental education to have community separate trash for recycling. Need awareness funding to make more businesses willing to participate.

Key points gained from interviews:

Ownership of activity by relatively powerful interests is essential for success.

Must focus on being a business, not a service.

If it can't become self-sustaining it is not worth the effort and raised expectations of the LEPPi process.

Private sector leadership and self-interest is the key.

Working too broadly in the community dilutes the impact and reduces effectiveness of solutions.

Fully researched markets and financial studies must be a central piece to the LEPPi solid waste program.

LEPPI must help participants and implementers understand the entire materials cycle to be able to address concerns and issues at each step.

LEPPI work linked to protected areas in region leads to better understanding of links between tourism and protected areas, responsibilities of municipalities and business towards resource base. Protected areas benefit from influx of income from tourists, tourist support of "green" values. Business benefits from the attraction the protected areas provide.

Env. NGOs active in Talamanca Corridor area before PROARCA. Initial agroforestry focus, grew to include environmental conservation, forestry, community organization, producers organizations and other rural development issues such as training and community credit. Very close working relations with producer and community organizations.

PROARCA focus on Gandoca-Manzanillo areas; start 1996. Work with both CAPAS and COSTAS, initially on turtle conservation, continuing existing NGO work. Small CAPAS and COSTAS grants provided important economic infusion to communities and improved volunteers. COSTAS provided TA was the most important impact of COSTAS. Many sources of funds but little experienced TA – good use of Eligio Binns and local Costa Rican experts. Other important PROARCA impacts on NGOs from training (e.g. nature guides) by CAPAS and COSTAS. Exchange with Bastimentos (Binns) useful to Gandoca-Manzanillo.

PROARCA objectives in keeping with NGO objectives, eco-tourism development, improved management of coastal resources, environmental conservation, and environmental education while improving quality of local life. Very good relations.

Specific comments from local Gandoca NGO: COSTAS involved in both existing and new activities at Gandoca. Many new starts since COSTAS arrived. Small grants support a variety of activities, management plan (build on existing plan), manual of best practices, (new), turtle studies (build on past work). COSTAS assists with admin. Costs and other small expenses without which the Gandoca NGO could not work.

COSTAS promotes good links among Bastimentos-Gandoca-Manzanillo, and between Gandoca and the COSTAS main office. Promotes information exchange at local level among NGOs, local govt., and development associations. Little information or exchange with other COSTAS or CAOPAS sites. Want better exchanges and other links to other COSTAS sites. Training primarily theoretical, with little practical application. Want to gain application experience through exchanges among protected area staff at other COSTAS sites. Environmental courses, esp. guide courses, successful, but need more field based focus. Want to see more regional activities. Want both contacts and to share experiences and learn from successes and failures.

Multiple use protected area requires patrols to control illegal fishing. Expensive. Get some funds from central government but unpredictable. Sustainability requires constant patrols to control illegal uses. COSTAS support needed to pay for patrols. Want to see more active COSTAS role in bringing in more municipal and regional government support, funds (park tourism benefits them) and participation.

Need inventories, bio-monitoring; build on past and ongoing work (e.g. lobster research by national university). COSTAS has a role in bringing in research interests and especially in linking the Smithsonian in Bocas and Gandoca – not done. COSTAS should build links to other Bocas actors, esp. NGOs. Financial support for cooperation and exchange.

Small grants: CAOAS rigid, COSTAS flexible. CAPAS uses private sector (accountable) implementation of small grants. Detailed planning, careful, responsible, control of documents, follow-up. COSTAS is less strict on controls, "improvise" more opportunistic. Local NGO prefers CAPAS model- use of receipts, plans for expenses, corroboration of costs. Better tracking, accountability, can see their effects of funds expended.

PROARCA seen as impact oriented.

CAPAS training (e.g., guides) directed at self-sufficiency and economic opportunities for local communities. Need funds for community groups and activities to support comité de vigilancia, beach cleanup. Minimal funds needed but large impact on participation.

COSTAS success has been the adoption of the locally supported agenda as the strategy for Gandoca. PROARCA design, by not being too narrow, allows for success. However, communities and local NGOs want better communication with PROARCA, better access to publications and information (CAPAS and COSTAS)

Social focus is fundamental to management of protected area. Includes users of natural resources. However, mixed-use area is difficult to manage and need heavy investments in education and sustainable productive use demonstrations. Need a baseline study to establish management parameters. Need a model of sustainable use (best practices) as the core model for a mixed use protected area.

LEPPI essentially unknown.

4.0 NICARAGUA

PROARCA ha contribuido substancialmente con Nicaragua. Pero deberían apoyar más especialmente a las instituciones de gobierno. El trabajo en la Costa Miskita con COSTAS es importante. CAPAS ha contribuido en el manejo de muchas áreas protegidas con las pequeñas donaciones y se esta haciendo algo en el área legal.

Debería haber mas apoyo a las instituciones nacionales para lograr hacer mayor cantidad de cosas por ejemplo en el Golfo de Fonseca. El apoyo que se brinda es mas dirigido a Honduras y se debería coordinar con PROGOLFO estrechamente para el manejo del Golfo de Fonseca.

En el caso de áreas protegidas las pequeñas donaciones a través de CAPAS nos han ayudado a consolidar aspectos importantes como los planes de manejo y la estructura de manejo tanto de las ONGs involucradas como de las áreas. Las ONGs han aprendido a darle un mejor seguimiento a la planificación y a los aspectos financieros. Hacer la relación plan de trabajo y disponibilidad de recursos e identificar en que temas necesitamos la capacitación. Los cursos que han realizado con el apoyo han sido muy buenos pero han sido mejor preparados los que se han manejado desde Guatemala en cuanto Organización y manejo financiero.

En la costa Miskita el trabajo ha sido bastante difícil por los diferentes intereses que se manejan en el área y la diversidad de grupos étnicos. Sin embargo se han logrado avances importantes en introducir el concepto de áreas protegidas en las áreas marino costeras. La situación que en este momento se afronta es que la mayoría del trabajo se ha realizado en aguas frías (lagunas) y no sabemos como realmente va a trabajar cuando apliquemos las cosas en las aguas calientes del mar. El trabajo que se realiza en el área se viene haciendo desde hace bastantes años pero con el apoyo de COSTAS se ha logrado consolidar por el hecho de haber involucrado mas socios y no solo estar con una sola ONG. (Por razones climáticas no se pudo visitar la zona)

PROARCA también nos esta ayudando a capacitar gente en los aspectos legales en la nueva normativa que entro en vigencia en el país. Se ha capacitado gente en la aplicación de normas y se han mandado algunos técnicos a otros países de la región.

En el caso de LEPPi toda la capacitación fue muy provechosa aunque el lugar y el tema de manejo de desechos sólidos ya se venia trabajando. En este momento los trabajos van avanzados pero todavía no hemos logrado iniciar los trabajos. Un área en la que necesitamos ayuda es en los desechos líquidos de los barcos y lanchas pesqueras. Todos los aceites que utilizan en los motores los tiran al mar. Hay experiencias ya en el país en la que se están recogiendo y se reciclan o se utilizan para combustible pero, necesitamos apoyo para regular y poner en práctica el control en los diferentes puertos pesqueros.

5.0 HONDURAS

1. Instrumento auxiliar de las políticas de cada país a través de los Ministerios encargados.
 - ♦ Falta de coordinación con los proyectos financiados (falta info).
 - ♦ Café ecológico/orgánico (AHPROCAFE y CECH).
 - ♦ SERNA **no** es considerada contraparte; se buscan otros aliados.
 - ♦ Papel importante: Silvia Marin / Edas Muñoz
 - ♦ Mediación SERNA-ANDAH-CODDEFFAGOLF (visitas campo y reuniones) en Golfo de Fonseca.
 - ♦ Aspectos técnicos y de medición de las actividades en el Golfo de Fonseca: a través de PROGOLFO, Proyecto de SERNA.
 - ♦ Algunos proyectos requieren AVAL de SERNA y ésta los desconoce. A veces hay duplicidades (se pueden resolver con envíos periódicos de informes / reportes a SERNA).
 - ♦ No ha habido participación en algunas capacitaciones regionales (de legislación particularmente); no se han recibido meniorias del resultado de los mismos.
2. SERNA: No ejecutor, solo normador
Ejecutores: ONGs y otros
3. Otros casos

Est. Nac. de Biodiversidad: GEF / B Busto

CITES: apoyo de Genius Grant a Carla Cantarero en DAPVS; ahora está en la UNAH y el proyecto pasó a la última.

2 talleres con autoridad científica
4. CAFE ECOLOGICO: ¿actividad nueva, existente?
¿papel de CAPAS?

CCCH: 50 coops y 12 grupos precoop.
 - ♦ Objetivos estratégicos, ya existían
comercialización
manejo alternativo: certificación
aspectos ambientales
 - ♦ Enlace Sur-Sur en M.A. y desarrollo (red de ONGs); también pertenecen “red pequeños productores de café” → comercio justo, que garantiza precios mínimos. CAPAS financió un encuentro a nivel de América Latina para pequeños productores (espacio de encuentro regional) con productores, comercializadores y brokers.
 - ♦ Donde está la CCCH?

Tiene la presidencia de la Coordinadora Regional

Iniciativas
 - Mercadeo (criterios: café (de pequeños productores, certificado)
 - Crear una certificadora (de café, hortalizas, etc.) en Honduras

Para Eruropa

20,000 qq en cinco años (café certificado) solo de la CCCH

Sello de calidad de comercio justo, con actividades de prefinanciamiento (menos del 60%) y se paga contra cosecha.

Necesidades: CCCH requiere de más apoyo

Ejemplo: apoyos como de financiamiento (caso biobitina) y los 4 talleres que se desarrollaron con 150 asociados 3 por cada uno; uno de los resultados de los talleres: "manual de control interno".

PROARCA, CAPAS está apoyando en los talleres de comercialización (mercados a futuro): esta es una debilidad regional al igual que marcas por región.

CAPAS da apoyos puntuales contra productos.

91% de mediano y pequeños productores

Conoció de CAPAS por medio del periódico.

Proyecto de 10 zonas: piloto para "tirarlo" a nivel nacional el otro año. Componentes

Capacitación

Mercadeo

Certificación

Asistencia técnica (un técnico financiero con CAPAS: small grants), en temas de cultivo (manejo) de café orgánico) y generará "guía metodológica" en cultivo.

Certificadora de agricultura orgánica y que se certifiquen desde Honduras para mercado norteamericano.

CAPAS da el apoyo financiero en partes 15%, 60% y el resto.

VENTAJAS DE CAPAS

Intercambio de información entre la región

Vínculo, cultivo (organización del productor) - comercialización (mercado)

Estuvo en evaluación de CAPAS (1999)

Pidió una información de lo que es PROARCA, ya que en SERNA hay nueva administración

Consejo de Ministros

La DGMA de SICA

¿Se vincula PROARCA con CCAD? y

¿Cómo ha sido la participación de la CCAD?

Hay conocimiento de la relación PROARCA y CCAD en la SERNA; pero no en los ONGs y en otras organizaciones. CCAD es la Ministra es un Foro.

Su participación (de CCAD) es beneficiosa, los resultados son “mayores”.

El enfoque de CCAD siempre debe ser de visión regional.

Medidas, leyes (estandarizadas)

Aspectos bi-tro o multinacionales

Debe ver 2 grupos

los proyectos regionales (cada país teniendo o desarrollando un componente)

los proyectos nacionales

Distribución de recursos financieros

debe ser equitativa (pequeñas donaciones)

(hacer más astringentes los criterios de selección): vincularlos con los problemas concretos.

La CCAD debe buscar los consensos en los criterios de asignación de RR

CCAD: vinculada a gobiernos

PROARCA: vinculada a proyectos

Falta la vinculación de CCAD con otras redes de la sociedad civil.

SUGERENCIAS PARA PROARCA

1. PROARCA debería vincular los temas que son “vinculables2 a nivel regional y nacional.
2. Vincular integralmente el “eje café” en el manejo de Aps en los Ministerios. Es decir, vincularlo con otros procesos existentes, incluyendo la legislación (que algunas veces es contradictoria); el vínculo debe ser más que solamente “prestar el logotipo” - prod - comerc-ambiente tanto anivel regional como nacional.
3. Asignación de RR: debe vincularse con la resolución de los problemas concretos que el componente de PROARCA pretente atender pero debe haber consenso regional en la elaboración de criterios (y en la planificación).
4. PROARCA II

Debe basarse en diagnósticos nacionales

Participación en el monitoreo de las actividades y proyectos por parte de SERNA (representante de CCAD).

Concepto de regionalidad de los usuarios y de los técnicos de PROARCA ya que este concepto varía de acuerdo a la dinámica de los procesos que se apoyan.

Que CCAD apoye más en el criterio de regionalidad.

PROARCA puede apoyar técnicamente a las unidades especializadas de SERNA; mejorar la comunicación.

1. Planificación estratégica (con apoyo de capas) de la DAPVS de COHDEFOR.

2. Aplicación de la “Herramienta de Monitoreo de APs” generado por CAPAS (TNC): Se está proponiendo insertarlo para el uso y planificación de APS.
3. PROGOLFO, PROMANGLE y PROCARA-COSTAS trabajando en reuniones conjuntas desde julio 1999 para coordinar temas comunes en áreas geográficas/temáticas. También en perspectivas.
 - Estudio capacidad carga Golfo de Fonseca
 - CB del Golfo de Fonseca (los 3 países)
4. Regionalidad:
 - Talleres para “descentralización del Poder Civil en el tramamiento de los problemas ambientales del Golfo de de Fonseca.
 - Varía en función de iniciativas nacionales (caso del Gobierno de Honduras con Belice); en el Golfo de Fonseca hay más movimiento de base en Honduras, también la presión industrial/agroindustrial ha sido mayor en Honduras (mayor confrontación en Honduras); FUNDEGOLFO: Asociación Pescadores en NIC.; ASUMA: ONG en El Salvador = se requiere de una estrategia para que éstos órganos sigan creciendo (en particular en ES); hay una Trinacional de Golfo (estrategia de expansión).
5. En regionalidad se requiere también una estrategia basada en la demanda local (caso ASUMA, caso LA UNION).
6. Otras características de regionalidad
 - Pobreza: igual en los 3 países
 - Capacitación: mejor en Honduras
 - Voluntad: existe en los 3 países (talvez un poco menos en ES).
7. Objetivos de los Usuarios de los RRDEL

Golfo: Diferentes en cada país (prolo.limítrofe)

ES: pescar en aguas hondureñas *

HON: pescar en aguas hondureñas y nicaragüenses *

(*) problemas de tipo legal

Requiere: Negociaciones entre los 3 países

 - RREE
 - Ambiente
 - Municipalidades
 - (a través de una conferencia que está promoviendo CODDEFFAOLF)
8. Trabajo en PROARCA-COSTAS
 - Información, concientización y capacitación (en 5 municipios del Valle): UNAs, voluntariado/asosers (mestros)
 - Conseración RRNN

- SIG (a partir de inducción)
- Manejo de cuencas
- Saneamiento básico municipal
- Legislación (forestal)
- Planeación
- Categorías de manejo de APs
Se capacitó a maestros, líderes comunitarios, UMAS, son capacitaciones introductorias y diferenciadas.
- Apoyo en procesos de concertación
 - para declaratoria de APs
 - vinculado con procesos de levantamiento de capacidades¹
- Apoyo técnico directamente a usuarios/gobierno (ej: talleres de manejo costero integrado)
- Apoyo en levantamiento de la capacidad propositiva municipal (conaciones/préstamos).
- Apoyo complementarios a actividades y procesos en ejecución.
- Fortalecimiento institucional = estratégico para la Comisión de Verificación y Control (CVC).

9. Contribución más importante de COSTAS

Acompañamiento en el proceso de aprobación de APs

Apoyo a CVC

Apoyo a trinacional de la SDC civil trinacional

como: catalizador
facilitador/interlocutor

10. ¿El papel de RSTA o los recursos financieros?

Papel de RSTA:

interlocutor
permite capitalizar en capacidades locales ya existentes
permite identificar más claramente las actividades de trabajo

11. ¿Cuándo CODDEFFAGOLF podrá “caminar por si mismo” (sostenibilidad/autosostenibilidad)?

Este es un proceso. Separando la necesidad de recursos financieros. Objetivo: apoyar a las municipalidades/comunidades para que vayan “independizándose”; se hace a través de proyectos piloto.

CODDEFFAGOLF es un grupo de comunidades más que una ONG.

CODDEFFAGOLF y el gobierno

CODDEFFAGOLF y la cooperación: CODDEFFAGOLF lidera, la cooperación solo acompaña

Un hito importante: la declaratoria de las AP que puede influir en la membresía de la ONG; igualmente se espera potenciar la venta de servicios ambientales (secuestro de carbono).

12. CCAD: Supervisor de proyectos ambientales; son los Ministerios de Ambiente.

¹base para los acuerdos entre CODDEFFAGOLF-ANDAH

RECOMENDACIONES PROARCA II

1. Más apoyo a las UMAs
En generación/transferencia/intercambio de información (sistemas de información)
2. Continuar apoyo a los 3 países
 - 2.1 La Trinacional: regionalidad (CBM, organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil)
 - 2.2 Fondos orientados a proyectos productivos, además de los de conservación (opción al uso tradicional de los RR)
 - 2.3 Con la aprobación legal, declaratoria de APs, se requerirán mayores apoyos técnicos-científicos (estudios más profundos) y también aspectos técnicos en manejo práctico.
 - 2.4 Procesos de zonificación (ordenamiento territorial?) y generación de acuerdos de uso y manejo de los RN entre los países. La SERNA: asumir liderazgo en CCAD.
 - 2.5 Proceso de “acercamiento” y coordinación.
 - 2.6 Apoyo en una conferencia regional sobre los temas arriba indicados.
 - 2.7 Apoyo logístico para la UMAs y a órganos públicos descentralizados presentes en la zona.
3. Continuar con apoyo a la C.V.C. y replicarla en los otros países; incorporar a otros miembros, caminar procesos (de monitoreo y control) en la CVC, reorientandola de “curativa” a “preventiva”.

6.0 EL SALVADOR

PREGUNTAS:

1. PROARCA y las estratégicas, políticas y planes nacionales (visión).
2. Regionalidad de las actividades en el Golfo de Fonseca.
3. Modelo sostenible: El desarrollo comunitario alrededor de APs.
4. PROARCA ¿nuevas actividades o continuación de otras actividades?.
5. PROARCA y CCAD.
6. Administración de PROARCA.
7. Valor de los talleres.
8. Pequeñas donaciones
CAPAS
COSTAS
9. Leppi, prolegis
10. Temas ambientales y otros donantes
11. Futuro de PROARCA.

COMENTARIOS:

1. Coincidencia de prioridades (MARN-PROARCA), en algunas veces.
2. PNUD-GEF = Est. Nac. de Biodiversidad.
3. Impactos de PROARCA: nacional, regional, capacitación.
4. Replicabilidad: lecciones aprendidas y experiencia de la tortuga marina (manejo, integrado y regional).
5. Aval técnico de los GO. Se deben conocer todos los proyectos de cada país. ¿papel de la CCAD?.

Experiencia del PROGOLFO; costas trabajando con ONGs y no con ONGs. Se requiere estructuras de enlace ONG-GO.

Debe basarse en la evolución de la complejidad y seriedad de las tareas.

Ver las APs como sistema.

Oportunidades Adicionales: Pequeñas donaciones

Continuar con las “contribuciones excepcionales”

- Se visualiza claramente en el proyecto PROGOLFO
- Una opción: Que en el futuro todos los proyectos sean regionales.
ejemplo:
 1. RIO PA2: Guate-ES, Sitio Ramsar Binacional.
 2. CBM: actividades nacionales del CBM; criterios de integración.
 3. Mapa de vegetación, base del CBM
- Experiencias regionales se diseminarán con el tiempo. (ej.: criterios e indicadores)
- CITES tiene un carácter regional, pero no se ha integrado regionalmente.
- CCAD: formulación/diseño políticas regionales.

- Manejo de fondos: flexibilidad/agilidad de criterios de AID.

- A través de la CCAD:

GO y ONG (MARN): en el diseño de la políticas
Directamente: en el aspecto operativo

- CAPAS: es muy agil, eficiente = no se debe cambiar este aspecto (ONG)

Calidad: muy buena

Cantidad: muy poca

se requiere más talleres; depende de regulaciones internas

- Se enteraron por casualidad (Funzel)
- Asociaciones o “Partnerships”
- Debe haber bancos de datos (en CAPAS) de: políticas y estrategias nacionales (MARN), Políticas y estrategias, regionales (MARN-CCAP), listado de ONGs, empresarios, consultores, prioridades nacionales (MARN)

Sirve para: pequeñas donaciones
talleres

Utilización de mecanismos como “punto focal operativo” que usa el GEF con la ONG. El punto focal debe opinar si un proyecto se enmarca dentro de las prioridades de MARN.

= se requiere nombrar comité de enlace nacional

- Se desconoce el apoyo que asuma ha recibido.
- Desconocen (se sabe que hay técnicos de MARN conocedores de esas actividades). Prolegis: muy poca actividad.
- Esfuerzos de coordinación, que le toca a la CCAD.
- Continuar con esfuerzos de APSs, CITES y CBM.
- Convenciones complementarias: biodiversidad y C.C. (sensibilización de niveles decisorios).
- Capacitación de niveles de decisión (políticos) y las comunidades, ONG ocupantes de zonas del corredor y la EN de Biodiversidad.
- Costas: trabajar con en Chismuyo, en Conchagua y otra en NIC.
- Apoyo del sitio Ramsar Binacional en el Río Raz (Guat-ESs), cuenca baja.
- Talleres de “aprender” haciendo”.
- Continuar apoyo a investigaciones ambientales.
- Apoyo regional de la tortuga marina.

REGIONALIDAD

1. Manejo de Sitios:

Ramsar
Cuencas bi-tri-nacionales
Gfonseca: un punto regional (pero debe atenderse integralmente)

2. Manejo de Temas:

Biodiversidad

3. Lecciones, externalidades

Intercambio de experiencias y lecciones aprendidas; ejemplo CONADIBIO y tortuga marina.

1. Principios de EIA - Calidad ambiental / EPA

Mucha utilidad en formación de Centroamericano

- OG
- ONG y Consultoras / Sector Privado.

Hay necesidad e interés

2. Se requiere profundizar hacia → Auditorias

Donde en la práctica hay muchos problemas
También se debe profundizar en metodologías de evaluación.

3. (SINAMA): Sist. Nac. de M.A. → se debe conformar.
4. Estudios de casos: Acordes a la realidad (tiene que ver con el
(hacerlos más “digeribles”) “manual de EPA” que debe ser adaptado)
metodología Sin perder la calidad. “Laboratorios de casos
nivel de participantes reales”
5. Problemática de logística (son mínimos)
6. Priorización de un programa regional
Producción → tec. limpia (agric, industria)
Medidas de descontaminación (agua, aire, suelo)
7. Indicadores y líneas base, que tomen en cuenta las necesidades de las comunidades.
8. Hacer cursos prácticos.

Se esperaba un proyecto práctico (con dólares)

- Talleres:

1. Identificación de problemas (3-4 talleres)

Comité Gestor: Se juramentó. Desconocimiento del antiguo “Comité de Desarrollo Local” de RTI.

2. Problema identificado: Manejo Desechos Sólidos

No se sabe el nivel de ejecución del proyecto.

Falta: cronograma de actividades concretas (hubo levantamiento de expectativas)

- Replicabilidad: Si se puede hacer (proceso muy participativo). Pero: hay que aclarar desde el inicio: ¿Qué se pretende con el proyecto?.
- Problemas: “Café”: Desechos sólidos y suelos.
- Se requiere programar muy bien las actividades.
- Clave: que las comunidades se apropien de los procesos; es más valioso.

Ambos proyectos: problemática.

- Revisar los términos de referencia y estudios en conjunto con MARN. Por ejemplo: el sitio de desechos no tiene estudio de suelos ni hidrológico. Esto se debe hacer para facilitar los procesos (hubo desconocimiento de procedimientos de la Ley de Ambiente).

PROARCA Y LA NUEVA COOPERACION

1. Objetivos que persigue Deben ser conocidas por MARN/nivel técnico. Para
Actividades poderlo aprovechar (acceso a los servicios) (requiere divulgar
PROARCA "IT".)

Plan definido de la cooperación (sus prioridades y su oferta)

Para minimizar / evitar duplicidades

2. En este momento hay desconocimiento de PROARCA y sus servicios.
-

- CAPAS fue conocida hasta 1998
- Actividades (Estas actividades han caído como "paracaídas". No hay programación coordinada con CCAD/CAPAS).

Listas rojas (flora y fauna)
Caoba
Legislación

- En capacitación: se hizo un cronograma que no fue implementado.
- En administración: se han rezagado.
- CITES: administrativo desconoce lo que CAPAS hace (desconocimiento de los servicios).

Sin embargo,

Se requiere de más apoyo.

CITES-ES, sólo mantiene como fuente de información a la Secretaría General de CITES (vía internet), personal dedicado: mínimo (4 personas).

7.0 GUATEMALA

MODELO DE CAPAS

BUENO: Incluyó componente financiero (mercadeo proambiental); con “service best” se aprovechó positivamente “el momentum”.

El diagnóstico por país más los aspectos de certificación turística.

Mas ciencia

Planificación (Nacional y Regional.)

Impacto económico para las CAMs de turismo, más personal capacitado, mayores oportunidades (ej. la negociación con TACA que permitirá certif. 5000 personas)

CAPAS utilizó las capacidades instaladas en instancias con carácter regional.

2. ¿Es CAPAS un proyecto regional?.

- ♦ Sí, participan varios países, intercambio de experiencias (ejemplo de ICT); también promueve coordinación interinstitucional.

3. Es CAPAS abierta?

- Sí, permite participación de otros entes. Es versátil (CAPAS está en una fase de “conocimiento”, con actividades bastante puntuales (que intrínsecamente tienen el concepto regional).

Se podría recomendar:

- Apoyos mucho más estructurados, planificación estratégica con las instituciones que ya conoce, sin perder la flexibilidad y versatilidad (esp. administrativa).

4. Metodología de “Talleres”

- En Turismo ha sido adecuada

5. Modalidades “Contractuales”

- ♦ Mediante contratos y asignación de RR.
- ♦ Mediante pagos directos de CAPAS.
- ♦ Como “consultores”

6. Recomendaciones para PROARCA / CAPAS II:

- ♦ Darle seguimiento a procesos de capacitación iniciados por CAPAS.
- ♦ Capacitar a los capacitadores (esp. en los procesos de certificación); enseñanza a adultos, (factores multiplicadores), formación de recursos humanos “que sepan enseñar”.
- ♦ Participar en procesos de educación formal.
- ♦ Conceptualizar sus apoyos.
- ♦ CAPAS debe continuar con los 6 temas que ya trabaja, pero debe concentrarse “tematicamente” en cada uno de ellos.

- Socios de CAPAS:
 - ♦ Sector privado - ONG
 - ♦ (iniciativa privada sin fines de lucro)
- Tipos de proyectos
 - ♦ solamente regionales (al menos 3 países)
- CAPAS “debe darse a conocer”

7. Relación CCAD / CAPAS

- CAPAS responde al mandato que tiene CCAD.
- CCAD: brazo gestor de proyectos de L SICA.
- CAPAS debe ser autónomo de DGMA-SICA.

8.0 BELIZE

PROBLEMS

Fishing grounds problems in port Honduras.

El problema que PROARCA nos debería ayudar a solucionar es la definición de las áreas de pesca en los puertos de Honduras.

What do about this problem?

Para tal propósito es necesario que nos ayuden en el aspecto de organización, establecer un patrullaje conjunto de las áreas de pesca. Para hacer esto requerimos de fondos y un proyecto como PROARCA nos los puede proporcionar. Es necesario que nos apoyen para delimitar para proteger mejor las reservas marinas y tenemos que hacer los estudios para buscar los mecanismos de expandirlas. Es necesario hacer mas investigación en temas como nichos de reproducción para diferentes especies, meses en las que algunas especies comerciales entran en reproducción y a identificar otras oportunidades en turismo o cualquier otro tema que nos permita mejorar el ingreso de las gente que se dedica ha estas actividades.

- Organize
- Patrol the area (requires funds)
- More protection to marine reserve(s) & expansion
- More research (breeding grounds spawning seasons, other options)

2. Workshops are good, but there is a need for action, also, there is the need for "workshops for fishermen" (more representation).

Toda la capacitación y los talleres que hemos recibido son buenos pero debemos pasar a la acción. En los talleres debería haber una mayor representación de los pescadores que es la gente que vive de los recursos del mar y no tienen suficiente representatividad.

SOLUTIONS

1. More education; related with the sea, fishermen, etc.
2. More organization
3. Specialized workshops.
4. Set up credit systems (mechanism) small credits for fishing activities.
5. Retraining (fly fishing, ecotourism, etc.)
6. Role of Tide
 - Help (them) for better boats.
 - Help in financial mechanisms
 - Managerial skills & training (business MGMT)
 - Have fishermen representation in TIDE's board
 - Get "Port of Honduras Reserve" declared
7. Standardize Communication Systems (better equipment to get along with them).