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EVALUATION of the USAID/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC BIODIVERSITY PORTFOLIO

Final Evaluation Report

December 2012

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ACRONYMS

CAFTA-DR	Central America Free Trade Agreement-Dominican Republic
CDCT	Dominican Consortium for Tourism Competitiveness
CEES	Center for Environment, Economy, and Society
CIBIMA	Centro de Investigaciones de Biología Marina
CITES	Convention of Trade in Endangered Species
CODOPESCA	Dominican Council for Fisheries and Aquaculture
CU	Columbia University
DGETP	General Direction for Technical and Professional Education
DR	Dominican Republic
DSTA	Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance
ESSEG	Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Economic Growth
EPP	Environment Protection Program
FG	Focus Group
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FHI 360	Family Health International (360)
FUNDEMAR	Foundation for Marine Studies
FY	Fiscal Year
GoDR	Government of Dominican Republic
INFOTEP	Institute for Professional and Technical Training
IU	Indiana University
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAC/RSD/ENV	Latin America and the Caribbean Rural Sustainable Development Environment
LMS	Living Museums of the Sea
MoE	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MSI	Management Systems International
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PAPA	Participating Agency Program Agreement
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
PMP	Performance Management Plan
RCRD	Reef Check Republica Dominicana
SEMARENA	Secretary of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources
SI	Social Impact, Inc.
SFM	Sustainable Fisheries in Miches Project
SFP	Sustainable Fisheries Plan
SOW	Scope of Work
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
USFS	United States Forest Service
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USAID/DR	USAID Mission in the Dominican Republic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2007, USAID has assisted the Dominican Republic (DR) to reduce threats to its biodiversity through a biodiversity portfolio consisting of five projects: Living Museums of the Sea (LMS); Sustainable Fisheries in Miches (SFM); Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance (DSTA); Participating Agency Program Agreements (PAPA) with the US Forest Service (USFS); and the Environmental Protection Project (EPP). This report presents Social Impact's (SI) findings, conclusions and recommendations and is intended to support future financial and strategic decisions of USAID/Dominican Republic (USAID/DR) regarding biodiversity conservation programs.

The evaluation of each project aimed to answer five critical questions concerning the extent to which the biodiversity portfolio activities assisted the DR Mission in conserving its biodiversity. Evaluation questions investigated the extent to which the portfolio fostered positive synergies within and among each project; achieved targeted outcomes and results; used best practices and lessons learned; achieved sustainability and the adoption of conservation practices; and complied with USAID's biodiversity criteria. To best analyze these areas of inquiry, the project evaluations relied on qualitative data collection and analysis methodologies.

Findings and Conclusions

Positive Synergies

The USAID/DR biodiversity portfolio did not successfully create synergies among the five projects, between projects and Dominican public and private institutions, or with grassroots organizations. The Ministry of Environment (MoE), which maintains centralized control over decision making, pursues such short-term financial and political priorities that it inhibits synergies for conservation. The projects' designs did not prioritize, or did not include, mechanisms for achieving synergies.

Outcomes and Results

The anticipated outcome of co-management agreements for protected areas was achieved only to a small extent. Enforcement of conservation laws and regulation did not increase significantly. However, the portfolio did strengthen the link between tourism and conservation by changing some people's attitudes and knowledge and establishing best practices regarding the conservation of biodiversity. It is possible that greater attention to gender issues might have increased conservation outcomes and results.

The portfolio's successes came from: (1) technical and leadership competence; (2) financial and land security benefits from participation in conservation practices; and (3) links between conservation and large financial interests driven by international competition. Its failures came from: (1) an overly centralized and politicized MoE; (2) insufficient awareness of the links between conservation and economic growth and stability; and (3) the projects' overemphasis on administrative needs and under-emphasis on technically sound field activities in collaboration with local people and institutions.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

The introduction of best conservation practices was most successful when they provided practical solutions to people's problems, as well as those related to conservation. Tourism can benefit from conservation since it protects the reefs, wildlife, beaches, water and landscapes that tourists pay to enjoy. The agriculture industry and energy sectors have equally powerful financial reasons to support conservation of biodiversity and renewable natural resources. Best practices must be constantly adapted to meet the needs of different and constantly changing

biological, institutional, socioeconomic situation. The participatory preparation of integrated territorial land-use plans underlies large-scale conservation within and outside of protected areas. The portfolio probably gave less importance to the effect of gender issues on conservation of biodiversity than they merit.

Systematic research into conservation problems is required to achieve conservation solutions. Climate change makes such research even more necessary. Territorial planning is also required in order to extend biodiversity conservation best practices to larger geographic areas over long periods of time.

Sustainability and Adoption

To achieve sustainability and adoption, conservation programming and strategy must provide financial benefits to large private sector enterprises. Such adoption will occur only as a response to international competition. Territorial planning forms the basis for large-scale adoption of conservation practices. Although foreign universities (US-based), the USFS, international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and Peace Corps can make important contributions to conservation in the DR, the Dominican people and local institutions must organize, support and finance conservation. Gender issues deserve more analyses and inclusion because they undoubtedly affect sustainability and the adoption of conservation best practices.

Compliance with USAID Biodiversity Criteria

The biodiversity portfolio complied in its design with USAID biodiversity criteria. Projects designed and implemented by scientists (LMS, SFM) were most concerned with monitoring biodiversity indicators. However, USAID biodiversity criteria do not mandate thorough analyses of the social, economic and institutional, and gender context within which the project is implemented.

Recommendations

1. USAID/DR should design synergy-building guidelines into its projects, particularly with the tourist clusters, but also with the agriculture, energy and industrial sectors.
2. USAID/DR should set achievable, measurable biodiversity outcomes and results for future biodiversity projects and collect reliable baseline biological, economic, institutional and social data.
3. USAID/DR should (1) explicitly link future biodiversity programming to the financial interests of important Dominican economic sectors; (2) finance Dominican research and educational institutions to do conservation research; and (3) place future projects within territorial land use plans.
4. USAID/DR should (1) program future biodiversity funding to support strengthening of links between conservation practices and Dominican internationally competitive businesses; (2) program biodiversity funding through Dominican institutions and use US institutions to support them technically; and (3) include thorough analyses of gender issues in relation to conservation in future project designs.
5. We recommend that USAID (1) program biodiversity funds according to the USAID biodiversity criteria, while ensuring that the proposed conservation activities are feasible given the socioeconomic, institutional and financial context; and (2) ensure that all biodiversity conservation projects measure the actual effects of the design and implementation on biodiversity.

INTRODUCTION

USAID/DR contracted Social Impact (SI) to conduct an evaluation of the Mission's Biodiversity Portfolio including separate evaluations of each individual project. The "hybrid evaluation" included an assessment of the portfolio at large, as well as two ongoing and three completed projects that comprise the portfolio, based several critical evaluation questions. This report presents the SI team's evaluation methodology approach, followed by findings, conclusions and recommendations for each of the five projects, as well as for the portfolio in its entirety.

Scope And Purpose Of The Evaluation

USAID's "Tropical Forests and Biodiversity Analysis: Dominican Republic" identified seven threats to the DR's biodiversity: (1) non-native invasive species; (2) illegal logging; (3) changes in land use; (4) soil erosion and sedimentation; (5) unregulated tourism and industrial factory development; (6) illegal trade in forest plants and animals; and (7) climate change.

Since 2007, USAID has assisted the Government of DR (GoDR) to reduce these threats to its biodiversity through five projects:

- The Living Museums in the Sea Project (LMS)
- The Sustainable Fisheries in Miches Project (SFM)
- The Development of Sustainable Tourism Alliance Project (DSTA)
- The Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA)
- The Environmental Protection Program (EPP)

The LMS, SFM and DSTA projects were planned to be completed by early 2012. The PAPA and EPP activities will continue to the end of 2013 and 2014, respectively.

In response to the Scope of Work (SOW), this project evaluation aimed to determine the results and effectiveness of activities and operations of the five biodiversity projects (Annex A). The SOW frames the evaluation as an opportunity to "capture results and lessons learned," especially because the Mission "does not anticipate additional *biodiversity* funding in the near future." In relation to this general goal, the most critical evaluation component requested was to determine to what extent, if any, the multi-project/multi-implementer approach taken by USAID/DR in its biodiversity portfolio has created synergies that produced greater development outcomes for positive biodiversity conservation results than might have been expected under a more unified approach. The evaluation's findings will be used to inform the design of future Latin America and the Caribbean Rural Sustainable Development Environment (LAC/RSD/ENV) biodiversity programming and may be used to set the stage for integrating successful implementation strategies and/or biodiversity goals (USAID 2012).

Evaluation Methodology

The overall evaluation methodology could be described as a "hybrid" evaluation due to different completion statuses of the five projects. The evaluation team collected data through a literature review, semi-structured key informant interviews (KII), and focus group discussions (FGDs).

The evaluation team relied almost exclusively on qualitative data collected from 23 key informants, 10 focus groups, relevant documents supplied by the USAID/DR biodiversity officers and program directors, and field observations (where applicable). A semi-structured, qualitative approach was most appropriate for obtaining and analyzing the type of informational data required to answer the

critical questions. All literature used to guide the development of evaluation instruments and ongoing evaluation activities are listed in the References section of this report (Annex A). Key organizations, program personnel and types of stakeholders are indicated in the 'List of Evaluation Participants' (Annex B). Standard protocols were aligned to an Evaluation Matrix (supported by standard evaluation definitions) to guide each evaluation team member in order to standardize their approach and analysis processes (Annex C, D and E, respectively).

The evaluation team began its work by prioritizing the questions of interest presented by USAID/DR in the SOW. The team drafted an 'Evaluation Matrix' that reprioritized the SOW such that data collection activities would focus on five 'principal' questions. Contained within the five principal questions are more specific questions, analyzed using three parameters: (1) Design, (2) Implementation and (3) Results. These parameters represent three separate phases of each program's activities.

Findings responding to the following five "critical questions" inform the conclusions and recommendations in this report. The words in bold, which summarize the essence of each question, are used throughout the report to refer to these five principal questions. A standard list of definitions for each word/phrase was used as a reference during data collection.

1. Did the multi-project/multi-implementer approach result in positive synergies between programs, thereby leading to greater development outcomes than might have been expected under a more unified approach? (**Positive Synergies**)
2. Did the five programs achieve anticipated outcomes and results, especially in terms of changes in attitudes, knowledge and best practices? What factors explain the success or failure of achieving outcomes and results? Were the projects designed in such a way that all genders had equal access to project benefits? (**Outcomes and Results**);
3. What are the most relevant elements of success (best practices) and lessons learned that could be applied to improve future biodiversity programming (including consideration of programming affecting all genders)? (**Best Practices and Lessons Learned**)
4. Which program activities are likely to achieve sustainability and reach an acceptable level of adoption by beneficiaries and why? (**Sustainability and Adoption**); and
5. Did each of the five recipients comply with the four Agency biodiversity criteria? Did the project have an explicit biodiversity objective? (a) Were activities identified based on an analysis of threats to biodiversity? (b) Did the projects monitor associated indicators for biodiversity conservation? (c) Did the projects have the intent to positively affect biodiversity in biologic important areas? (**Compliance with USAID Biodiversity Criteria**).

Limitations Of The Evaluation

Qualitative data inevitably reflects personal viewpoints as much as objective assessments. The period of time available for the collection of data, its analysis and preparation of the report was short considering the complexity of the issues and the length and variety of activities addressed and implemented by the biodiversity portfolio. The evaluation methodology largely compensated for these issues by collecting data related to the same five principal questions from numerous and

varied sources. The data collected was sufficiently abundant and varied to permit triangulation between different sources and provided a check on its reliability. Furthermore, consistent patterns of findings emerged from the data, so that additional data and analysis would have been unlikely to change evaluation findings significantly. Therefore, the evaluation's findings, conclusions and recommendations can be considered reliable.

EVALUATION: USAID/DR BIODIVERSITY PORTFOLIO

This section presents 'chapters' that present the findings, conclusions and recommendations for each of the five projects of the USAID/DR Biodiversity Portfolio in response to each of critical evaluation questions.

Living Museums of the Sea (LMS)

The Living Museums of the Sea Project (LMS), awarded to Indiana University (IU) in 2009, ended in 2011. Its objective was "to establish a network of preserves with the Captain Kidd site as its cornerstone" (USAID 2009). The project was to have been implemented at four shipwreck sites (Captain Kidd, Guadalupe, St. George, Guaraguao Reef) off the southeastern coast of the DR (USAID 2009).

Findings

Positive Synergies

Although the LMS project description states that a "wide variety of stakeholders" would be involved² it fails to mention the other four USAID/DR biodiversity projects (USAID, 2009). The description includes "encourage public participation in site monitoring and protection" as the tenth of its "proven principles used in the establishment of underwater preserves" (USAID 2009), but does not define specific actions to achieve this participation or indicate that Bayahibe businesses or community leaders had been consulted as the project was designed (USAID 2008).

A LMS project report says IU worked "closely with the various government ministries, such as Environment, Tourism and Culture, in order to institute this system of marine protection," but found that it difficult ". . . to get these ministries to take responsibility for maintaining the underwater sites." The same report concluded that "... more money and local support from dive shops/centers and from the local tourism cluster is needed to ensure proper site management" (Ayres, 2011).

The Bayahibe focus group indicated that some coordination did occur between LMS and the other USAID biodiversity projects, with the exception of Sustainable Fisheries in Miches (SFM). A key informant (KI) agreed that no coordination occurred between LMS and SFM.

The LMS status report for 2009 makes no mention of the other projects, or of coordination with any local organizations (Beecker, 2009). The founding institutions of the National System of Underwater Living Museums were IU, the National Office of Underwater Cultural Patrimony (ONPCS), IU, USAID and the Peace Corps (IU 2012), but no local organizations or businesses near any of the DR's ship wreck sites.

² The stakeholders mentioned in the cooperative agreement are the National Office of Sub-Aquatic Cultural Patrimony of the Ministry of Culture, the Association of Hotels of La Romana-Bayahibe, Project AWARE Foundation, Armenian Nautical Association for the History of Inter-Maritime Trade, Viva Dominicus Resort, Ministry of Tourism, National Geographic Channel, and Casa de Campo Resort.

Outcomes and Results

The LMS project description does not contain a list of anticipated outcomes and results and LMS did not prepare a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) which would have outlined, and served to monitor, progress toward its outcomes and results (USAID 2009). However, the agreement that “protection will be afforded to cultural, historical and biological resources” at shipwreck sites and LMS’ ten “proven principles” might be considered to be anticipated result and outcomes, respectively. The project description also states that, “key to the establishment [of a living underwater museum] is harnessing local participation and ownership ...because an underwater preserve is important to a wide range of stakeholders, on both a local and national level. Stakeholder interest is crucial to creating a sense of local ownership” (USAID 2009). These design perspectives indicate intention to achieve a change in attitudes of the local population towards the shipwrecks LMS planned to study and maintain.

However, no report on LMS clearly indicates that it achieved the protection of resources, its ten principles, or a change in attitude. Information gathered by the Team sheds some light on LMS’ impact. A report on the national system of Living Museums of the Sea describes informational materials about the shipwrecks and how LMS maintained them (IU 2012). The LMS Final Report indicates that the underwater museums were dedicated in a public ceremony (Ayres 2011). A KI said that the Altagracia Tourism Cluster “was important in arranging the visits to schools. There were a lot of TV and radio programs to reach massive audiences in which tourist clusters participated.” A member of the Bayahibe focus group stated, “A large part of the community has been educated about the marine resources. People did not know about the value of the corals and they harmed it, whereas now a lot of people do value the corals.” One KI reported that “. . . the project has created consciousness of the importance of ship wrecks in many audiences including grade schools, high schools, universities, public agencies, community including fishermen etc.” Another KI said LMS established “. . . the importance of the subaquatic cultural resources of the DR in the minds of authorities who previously had had no idea of their value. . . .”

Project documentation indicates LMS completed nine of its ten “basic principles and that corals increased in size and variety at the sites, including the endangered *Acropora palmate* and *Denrogyra cylindricus*” (Ayres 2011) (Beeker, Shipwrecks Living Museums of the Sea 2010). LMS established three “no-take” underwater reserves “. . . where cultural and biological resources are respected,” (USAID, 2009) and where, according to a KI, fishing is prohibited. The informant also said that, as a result of the reserve, “. . .fishermen look for other sources of employment” and are “now tourist guides and captains of tourist boats, and their change of occupation has helped to conserve biodiversity.” Another KI said LMS “. . . has helped increase biodiversity; now you can see bigger fish, seahorses, more eels, more fish, some octopus and coral canyons. . . .”

The LMS Final Report states, “we need to ensure the safety and protection of these sites; additional mooring and marker buoys for dive boats still need to be added, along with the removal of older/damaged buoys. There was and continues to be a lack of compliance and enforcement of the sites. Both the biological and archaeological aspects of the sites should be protected from destruction or removal” (Ayres 2011).

In line with USAID Policies regarding the inclusion of equitable consideration of both men and women in program design, significant changes in attitudes, knowledge and best practices related to the shipwreck sites will only occur if it is a targeted result among both genders. The LMS project description does not analyze the effect gender roles would have on achievement of its objectives.

A KI said there was no gender bias during the implementation of the project, but field observations suggest that men participate more than women in activities related to the shipwreck sites. These observations are further supported by reports from KIs involved in the design and implementation of LMS, who stated that, overall, male participation tends to outweigh that of women in relation to preservation of, and tourist activities around, the shipwrecks. LMS design and implementation documents indicate no analyses of the impact of gender differences in activities and interests on its success, or any specific effort to equalize the participation of men and women in decisions regarding the use and protection of marine resources.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

Data from reports, a Bayahibe focus group and relevant KIs indicate the inherent, positive cultural and biodiversity value of the shipwreck sites and likewise support IU's superb technical competence (Ayres 2011) (USAID 2009) (USAID 2008). Field observations supported reports and the KIs' assertions that LMS introduced the technical practice of studying the geology, biology and archeology of the wreck sites sequentially, and imparted successful techniques for establishing coral, measuring and monitoring coral diversity and growth, making inventories of fish populations, and placing buoys and underwater interpretative materials (Becker, 2009). Data also show that both targeted and peripheral beneficiaries from Montecristi know about, and would like to apply, these techniques.

A KI said LMS established the technical parameters for research and maintenance of shipwrecks off the Dominican coast and noted, “. . . [I]f these technical measures were to be consistently and permanently applied the important underwater biodiversity and cultural resources would be conserved ... [this] could contribute to more diversified and therefore more stable tourism.”

Sustainability and Adoption

The Bayahibe focus group and interview participants agreed that LMS did not establish the institutional structures, financial mechanisms or community participation required to conserve the sites permanently or to expand the system of underwater living museums. Key interviewees said the sites were not a priority for the Altagracia Tourist Cluster. One informant asserted, “We are trying to motivate [the Dominican Consortium for Tourism Competitiveness] CDCT to assume more responsibility in the maintenance of the project. The cluster must collaborate more with maintenance of the sites.” For example, field observations and the Bayahibe focus group indicate that no financing or administrative provision has been established to replace damaged or stolen buoys, although buoys are essential for achieving protection of the biological diversity of the wreck sites.

Observations indicated LMS may have diversified or changed job opportunities for poorer segments of the Bayahibe population, but not necessarily increased their overall welfare. For example, a boat captain commented he could not become a dive guide because he lacks funds for the certifying courses, all the dive guides observed were foreigners.

Documents and field observations indicate that the total area where biodiversity is protected at the sites of shipwrecks is not more than a few hectares of the vast marine areas off the DR's coasts and involves only the reef ecosystems (Ayres 2011).

Compliance with USAID Biodiversity Criteria

LMS fully met the USAID biodiversity criteria. Its design refers to the uniqueness of and threats to the ecosystems and organisms at the shipwreck sites, including several critically endangered coral species. LMS's design establishes an objective of reef conservation, describes the biologic importance of reefs, analyzes threats to reefs at the sites and defines procedures for monitoring reef biodiversity. During project implementation, measures—such as the removal of fishing nets, placement of buoys, and prohibition of fishing and drag netting—were implemented in order to achieve the explicit biodiversity objective of increasing reef growth and species variety.

Conclusions

LMS presented a great opportunity to develop synergies with the Altagracia Tourist Cluster to achieve reliable maintenance of the wreck sites, since many businesses in Bayahibe derive part of their income from diving at the sites where it worked. LMS would then have been a model for how to work with local institutions to establish protected underwater living museums off the coast of the DR. LMS does not appear to have made a concerted effort to develop this potential synergy.

LMS did achieve some local and national awareness of the economic and biodiversity conservation importance of wreck sites. This awareness may eventually stimulate specific actions to maintain the sites where LMS worked and to add other shipwreck sites to the national system of underwater protected areas. IU's technical competence in archeology was not matched by similar expertise in working with the local community and businesses to establish the institutional and financial basis for maintenance of the ship wreck sites. Therefore, LMS did not achieve the financing mechanisms and institutional structures required to protect permanently even the sites where it worked.

LMS did not analyze the different roles of women and men, or any other groupings of the local people, related to maintaining the wreck sites. To some extent, it can be assumed that the roles of men and women, and other groupings of local stakeholders, related to the conservation of the reefs and wreck sites would differentiate. LMS lacked critical information on gender roles that could enable it to better understand how to achieve local ownership and maintenance of the wreck sites.

LMS did bring expert technical knowledge to the study of the wrecks and for training some Dominicans, particularly members of the navy. Its results certainly demonstrate that success in conservation cannot be achieved without technical competence and experience. However, LMS demonstrated that technical competence alone, without a supporting social, economic and institutional context, including gender considerations, may produce excellent technical results without achieving long-term, large-scale conservation.

The wreck sites are too small in area and represent too limited a range of ecosystems and species diversity to provide a way to conserve biodiversity on a significant geographic scale. "Living museums of the Sea" are useful more as an awareness-raising activity than as a conservation activity that will achieve long-lasting, large-scale conservation of biodiversity.

Recommendations for USAID

- I. Finance the Foundation for Marine Studies (FUNDEMAR), the Altagracia Tourist Cluster and the Monticristi Tourist Cluster to prepare and implement jointly, a plan to design and

implement permanent financing and institutional arrangement to ensure the protection and replacement of buoys for LMS wreck sites and the wreck site off of Montecristi;

2. The Mission should encourage the design and financing of conservation projects that include the participation of such institutions, as IU, as providers of specialized, technical assistance and training to local partners. It should support localized leadership in conservation projects in this way, rather than financing small biodiversity conservation projects with a non-Dominican institution.

Sustainable Fisheries in Miches Project (SFM)

The objective of this two-year project was to restore reef biodiversity and local fisheries off the 42-mile-long Miches shoreline by facilitating the development of a sustainable fisheries plan (SFP). The project was carried out by the Center for Environment, Economy, and Society (CEES) as part of their Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Economic Growth (ESSEG) Program, operating in the DR on behalf of Columbia University (CU) (CEES-USAID 2012).

Findings

Positive Synergies

The project design included a detailed work plan for the project's two years. Year I activities included a baseline assessment of reef health off the Coast of Miches; a marine biodiversity education campaign; an education campaign about options for sustainable fisheries; the creation of a network of Miches Fisheries Management Entities; and the drafting of a sustainable fisheries plan. These activities were designed to engage diverse national and local institutions in their implementation. For example, the project pointed out that it would collaborate with scientists from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MoE), Reef Check-República Dominicana (RCRD) and the Centro de Investigaciones de Biología Marina (CIBIMA) at la Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, the Dominican Council for Fisheries and Aquaculture (CODOPESCA), the Peace Corps, and garner support from local political authorities in Miches and the larger community (USAID 2009). "Columbia University did work with [The Nature Conservancy] TNC specifically on the beginning, with a variety of local-government, non-government organizations, representatives around Samaná Bay area and surrounding municipalities," reported a KI involved in the project design and implementation. Thus, the design shows the potential for generating partnerships and synergies at different institutional levels (e.g., national government agencies, fishermen and community).

One of the components of the project sought to build capacity among local fishermen and their communities as eco-tourism operators and guides. Through this component, the project would collaborate with a PAPA/United States Forest Service (USFS) project, which had been directed to supporting the regional tourism clusters to implement specific tasks, such conducting a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) assessment, designing a kayak route, and creating prototypes of informational brochures. In addition, CEES formalized collaboration with USFS to develop the Kayak Limon Initiative (CEES-USAID, 2012). Thus, a joint activity provided the common ground for developing close coordination of specific activities, such as invitations to workshops and training. "The guides were given training in kayak maneuverability and maintenance, as well as sessions related to tourism and environmental interpretation" (CEES-USAID, 2012).

As project implementation progressed, the relationships among project, local communities and government agencies, especially CODOPESCA, also developed successfully. During the first year of the project, CEES collaborated with CODOPESCA to implement human capacity-building and information-collection activities. The CODOPESCA Basic Survey was presented to invited local community leaders. During the project's second year, CEES worked to finalize the SFP, in consultation with local fishermen and CODOPESCA. This successful synergy was reported by the project.

Despite these successful partnerships, local urban authorities and members of the urban community expressed frustration with the execution of project activities. Direct testimonies from a focus group provide ample evidence: "The community did not know what the results were supposed to be. We did not know the results of any parts of the project. They managed the information in a closed manner and then applied their own solutions without agreeing with the community. There was no synergy between Columbia University (CU) and the community. CU's role was arbitrary in various aspects. They provoked problems in the community of Los Guineos." "What happened in Miches with Columbia University is that we did not identify what its function was. We met with them in the Consejo de Desarrollo Sostenible. We asked for their studies to deposit in the municipal files. But, I did not receive any study from the CU. I know they were working on issues of fishing and water. If they make a study, they should give it to local authorities, as other organizations do." These criticisms from focus group participants indicate that the project's successful synergies were based on its work in the rural area, but local municipal authorities and members of the urban community resented that they were not given the same priority as their rural counterparts for participation in the project. Documentary data supports this finding (CEES-USAID, 2012).

The project formed alliances with rural communities interested in the project activities plan, which included sustainable fisheries and ecotourism. For example, in Los Guineos, where CU collaborated with the Peace Corps, project interaction was directly with community members and strong institutional relationships developed. A KI said, "In the Los Guineos, the project was particularly successful because Columbia asked the Peace Corps to work there."

Outcomes and Results

Project documentation shows the project achieved most of its goals, including the collection of baseline data on biodiversity and social aspects of nine fishing communities, training in marine ecology and ecotourism, establishment of community-based fisheries management committees, a draft SFP, and projects for lobster fishing and exchange of fishing nets (CEES-USAID 2012). FG participants reported that the "nets are a technical change that was made. They succeeded in regulating the Laguna de Limón." The achieved its goals, not in the urban municipality of Miches, but in five rural communities, particularly in the Los Guineos. "The five rural communities were open to capacity building and other related types of assistance, although we have not been as successful and planned with the three urban core communities."

The project's greatest achievements occurred where specific ecotourism opportunities were identified and where peace corps volunteers (PCVs) collaborated. SFM was originally tasked to remove invasive species, clean up water bodies, and establish sustainable fisheries. However, the PCVs recognized the potential of the area for ecotourism and organized kayak rental businesses, through which local people could earn income by renting kayaks and guiding tourists. This activity

made them realize the economic value of their area's biodiversity. Consequently, SFM's focus changed to the ecotourism Brigada Verde project.

The project design did not mention gender issues or provide for the collection of gender data. Nor does the SFM Final Report include data on inclusion of gender issues/needs. However, PCVs did work with women. "The volunteers worked with women's groups [and] with the community more than the people from Columbia," says a KI. The final report also mentions a PCV formed a women's group to make purses to sell locally (CEES-USAID 2012).

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

The SFM final report describes that the project's design included educational and training sessions as ways to gain the community's trust and to achieve a larger goal of facilitating its participation in activities related to biodiversity conservation. Considering activities related to biodiversity conservation and community well-being, a PCV involved with SFM organized discussions about reducing the risk of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases and organized community activities to discuss the health effects of burning trash (CEES-USAID 2012). The project conducted at least 70 educational and training sessions for fishers and helped to create a network of community-based fisheries management entities, including the distribution of exchanging legal for illegal fishing nets (CEES-USAID 2012). The success of this occurrence demonstrates a strategy that can be considered when improving current or developing new biodiversity initiatives, especially within this and similar fishing communities.

Sustainability and Adoption

The large number of educational and training sessions generated environmental awareness among the Miches population, as evidenced by direct quotes from an SFM focus group: "Some people have been trained. People have a better attitude towards the natural resources. Although it did not work well with the community in some places, the project did make some positive contributions. We need to continue with the activities that Columbia started, more interaction with the local authorities [and to] continue to check the quality of the water. In the social part, we need to continue the Council for Sustainable Development; to solve the problem of our fishermen, to unite the fishermen of all the villages in order to solve the problem of drag nets [*licuadoras* translates almost literally into 'blenders']." These responses from the Miches FGDs indicate that part of the population has become aware of environmental problems of their communities, especially in relation to water, solid waste and fishing techniques.

The activity to introduce new fishing nets generated intense discussion in the interviews. For example, some participants pointed out that the fishermen used the wrong type of nets and destructive fishing methods such as the *licuadora*. A representative of the Fishing Cooperative La Gina pointed out, "We are using small diameter nets, which kill everything. People come from other places using small nets that kill everything. There are 68 *licuadoras* there. They pay off the navy. When they are gone we will have nothing to do." The fisherman was pointing to a broader issue: while the project has had success in working with local rural people, its impacts will be limited as long as there is no way to exclude outsiders who do not follow the rules. However, it is also important to note that the project acknowledged this situation, and had initiated talks with government agencies and environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGO) (e.g., TNC) for promoting a comprehensive management plan that would delineate reproductive sites for different marine species, buffer zones, the bay's productive capacity, and reef monitoring, and define rules of access for fishermen (CEES-USAID, 2012).

Unfortunately, there has been no follow-through on these issues. Similarly, while the project created greater awareness among local people, this awareness brought expectations of a longer-term collaboration. FGD participants said, “We worked so closely with CU almost every day. The CU people left so quickly, leaving nobody behind to monitor or continue the work.”

In Miches’ urban core areas, no individuals or organizations assumed responsibility for providing leadership and coordination with the project. The Miches community members themselves commented on the lack of a person or institution to fill this leadership role: “There was not training for the people next to the water. CU did the work themselves, but did not involve the people who lived next to the water. There was no participation in the monitoring process. I saw how the leaders of the communities were anxious to integrate the community into the CU work but could not do so (Miches, 2012).” The final report offers a somewhat different vision, stating, “CEES has also been working with other local governmental leaders, formal and informal, to create the Consejo de Desarrollo Sostenible (CDS) for the municipality of Miches. The CDS includes fishers, the Mayor of Miches, private business leaders, local NGO representatives, and interested community members. We expect the CDS to play an important role in our activities locally.” (CEES-USAID, 2012)

In addition to the environmental awareness that the project had created, and changes in fishing practices, the project also introduced other fishing practices, including a pilot lobster fishing reform project that involved lobster fishing training and deployment of lobster houses (also called lobster traps). “Lobster houses will help make the existing lobster fisheries more sustainable and lucrative by reducing fishing pressure and disturbance on the reefs and redirecting it to the lobster houses that we built and located off the reef (CEES-USAID 2012).” Apparently, lobster fishing does not have the economic impact that regular fishing does, based on the following statements made in the SFM FG: “CU worked on the lobster houses. It was put in a specific point. A group of fishermen could take out the larger lobsters. I don’t know how many of these [lobster houses] are left.”

Compliance with USAID Biodiversity Criteria

The project reported that, in the first phase, it collected ecological data from 24 reefs, which enriched baseline information about the Miches area reefs. In addition, PCVs were trained by the ESSEG Dive Team to expand coral reef monitoring to additional sites (CEES-USAID 2011).

In the SFM final report, one of its largest accomplishments was to stimulate and assist in the organization of the CDS of the municipality of Miches. The CDS comprised 11 individuals, including the Mayor of Miches and the Municipal District Leaders of La Gina and el Cedro, fishermen, members of local NGOs, private business members, and other community members. The CDS became a functioning community group, which facilitated communication with USAID and CDC regarding the Basura Cero solid waste reduction and management program (CEES-USAID, 2012).

The project reported that CODOPESCA continues to provide data to the project. Unfortunately, the SFP does not find the information CODEPESCA provides useful, so the value of this aspect of the collaboration is not clear. Nevertheless, CODOPESCA served as an arbiter between the fishers and the aggregators who purchase their catch (CEE-USAID, 2012).

In conjunction with the ecotourism planning for the Bahia de la Gina, the project supported the elaboration of a management plan, to provide guidance for how tourism and other activities should be conducted, in order to ensure their long-term sustainability (CEE-USAID, 2012).

Conclusions

SFM was designed with clear biodiversity and environmental objectives and goals. It included a detailed plan of activities in each of the components, such as education, environmental assessments, and drafting management plans. The project had identified in detail the collaborators, partners and stakeholders for implementation of the different activities. However, as one KI observed, “We had an ambitious program that tried to get sustainable fisheries management plans to all of the communities but this ended up being too complicated. We ended up only being able to successfully do so for three communities. The biggest competitor of this program was time. Time was not on our side for getting all communities working in the same direction.” The project did not have the institutional capacity in the field to be able to guarantee the necessary support for continuing management of the activities it initiated. The project relied heavily on the presence and work of the PCVs, who were the main link with the communities. The project forgot that PCVs are transitory residents, who are only in an area for a limited time. This meant that efforts to win the trust and establish lines of engagement with the communities were in continuing flux. The effects of this were accentuated by the fact that, when the project ended, there was no institution responsible for continuing key activities.

The project’s concepts and approaches were sound. However, there is no substitute for an on-the-ground presence that assumes responsibility for overseeing thorough implementation of project design. The case of the fishing nets and the efforts to improve water quality were examples of creating expectations for the provision of long-term support that was not forthcoming. It is important to acknowledge that, while biodiversity and environmental project objectives may be defined in terms of protecting and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems and managing these resources sustainably, they also have profound impact on the cultural value, norms, social relationships and economic options of local communities.

Biodiversity and conservation projects require a baseline socio-economic analysis, the design of which needs to be complimentary to biodiversity and conservation assessments. A better understanding of social and economic issues at the outset would have allowed the project to identify opportunities to address key environmental issues more efficiently, as well as issues that could negatively affect implementation if not addressed from the beginning. If this had been done, it would have facilitated community activities as a whole, and allowed gender issues to be explicitly considered. According to one KI, “many things that CU proposed were not feasible because there was not understanding between CU and the base. There were social and ideological problems that Columbia could not understand. They do not have Dominican mentality, so things did not operate well.”

Recommendations for USAID

1. In the future, USAID should finance short-term biodiversity conservation projects with sound plans for sustainability and that establish mechanisms and financing to continue activities after the project ends.
2. Identify specific social, cultural and economic impacts before developing strategies for allocating biodiversity funds and program actions to address these impacts as an integral part of the project.

Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance Project (DSTA)

The DSTA Program was an alliance of four implementing institutions, including Solimar International, the George Washington University, the Nature Conservancy (TNC), and Family Health International (FHI 360) (named AED at the beginning of the contract). FHI 360 led the overall management, communications and social networking of the DSTA Program. Each institution provided their thematic expertise for the program implementation. In addition to these four implementing partners, EplerWood International and Counterpart International provided targeted technical assistance in the areas of private sector investment and community pro-poor approaches, and environmental and cultural conservation planning, respectively. As the program developed, its alliances with other national and international institutions increased—for example, with the MoE, the Ministry of Tourism, INFOTEP and DGETP, as well as with international organizations such as the World Bank and UNESCO (USAID-DSTA 2011; USAID-DSTA 2012). The CDCT, created under the institutional strengthening objective, was to provide guided instruction, technical assistance and advisory support to the network of Tourism Clusters. All tourism clusters—legally incorporated and registered organizations with articles of constitution, by-laws, and Boards of Directors that meet regularly—are members of the CDCT (USAID-DSTA 2011).

Findings

Positive Synergies

FGDs indicated that the tourism clusters have developed into solid institutions, whose success depends on their ability to align their objectives with the economic interests of key actors in their areas. KIs indicated that many activities had been duplicated and suggested there should be better coordination to optimize the institutional expertise the multi-implementer/multi-project approach could provide. According to one KI, “We lacked coordination between the projects to coordinate the training and not oversaturate the beneficiaries.”

CDCT intended to establish a network of tourism clusters. Its project design did not mention synergies, but rather established alliances, cooperative agreements, concessions and co-management agreements (USAID-DSTA 2012).

A KI noted that the implementation of co-management agreements for protected areas would be the practical conservation outcome of collaboration and synergies, but did not think that the MoE had proven capable of arranging such agreements: “[T]he DSTA and the CDCT should make these agreements a priority. The MoE has the rules for co-management of protected areas, but DSTA never showed an interest because, I think, they do not understand its importance because they are not technical people.”

Outcomes and Results

Outcomes and results, especially in terms of attitudes, knowledge and best practices, varied according to when the cluster’s economic setting and leadership was established. The clusters are most systematic in their delivery of reports, bulletins, financial reports, and information to members, which demonstrates greater accountability and commitment to their membership. Clusters create greater confidence in the capacities of the organization, and demonstrate that it is worth being part of an organization that demonstrates proactive and organized leadership (USAID-DSTA 2012).

Key informants pointed out that in some cases, where previously there had been no benefits, cluster members began to perceive benefits that the cluster, as an organized entity, could bring. In other cases, cluster activities increased benefits. In contrast to what beneficiary KIs reported, government KIs insist that the project benefits have reached only clusters participants and that these were not intended for the entire community.

A KI emphasized that a central role of the CDCT should be to build public awareness of the link between conservation of biodiversity and the international competitiveness of the DR's tourism industry. He described how some of the large, well-financed "all-inclusive" hotels, even ones who are members of tourist clusters, violate regulations against catching lobsters out-of-season and said, "I do not think the CDCT has an awareness program. That is where it ought to be working. At least the members of tourist clusters should follow the regulations. Let's build awareness."

The program included women as part of its group of beneficiaries, but the program did not specifically target women. "If an opportunity arises to help women, then we can approve it and implement it, but it is not a specific target of the project." However, in order to fulfill USAID requirements, the program detailed the beneficiaries' participation and characteristics through data disaggregated by gender (USAID-DSTA 2012). KIs also noted that men usually participated more than women. This situation was attributed to the focus of discussions and activities on such things as fishing or/and agriculture, which, KIs maintained, are not usually performed by women.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

One of the major lessons that tourist clusters emphasized was that institutions accomplish more working together than individually. Cluster members are small, medium and (some) large touristic enterprises that engage in efforts to form partnerships with local authorities and extractive enterprises for working on environment and economic issues in their areas. According to one KI, "The cluster, the mayor's office, and integration among neighbors associations build awareness around biodiversity issues and establish good environmental management."

The program recognized that each of the clusters in the CDCT network had unique economic, social and cultural characteristics. Each cluster's uniqueness made it difficult and complex to work on pre-determined approaches, forcing the program to adopt an open and flexible approach for more effectiveness (USAID-DSTA 2012). Thus, as the program developed, it also learned that the design phase should be explicit in its definitions of cluster, conservation and environmental protection. In this way, participants could understand the program's goals and objectives.

A KI pointed out that it is important to define the parameters of the gender requirements during program implementation: "More than cultural is a matter of understanding the concept of equity of gender. The administrators and technicians need training. It is parallel to the concept of branding of USAID so that everybody would know what was being talked about and not find out in the middle of the project that the requirement was not being met."

Sustainability and Adoption

The CDCT made 37 alliances and agreements to enhance protection of biologically significant areas for sustainable tourism, such as co-management agreements between communities and the MoE; tourism infrastructure improvements in protected areas; concession agreements in protected areas; and environmental permits for DESTINOS and Innovation grantees (USAID-DSTA Associate Award Final Program Performance Monitoring Plan Report September 10, 2007–

March 31, 2012). A KI stated: “Thus, the number of alliances required the participation of diverse actors, and to be able to coordinate with the government, the private sector and with the local communities.” The program task was to develop and implement TNC’s conservation area planning exercises and management plans in protected areas. These implementation activities were coordinated with the MoE, NGOs and other stakeholders, and the several tourism clusters. TNC delivered informational resources and advice to various USAID-DSTA grantees (DESTINOS, Innovation and Tourism Clusters) by reviewing the environmental mitigation plans and reports prior to submission to USAID. TNC also provided continued follow-up to the MoE for the granting of environmental permits for the grantee projects (USAID-DSTA 2012).

TNC supported the clusters and the CDCT in obtaining the necessary tools to insert climate change adaptation into their planning processes and objectives. TNC also facilitated a workshop to improve the CDCT and clusters’ capacity to develop strategies for global climate change adaptation. TNC worked with the CDCT to design the terms of reference for an environmental unit coordinator, a climate change specialist and a vulnerability analysis consultant to strengthen the CDCT environmental capability (USAID-DSTA 2012).

Compliance with USAID Biodiversity Criteria

A climate change adaptation presentation was included in FODATUR 2011 (an annual Dominican forum of tourism), with the participation of the TNC Climate Adaptation for the Latin America Region Director, to provide information about the impact of climate change on the DR’s tourism industry (USAID-DSTA 2012). TNC also donated a Climate Change Guide to the CDCT to instruct teachers on addressing climate change. Nevertheless, although reported by the CDCT on its activities on climate change, it is apparent that the climate change activities’ impact remains at the level of the national organizations and forums. Only some clusters reported that they have participated in activities related to climate change, while others do not know about those activities.

The effectiveness of activities toward addressing biodiversity issues was best indicated by the diverse economic settings where the clusters have been established or are developing. Even so, one of the most dramatic cases on biodiversity-impact activities occurred in the Bavaro cluster, which successfully cleaned a lake in the Bavaro area. The FG reported: “This was a garbage dump before. There are still things to do, but with what we have, we can work. There are many more birds than before. The mangroves have grown a lot more. There is more protection and care than before.” Other clusters also report that they have increased the biodiversity found in their surroundings and acknowledges the economic and social benefit of it: “There were many things that we did not know, but by practicing, we did it. For example, the trail building, we put in practice a workshop and implemented in the area. As individuals, we have received a lot of training.”

Conclusions

Although the CDCT did not specifically target the building of synergies among the different and diverse institutional components of the program, the CDCT was able to develop partnerships with other national and international institutions and NGOs in order to implement its activities, which, in turn, were diverse and needed to be adapted to the respective clusters. The CDCT was also successful in promoting synergies among the different and diverse enterprises and institutions that participate in the respective clusters at the local level. Thus, although CDCT has been providing

technical support to the network of tourism clusters, synergies developed not as a result of its efforts, but due to the efforts of tourism clusters themselves.

The synergies arising from the collaboration between participating local institutions, NGOs and the clusters, developed positive approaches towards biodiversity conservation and environmental management, based on creating economic incentives for the local enterprises participating in the cluster; yet, the outcomes and results, especially in terms of changes in attitudes and knowledge, varied dramatically from one setting to another as a consequence of their respective inception dates and economic circumstances. Certainly, the clusters gave rise to one of the most successful synergies, probably because of the length of time over which its activities developed and the support of the CDCT.

The CDTC and its cluster network have established a successful synergy, as has the local cluster with local government, NGOs and grassroots organizations (e.g., junta de vecinos). Therefore, the CDCT and the network of cluster participants are good drivers for implementing biodiversity and conservation activities because they are able to mobilize local institutions and NGOs; in some cases, they have even managed to secure the participation of local government officials. However, the CDCT and the clusters' institutional weakness is manifested in their relationship to grassroots organizations. As noted by the Team during field visits and interviews with KIs, to include grassroots organizations in the cluster and transmit biodiversity and conservation activities requires an understanding of communities' socio-cultural and economic situations. Working together to formulate a viable plan of activities could address communities' immediate economic needs. Participants of the Puerto Plata FGD suggested that implementers should "[i]nvestigate with the community what their needs are . . . should not impose a project on the communities. The communities should define the needs and be empowered. The projects have to come out of the community."

Because the clusters are not prepared to work intensively with local people on the full range of issues that affect program success, they have difficulty responding to changing conditions. Problems tend to be attributed, uncritically, to program participants' lack of education and/or the weakness of government institutions. While both things may be true, simply understanding a difficulty does not contribute to solving the problem in order to continue to move forward.

The current manner by which the DSTA and CDCT's treat gender issues reinforces traditional women's roles. It has not opened up new roles for women nor offered new productive options to women. This sometimes creates more competition than collaboration among members of the same clusters, such as between small and medium-size hotels.

Recommendations for USAID

1. Finance activities to expand and strengthen the synergies that have developed between CDTC and the cluster network so that it delivers significant economic benefits to locals. Encourage the CDTC and the tourist clusters to identify and implement measures systematically to involve local people in their activities.
2. Encourage CDCT to assist the tourist clusters to address specific issues related to adaptation and climate change that concern their members.

3. Encourage CDCT to assist the tourist cluster in the analysis of the influence of gender on achieving their objectives, rather than simply organizing women's group-based touristic or/and artisanal activities as a "gender" activity.

The Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA)

The principal focus of the Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA) with the United States Forest Service (USFS) was to provide demand-driven technical assistance to the USAID-DSTA, the CDCT and tourism clusters, local NGOs and communities, as well as the MoE. Within this institutional framework, the PAPA focused in two specific tasks: (1) the establishment of a National Seed Bank, and (2) provision of technical assistance to the CDCT and tourist clusters (Dominican Republic PAPA FY11, 2011).

Findings

Positive Synergies

The project design included two components to be implemented through partnerships (USFS/IITF Dominican Republic, 2012; Dominican Republic PAPA FY11, 2011), though it does not use the term "synergies".

PAPA did establish partnerships. The National Seed Bank, for example, was implemented in partnership with ProNatura, TNC and the MoE. According to one KI, "Yes, there were synergies with ProNatura and TNC. We worked with them very closely . . . through telephone calls, informal meetings and workshops." Another KI said, "There were complementarities and joint work with the tourism cluster and the PAPA in the work of re-vegetation of Salto Agua Blanca with the purpose of protecting the water supply and quality. In Bavaro Lagoon, we have developed the small business of kayaks. With Columbia University we assessed Limón Lagoon in Miches."

Informants in MoE considered the PAPA to be one of many MoE projects, so it was difficult for them to attribute specific institutional synergies to PAPA. One informant stated that, ". . . synergy depends on the culture of the organization and personalities." However, several key quotes from the Bayahibe FGD reported examples of synergies and partnerships: "We have built partnerships to get groups working together and we have accomplished that. In Laguna Bavaro, we have developed the small business of kayaks. With Columbia University we assessed Laguna Limon in Miches and we made a report. We did the analyses in Miches and Limones. Just last month with the [Peace Corps], we brought the guides from Limon to Bavaro for three days of training. We did it at Bavaro with the two groups. The community of Guineos and Bavaro now work together and can benefit both of them. They can send tourists to each other."

According to another KI, "PAPA worked with CDCT and the tourist clusters, especially those in highland regions, to build partnerships with the MoE and prepared management plans for protected areas, but the political culture of the MoE generally prevented PAPA from forming alliances with government institutions

. . . people from the MoE are political. They made great promises in Parque del Este but as soon as we stopped nothing happened. They do not have a civil service so they do not stay for more than three or four years. There are a lot of political appointees who are not always honest. People in the MoE have even tried to undercut us."

Outcomes and Results

A KI emphasized the influence of local settings on PAPA's outcomes and results: "We have worked in the mountains and in the coast—Bavaro, Bayahibe, Limón. It has been about half and half. But the tourism aspects are different in these areas because the mountains are smaller scale and more rural while in the coasts there lots of people. We have not been successful in working with the 'all-inclusive hotels'. We have built partnerships to get groups working together."

Gender issues were not mentioned in PAPA's design, though it reports disaggregated data on gender participants (Quarterly Technical Progress Report 13, 2012). Data was unavailable to indicate if gender issues were overlooked, or considered but not perceived to be significant.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

The manner in which PAPA planned and implemented specific activities with tourist clusters, such that beneficiaries were directly involved in planning and implementing activities, offered a valuable lesson. This methodology facilitated interaction and confidence between PAPA and participants (Sustainable Fisheries Miches, 2012).

A KI emphasized that technical best practices are central to achieving conservation of biodiversity, saying, "DSTA and CDCT do not have technical people, [and this] is one of their biggest problems. They do not have skills to help the clusters or the communities. The CDCT people do not go to the field. For example, in the kayak project, DSTA did not know anything about the water body where the kayaks were to be used, so I could recommend which kayak it should buy. So we did a technical report about the type of kayaks. The Sereno de Montana people were elated that we went out there. The DSTA people would not even stay at the Ecolodge. They need technical people on the ground. The CDCT is the same way. They are a subset of people from DSTA."

The same KI emphasized that paperwork is not necessarily useful and should not be confused with producing actual conservation results: "TNC produces a lot of documents. They get money to do management plans over and over. They do all kinds of plans for Parque del Este. They should do something on the ground."

Sustainability and Adoption

In the opinion of one KI, achieving sustainability and adoption requires the formulation and application of technical standards: "You do not need so many plans but you need to do specific things. For example, safety measures, get rid of goats, build the trails, and build latrines. There are standard practices that do not need studies, but just need to be done. We define the specifications for standard practices for a specific place. They have to be specified and organized as, for example, a sign plan for a park. We call it a 'Site Analysis'. They list the actions, responsible and the cost. This is the approach we take on everything—a specific, guided technical report with recommendations and actions."

PAPA provided training that the Constanza focus group believed would contribute to sustainability and adoption: "As individuals we received a lot of training, there were four young people who became guides, they went to Tabarete and received training. There, they explained and practiced, there was a lot of knowledge. Once they came back there were different. They thought them many things about nature, and now they can explain."

Compliance with USAID Biodiversity Criteria

PAPA was designed to provide the technical expertise required to address explicit biodiversity objectives. All activities undertaken through the PAPA were in support of biodiversity conservation in protected areas and their buffer zones, and in conjunction and coordination with the tourism clusters and the CDCT project (Quarterly Technical Progress Report 12, 2012). One KI reported, “One of my responsibilities is to identify biodiversity threats. We make an analysis of threats for each site, and use the US Forest Service’s ‘Recreation Opportunity Spectrum’ methodology to zone the areas where we work. We invented the Range of Opportunities of Visitors in Protected Areas system with five or six classifications that you map out and then formulated proposed actions for adaptive management.” The program also supported the development of biodiversity and heritage interpretation materials to help educate the traveler about how local enterprise fits in as part of the structure supporting biodiversity conservation and climate change initiatives (US Forest Service/IITF Dominican Republic, 2012).

Conclusions

The seed bank activity developed partnerships and synergies with TNC, ProNatura and the MoE, while the protected areas activity developed them with CDTC, tourist clusters and local communities. The MoE’s constant changes in personnel undermined PAPA’s efforts to establish partnerships and synergies. By contrast, PAPA’s one-person staff interacted extremely effectively with local communities, NGOs, and tourist clusters. Institutional culture and individual personalities greatly affect success in establishing partnerships and developing synergies.

PAPA implemented specific activities with the technical advice of a single individual, so it did not contribute to the development of relevant institutional capacity, within either the CDTC or the clusters. Rather, it delivered specific activities that increased individuals’ awareness, knowledge and capacity to implement best practices.

PAPA produced its anticipated outcomes and results effectively and efficiently by responding to the needs of CDCT and tourist clusters for specific technical assistance and training. The predominance of large, “all-inclusive” hotels in coastal regions, however, made PAPA’s methodology of seeking collaboration with local communities less feasible than in the highlands, where tourist enterprises are mostly small and medium sized, and where CDCT supported the establishment of community ecotourism enterprises.

The lack of an appropriate institutional framework—especially involving government agencies and linkages between the Seed Bank and the Tourism activities—were not clear to the government participants, causing the overall vision of how each set of activities contributed to conservation and resource management objectives to be lost. More effort should be invested in finding ways to help people understand the issues and their implications for their quality of life. Some of the activities, such as signs, maps and trails, were of questionable value in terms of their direct contributions to biodiversity conservation, though they are also the activities that people remember best and had the biggest impact on their environmental awareness. However, there was no institutional framework at the national and/or local government level to capitalize on this awareness to advance conservation goals.

PAPA’s methodology does not specifically analyze or address potential gender issues. Consequently, data are unavailable to determine if more attention to gender would have made

PAPA activities more effective. PAPA's principal lesson is that the sound application of best technical practices at field sites must form the basis for the effective, long-term conservation of biodiversity. Conferences, meetings, training sessions, workshops, publications, and institutions contribute to conservation of biodiversity to the extent that they produce widespread application of best practices for resolving problems negatively affecting biodiversity.

PAPA's contribution to sustainability and adoption came through the training and technical assistance it provided, not through building institutions or financial mechanisms for conservation. Its technical advisor supports the ability of other projects to implement technically sound conservation measures in the field. Such a source of technical advice cannot respond to more than a few of the DR's many and varied needs for the application of best conservation practices, even when it is available. It remains unclear where the DR will obtain this type of technical advice and training when the PAPA project ends.

PAPA's design not only complied with USAID's biodiversity criteria, but its implementation provides an excellent example of how USAID policy intends biodiversity funds to be utilized for on-the-ground work to reduce threats and protect biodiversity.

Recommendations for USAID

1. Identify ways to establish a permanent channel of technical advice and training from the US Forest Service, the MoE, the MoT, CDCT through to the tourist clusters and local communities with potential for ecotourism to continue after PAPA ends.
2. Insist on specific, effective, and measurable collaboration between EPP and PAPA during the remaining months of the two projects, with the objective of reducing the current dichotomy between planning by EPP and fieldwork by PAPA.

Environmental Protection Program (EPP)

The Environmental Protection Program (EPP), implemented by The Nature Conservancy, started in 2009 and is slated to end in 2014. Its original objectives were to strengthen municipal environmental units in order to better enforce environmental laws and regulations, support actions to conserve biodiversity, promote market-based conservation of biodiversity, and improve private sector environmental performance. The biodiversity conservation component involved reducing illegal trade of wildlife, improving protected area management, and increasing environmental funding for communities around protected areas (USAID 2009). In FY 2011, EPP was amended to include climate change as a new component and add support for the DR to adapt to climate change (The Nature Conservancy, 2012).

Findings

Positive Synergies

Although the EPP project description says EPP would "...maximize coordination across existing USAID projects, such as the DSTA," it specifies no coordination mechanisms with the other four projects. A KI said, "There was always communication between these [USAID] projects. There were synergies and EPP complemented activities that DSTA had left incomplete, but it would have been better to have a multi-sectorial project to create clearer common projects. Each project had its own objectives and time frames, so there was discontinuity. Each project had its own

relationship with the Ministries of Environment, Tourism and Culture. There were various channels of communication with the different ministries. USAID did not play this role [of creating synergies] especially at the beginning of the projects. The funds came in different forms, so it was difficult to create synergies afterwards.” Another KI said, “We in the MoE are accustomed to thinking in terms of one overall project. It would help the MoE to have one big project rather than lots of little projects. In that way the work could be more coordinated and would be more of a help in organizing the MoE.”

In agreement, another KI stated, “[E]ach project had its own design. USAID projects with the most synergies were PAPA, DSTA and EPP [because] USAID put more effort into coordinating between these three projects. Columbia University in Miches and the IU did not feel like part of USAID projects. Columbia University from its origin was not a USAID project, but was added later. We learned about LMS only because USAID was the link with the Ministry of Culture, but nothing about it was reported to the MoE.” Additional KI responses indicated: “Odelis Perez and Duty Green [of USAID] promoted this synergy between projects and invited other projects to meetings. They were always looking for a way for the experience of one group to reinforce the work of the others.”

Several KIs mentioned coordination between the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) and MoE as a potential source of synergies. “The MoT and MoE were not working together. Now they are and MoT has said tourism can be diversified and grown through ecotourism. We are reaching the end of beach and sun tourism with the all-inclusive hotels. The communities do not benefit from this type of tourism. However, another KI said, “The MoT still does not have a plan of sustainable tourism, although it does have plans for other components. Such a plan would unite the MoE and MoT.”

Findings show that synergies occurred more at the local than national level. A KI asserted, “In the Samana Bay area, we had various meetings with Columbia University and CEBSE to interchange information and we held joint meetings with Columbia University and fishermen.” Another mentioned, “[T]here was synergy with the Columbia University project in the work with municipalities and through the . . . working group of Samana Bay. We worked with the Dominican Institute of Cooperatives and the Dominican Council of Fishing public to establish co-management fishing agreements. Columbia University liked the model and started to use elements of the model for its project. We visited each other. We did learn from them.” The same KI thought synergy occurred between EPP and the PAPA Project in the implementation of a kayak tourism project for Laguna Limon and Bajo Yuna Bay, saying, “TNC is buying the kayaks, and we have identified the routes and Jerry Bauer is coming to go over the route,” and that “. . . there are many interchanges between [CEBSE] and the Tourist Cluster.”

The Bayahibe Focus Group commented, “We participated in each other’s activities and exchanged information. FUNDEMAR is part of the La Romana Tourist Cluster, so the coordination is much closer with the cluster. The project was important to establish links and let us work together even more than before. We now have a close link with the cluster and with the community, and I attribute it largely to the EPP project . . . that let us establish ourselves in this zone.”

Synergies also developed at the local level between EPP, other USAID projects and locals during activities involving the Valle Nuevo National Park. EPP, for example, coordinated with the

Constanza Tourist Cluster in the training of tourist guides in ecological interpretation along the path to the Aguas Blancas waterfall. Synergy with the DSTA/PABA project also occurred, through the design and implementation of “. . . paths, training courses, information, projects of development, such as Salta de Jimoneo of DSTA/CDCT,” organized through the Tourism Cluster. The Constanza Focal Group said, “All the interests of the zone are represented in carrying out [projects within the] national park. Until now there have been only conflicts between the different interests. . . . The formation of the Committee of Coordination is a great success for the country. The Committee has managed to unite the different institutions and private sector. This is a general problem of the country. The Management Committee . . . is an example for the whole country. This is something that is marvelous.”

In Puerta Plata, by contrast, a KI said, “I do not know anything about this tourist cluster project. They have not communicated with me at all.” In fact, officials from municipal governments and the Ministries of Tourism and Environment were notably absent from almost all the focal groups. Two key informants shared

that, in their experience, the local and national officials of the MoE rarely take the initiative on conservation actions, and sometimes even block attempts to implement conservation projects. They attributed this lack of initiative to the domination of the ministries and local governments by political appointees who tend to focus on “short-term” objectives. One KI reported that he had faced insurmountable obstacles when trying to convince ministry officials to be proactive in conservation initiatives, and another noted that “. . . synergy depends on the culture of the organization and the personality.”

Outcomes and Results

EPP’s original design lists 45 results, which, when measured against this evaluation’s definition, do not qualify as achieving biodiversity conservation. None of the data the Team found clearly compared the 45 anticipated results against actual results. The EPP’s project management plan (PMP) does compare planned against actual progress towards EPP’s indicators, though none of the 51 environmental laws, policies, regulations, administrative procedures and studies submitted to national and local government institutions by EPP through the end of FY 2011 had been implemented. By the end of FY 2011, the rate of processing environmental assessments had increased by 105% compared to the baseline rate.³ The number of people demonstrating improved knowledge and skills in environmental laws and procedures, municipal environmental management, and watershed and environmental leadership had increased by over 1,500 people. In only one instance has a private-public partnership achieved a voluntary agreement for reducing environmental pollution or use of environmental management systems. EPP achieved 276 ha. of a targeted 800 ha. of improved management and estimated that it had increased the effective management of the Valle Nuevo National Park by 70% and of the Samana Bay area by 61% through the end of FY 2011 (TNC 2012).

The FY 2012 amendment to EPP states two “results” of ecosystem management demonstration: strengthening of institutions for climate change adaptation and fostering of public/private partnerships for climate change adaptation (TNC 2012). No data was yet available to determine the degree to which these anticipated outcomes and results have been achieved.

³ The rate of processing of environmental impact statements may bear little relation to their quality or usefulness.

EPP anticipated changes in attitudes, knowledge and best practices towards conservation and ecotourism (USAID 2009) as an outcome, but one KI noted that the term ecotourism was unclear; business-owning locals needed to learn these terms. While these terms are now better understood, the project design did not foresee the necessity of clearly defining these terms to project participants. The Bavaro focus group confirmed that the Bavaro Lagoon kayak and cleanup project positively affected local attitudes and knowledge, prompting a complete change in attitude due to the area's newfound value. The lake has become a valuable part of the community, where before it had been just a garbage dump; the community helps to protect it, rather than destroy it. The lake itself is an example to many of the great achievements possible through a small, concerted effort.

One KI shared this insight: "I didn't know about a lot of things about quality of water. I have learned a lot of new concepts that people who work in education should know. Many people in TNC have worked in climate change and know a lot about this issue. That is to say that climate change is a reality and TNC can transfer their knowledge to us. The participation of communities is a third example of a change in attitudes due to the EPP." Another KI said, "We have seen that fishermen are administrating their resources better. For example, they are taking their fish and processing their fish and selling it cheaper to the people than the fish stores and they have improved the quality of life of their members. For this reason, fishermen are becoming members of the fishing coops. In Sanchez, we are promoting use of legal nets. They were getting illegal nets from the fishing shops on loan." Farmers within Valle Nuevo National Park "set aside land for ecological restoration. TNC used the argument of the impact of agricultural practices on tourism of the region. These lands were not theirs but were inside the park. Other farmers gave them land to replace the land that they stopped using inside the park. Their interest was mainly in security of land tenure and that the MoE wasn't going to kick them out of the park."

The project description states that "[i]ntegrating gender and equity considerations relevant to the DR will be important to the overall implementation of the EPP" and provides for several months of technical assistance and training to the EPP and its partners from a gender specialist (USAID 2007). "We invited all local partners to gender sensitivity training and had a follow up meeting several months later," noted one KI. "We hired a gender specialist to incorporate gender issues into our work and made a conscious effort to have meetings when they could be attended by men and women. Women tend to be administrators in fishing cooperatives and take care of cleaning, selling and processing. We have not made much difference in the role women play in the fishing cooperatives."

"Usually more men participated in workshops than women because of the issues that were discussed, but that in two communities only women attended workshops on business practices, although women did not take part in the decision processes and the idea of gender is not understood. More than cultural, it is a matter of understanding the concept of equity and gender. The administrators and technicians need training." A KI agreed that women are involved in administration and was of the opinion that "women have amplified their horizons and are thinking of new needs that they would not have thought of before. They are demanding more from the authorities and have become interlocutors."

A KI said, "Strengthening of local partners is a big result of EPP. It is difficult to be an environmental NGO because funding sources are limited. To access funding outside of the DR an NGO has to have internal capacity. EPP strengthened their accounting, organization and policies to

avoid conflicts of interest so they can now get external funding. So we believe that local partners will continue after project even if TNC no longer gets funding.”

Focus groups expressed their appreciation for training, a principal EPP activity. “A lot of women and young people have received a lot of training from the project. Training in the management of the security of tourist groups has been especially useful. Guides have received the training they need about the plants and animals in the lake.” Another FG participant said, “We reached a point when all the programs had this experience of saturation of training. In tourism the same people were trained in different areas many times.”

EPP also provided equipment, and a KI confirmed its importance: “We did not have equipment here before. Now all the classrooms have equipment and we have 24 computers.” Observations confirmed that the environmental school in Jaracaboa is well-equipped and maintained. MoE officials claimed they have not received the vehicles promised by the EPP.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

KI: “It is best to design the project with dates and then measure the results. Communities need to see results. We have made a lot of studies but they are not tangible results for most people. People need to see what benefit is in it for them, such as a visitor center. Results create confidence and credibility.”

It was emphasized that “joint design is very important. Donors should not come with a preconceived project but should formulate it together with the ministry. The more successful projects have been formulated together with the MoE [because they] feel that it is their project.”

A KI recommended, “USAID should demand that all the NGOs have to work together with the government institutions rather than separate from the government institutions. USAID should monitor more closely the implementation of the projects that has been done during this project. The NGOs manage a project as if it was a store without any responsibility for producing results.”

Findings frequently presented the value of inter-institutional cooperation: “We need to harmonize the issues of the projects with that of the MoE,” stated one KI. “For the MoE to assume the project it has to be a cross-cutting. Otherwise, it will be difficult for the ministry to continue the project.” She emphasized that the co-management of protected areas is a priority of MoE as a way to achieve practical collaboration between communities and the MoE. Another said, “It is necessary to strengthen the capability of the state; a civil society organization cannot replace but can strengthen state institutions. The ministries have limitations in implementing. They are regulating institutions more than anything else. Civil society has to demand research, participation, participation in protected areas.” An FG participant commented, “We only have a few months working so far, but all the sectors are participating in the solution of problems. USAID may have started this, but it is continuing by the initiative of the people who participated. We will have practically eliminated the conflicts that have existed for the last 20 years.”

Key informants and focus groups mentioned inclusion as a lesson learned: “Including the community is important because the people have power against the hotels including contamination. The community members feel that they can monitor contamination from the hotels in a way they did not feel before.” “The tourism program was designed for the development of the private sector tourism,” said another. “They worked a lot in the concept of a

Tourism Cluster and what the term really means. The concept goes beyond only the tourism sector itself. There was an effort to make the clusters more inclusive rather than only include the tourism businesses.” Another KI flatly stated, “Projects that work are in the private sector.”

Focus groups and KIs noted co-management agreements are a means of achieving community involvement. The Bavaro focus group said, “EPP contributed to the establishment of co-management of a protected area, which is a practice that could be applied to improve future biodiversity programming; how are we going to take care of the lake if the community members are not involved?” A KI in MoE agreed: “Co-management of protected areas is a priority of the MoE.”

EPP demonstrated the value of specialized technical assistance. According to one focal group, “In a cluster each one of the implementers is a specialist in one area. One implementer would have to go to the specialists. The specialists should be affiliated with the clusters. The costs would be less.” A KI said, “TNC has technical capacity that we do not have as, for example, a person in planning and one in marine conservation. These two people are there when we need them for projects or technical assistance. It is a back-up institution for CEBSE.” Another KI, however, thought EPP has not provided enough field-level, practical technical assistance to communities to enable them to resolve specific management problems that create obstacles to their participation in ecotourism projects.

KIs frequently mentioned the need for territorial planning to achieve inter-institutional cooperation and high technical standards as the basis for large-scale, long-term conservation: “We are supporting the preparation of a Territorial Land Use Plan, whose preparation is a legal requirement and which is essential as a basis for orderly development and equity. We are trying to [use it] to include all the actors in tourist development.”

Sustainability and Adoption

Key informants linked sustainability of the DR’s tourism industry to conservation. “The tour operators were not including natural values in their products. Operators in other countries do have these attractions, so the DR will lose competitively if it does not include the natural attractions. This need creates synergy between all the actors to create a tourist product.” Another KI commented that the MoE has been looking at tourism to the natural areas, considering it from the point of view of management and as a revenue source.

Another KI emphasized sound and sufficient research and technology as important aspects of sustainability and adaptation, saying, “There are a lot of gaps in knowledge. Research takes time and is costly. We have a big area of research that is not being implemented within our strategy for lack of resources. We got funds for a little research and our results put us on the international map of decisions about ocean mammals. There is a great lack of information about the sea. There are reefs such as the Medio Luna in front of Miches and in front of Santa Barbara. We do not even know if they are alive. We do not know about the zones where shrimp larvae are bred... if the levels of salinity are changing and how these changes affect the larvae -and shrimp larvae are the base of the food chain of fish...if there is a more resistant type of shrimp changes. We need to test the fishing methods best for the situation. We looked all over the Caribbean for the best technique and could not find an answer. We do not even measure the changes in temperature of the water or the changes in levels of the water. Local people can be very involved in the scientific collection of information. People come from outside to help us get data, when the fishermen

themselves can collect scientific information. It has not been a strong part of the training that has been given.”

Several KIs linked sustainability and adoption to enforcement of conservation regulation. One said, “None of the institutions responsible for fishing have boats. They do not have a system of patrol and control. Therefore, it doesn’t matter how many courses the fishermen have attended. The government wants the fishermen to do the control and patrolling, but we need the government to do the control.” Another commented, “The largest issue with fisheries is lack of proper authority. CODAPESCA has no capacity to monitor what is going on at sea and only very basic information processes.”

Several KIs noted achieving sustainability and adoption takes a long time because it involves changing the institutional culture of public ministries. One, for example, said, “sustainability can be achieved in several ways. We tried to influence policies and processes in MoE that are at the root of its day-to-day decision making and operations. A basic strategy for sustainability in this project is that we work with Dominican authorities and do everything with the government. Therefore, things that could have taken two weeks have taken two years, such as the Master Plan for System of Protected Areas and the National Strategy for Biodiversity.”

Compliance with USAID Biodiversity Criteria

EPP’s design had explicit biodiversity objectives and identified its activities based on such threats as illegal trade in wildlife, exploitation of natural resources, sedimentation, contamination and aggressive introduced species (USAID 2009). Among its many and varied activities, EPP financed updating the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of threatened DR species; developed an effective and comprehensive sea turtle management plan; trained people to enforce the regulations of the International Convention of Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and sought alternative sources of income for people who live in and around parks and reserves; and improved the MoE’s ability to manage protected areas and prepared regulations (TNC 2011). EPP’s program has shifted to assisting the GoDR to adapt to rapid climate change (TNC 2012).

Conclusions

EPP was intended to coordinate with and complement the other four projects to achieve development outcomes through synergies. However, the other four projects were not designed to coordinate with each other and the MoE did not assume a coordinating role. EPP’s ability to coordinate and create synergies was limited. USAID’s push for collaboration and synergies could not substitute for the long-term role of the MoE in pushing for collaboration and synergies. It appears unlikely that the MoE will assume such a role in the short term, because its decision-makers not only change frequently but are predominantly motivated by concerns other than achievement of conservation results through collaboration and synergies.

EPP has demonstrated that coordination, collaboration and the creation of synergies between the MoE and MoT are essential for using tourism as a vehicle for achieving conservation of biodiversity in the DR. However, the ministries have not yet reached these essential abilities. The MoE may be more interested in collaboration than the MoT, since the MoT already has a model of development in “beach and sun” tourism that generates billions of dollars of income for the DR, while the MoE has no model of conservation tourism that would generate such income.

At the local level, EPP did help to establish collaboration and cooperation that led to synergies. Given the difficulty of working through the MoE at most societal levels, these local synergies represent important experiences upon which to base the design and implementation of future biodiversity conservation and climate-change-adaptation projects.

EPP has achieved many outputs but has not achieved its anticipated outcomes: co-management agreements for protected areas and effective enforcement of environmental laws and regulations. However, it has contributed to changes in attitudes, knowledge and best practices through its support for local projects, sometimes in collaboration with the other four projects. EPP has provided extensive support for training and education, thereby achieving these behavioral changes while also creating technical capacity for conservation. Training and education generally produce unpredictable but beneficial effects, over many years. EPP's support for training and education, therefore, almost certainly will yield significant conservation results, eventually.

Although analyses and training in gender issues that affect conservation were incorporated in a systematic manner into EPP's activities, data is lacking on how they specifically contributed to the achievement of conservation outcomes and results. By strengthening the internal administrative and accounting procedures of several Dominican conservation NGOs, EPP has contributed significantly to long-term conservation in the DR. Again, the specific conservation outcomes and results from such strengthening cannot be measured, since it may occur well into the future, but almost certainly will occur.

EPP demonstrated that working through and with the MoE is difficult and time-consuming. It is not clear that its support for the MoE will eventually create a more effective MoE, given the constant turnover and political orientation of its decision makers. It appears unlikely that MoE will ever become an effective force for conservation in the DR unless a strong, effective, knowledgeable leader becomes a minister for a substantial period of time and forcefully changes its current institutional culture towards conservation of biodiversity.

EPP has shown that social, biological and economic research on biodiversity is vital for sound technical conservation practices and effective conservation policies. Without basic scientific knowledge about biodiversity, such as reefs, marine life and upland forests, and about the social and economic context that affect its conservation (or lack thereof), effective programming of biodiversity funds is impossible.

Recommendations for USAID

1. Support the MoE on the basis of clearly defined, easily measurable, negotiated targets for achievement of co-management agreements for specific protected areas and for enforcement of specific conservation laws and regulations;
2. Support specific actions to achieve coordination between the MoE and MoT, with the aim of linking the country's massive tourism industry to the management of its protected areas;
3. Request that EPP analyze the effect its provision of technical assistance and training in gender issues has had on the effectiveness of its actions in support of conservation. Then, use the findings of that study/assessment in the design of future biodiversity activities it may fund;

4. Ascertain the current institutional strengths and weaknesses of FUNDEMAR and CIBSE compared to its own standards for institutional strengths (USAID 2004) and provide resources to them to correct their remaining institutional weaknesses;
5. Identify the social, economic and biological research that is required in order to design and implement specific conservation actions in the DR that it may finance in the future and finance this research when required.

Overall Portfolio Findings, Conclusions And Recommendations

Positive Synergies

Findings

The USAID/DR biodiversity portfolio was not designed and implemented with the objective of creating synergies between projects or synergies between Dominican public and private institutions. Rather, their different funding sources, objectives, implementing partners and time periods complicated the creation of inter-project synergies. Consequently, the portfolio has not been able to capitalize fully on potential synergies between the projects that would have made them more effective and efficient.

Effective synergies did stem from partnerships between projects, NGOs and communities when they identified and supported economic interests that concerned local institutions and businesses. Success in addressing these economic issues, in turn, created incentives for regional and/or local government agencies to become more active and participatory.

Project partnerships with the MoE were based on specific shared objectives related to biodiversity conservation. These projects served as providers of specific services, agreed on with the government and implemented with the supervision of government agencies. However, the MoE's centralization of decision-making prevented the development of synergies from such partnerships. These partnerships did not cause changes in MoE policies and practices—especially its highly centralized decision-making processes—that are inimical to the creation of synergies for conservation.

Decision-makers in GoDR public institutions, such as the MoE, MoT and municipalities, tend to pursue short-term financial and political priorities that militate against the establishment of the national and local policies required to establish synergies between public and private sectors that would be beneficial for conservation of biodiversity. Yet the MoE, possesses centralized powers to make decisions that greatly affect the DR's ability to create the synergies at the local, regional and national level that effective, large-scale, permanent conservation of biodiversity requires.

The projects were unable to establish strong and long-term partnerships with grassroots organizations because of the short duration of the projects, lack of socio-economic and cultural studies to establish baseline information about local conditions, and lack of experience in community-based projects.

Conclusions

No single public or private Dominican institution has the skills, funds, or knowledge to plan and implement the multitude of actions that effective, large-scale, long-term conservation in the DR requires in order to counter the country's tradition of ceding to powerful financial interests and

the clarion of development. This leads to sacrificing environmental controls and gives rise to conditions that eliminate, degrade or threaten biodiversity.

The multi-project/multi-implementer approach resulted in some positive synergies between projects that led to greater development outcomes than might have been expected under a more unified approach. These positive synergies occurred because individual projects were able to identify stakeholders' specific interests and problems and provide them with feasible solutions more effectively than a more unified approach might have accomplished. However, the portfolio was able to create these positive synergies only on a small, local scale over a short period of time. The highly centralized, bureaucratic and politicized institutional culture of the MoE has made it difficult for the portfolio to create positive synergies that affect large geographic areas over a long period of time.

Recommendations for USAID

1. Design biodiversity projects to establish partnerships between Dominican public and private institutions, socioeconomic groups and economic sectors with the potential to create synergies that favor biodiversity conservation.
2. Design projects that can form the basis for exchanging expertise, personnel and experiences, in order to build permanent and fruitful synergies that contribute to successful project implementation and results.
3. Build on the strong foundation provided by the tourist clusters, while supporting a shift of CDCT to a technically competent, small coordination organization that supports the clusters.

Outcomes and Results

Findings

The biodiversity portfolio had four general anticipated outcomes: (1) more effective conservation in protected areas through co-management agreements; (2) increased enforcement of conservation laws and regulations; (3) increased contribution to conservation of biodiversity by tourism enterprises; and (4) changes in attitudes, knowledge and best practices regarding conservation of biodiversity.

While, the portfolio achieved more effective conservation in protected areas through the co-management agreements, overall, it was unable to establish this strategy as a routine that could be effective in a large-scale, permanent way that would ensure the management of Dominican protected areas for biodiversity conservation. Through the cluster strategy, the tourism industry has begun to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity, and there is considerable potential for it to increase this input, especially to conserve marine ecosystems and species. The portfolio also succeeded in changing attitudes, knowledge and best practices related to conservation of biodiversity on a small geographic scale among a limited population.

The design of four of the five projects gave little or no attention to equal access of men and women to project benefits. EPP did include considerable resources for technical assistance and training in gender issues. Data are unavailable to permit an accurate evaluation of the effect of gender roles on the success of the portfolio or on the conservation of biodiversity more generally.

Conclusions

The portfolio's successes in producing outcomes and results are due to (1) the technical competence and personal attributes of its technical advisors; (2) its provision of financial benefits or security of land tenure to community participants in small-scale conservation activities; and (3) the self-interest of some parts of the tourism industry in protecting its competitive international competitiveness by conserving marine and beach environments.

The portfolio's failures are due to: (1) an institutional culture in the MoE so dominated by short-term political and financial calculations that long-term conservation objectives become almost insignificant and professional staff initiatives are not only stifled but discouraged; (2) continued lack of wide-spread awareness and knowledge of the relationship between conservation of biodiversity and international economic competitiveness in the tourism and other important Dominican economic sectors; (3) weaknesses in the designs and implementation of the projects themselves, especially in their greater emphasis on bureaucratic procedures, reporting, theoretical training, meetings and workshops rather than on technically sound field activities to solve specific conservation problems with specific people and institutions in specific areas.

Recommendations for USAID

- I. Establish outcomes and results for future biodiversity conservation projects that combine biodiversity conservation with adaptation to climate change, especially in relation to the financial interests of the Dominican Republic's tourism industry;

Establish feasible, achievable outcomes and results for future biodiversity conservation projects on the basis of a thorough understanding of the specific socioeconomic and biological situation within a given region, in relation to reliable, up-to-date, easily measured baseline data.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

Findings

USAID's biodiversity portfolio demonstrated best practices for biodiversity conservation in offshore, reef marine, mangrove forest and lagoon, open marine and highland forest environments. To be successful, each demonstration had to be designed and implemented based on a thorough understanding a different set of biological, institutional, social and economic parameters and fit into the concerns and interests of the people who use the natural resources of these environments.

The demonstration projects clearly showed how best practices can benefit the tourism sector by conserving the resources, such as reefs and natural landscapes, which tourists pay to see. The portfolio did less to demonstrate to the agriculture, industry and energy sectors their dependence on abundant, reliable supplies of clean water.

The experiences of the biodiversity portfolio projects indicate that best practices must be constantly adapted to meet the needs of different and constantly changing biological, institutional, socioeconomic situation, but the portfolio did not establish mechanisms for performing the monitoring and evaluation that such adaptation requires. The portfolio was not designed to support preparation or implementation of large-scale, territorial land-use plans that integrate socioeconomic, institutional and biological factors that affect the conservation of biodiversity. It has begun to support this type of planning and implementation.

Training, through both one-time courses and through more permanent institutions, was given in conservation practices to many people, but the distribution of this training by subject area, geographical area and type of trainee is unclear. It is also not possible to determine the extent to which training is being applied to solve conservation problems.

Generally, the portfolio treated gender considerations mostly as a question of the relative participation in project activities and benefits of men and women, rather than analyzing the factors related to gender that threaten biodiversity and provide opportunities for its conservation.

Conclusions

One of the most relevant elements of success and lessons learned that could be applied to improve future biodiversity programming is that technical solutions must exist for protecting Dominican biodiversity. These solutions can only be applied on a large scale over a long period of time if they respond to financial and institutional interests. The tourism industry's incipient interest in conservation stems from its influence on the DR's international competitive position. However, the agricultural, industrial and energy sectors have not yet generally understood their dependence on the application of best conservation practices on a large geographic scale.

Another relevant conclusion is that best conservation practices result from constant, systematic research into conservation problems and solutions. The projects have used best practices developed on the basis of research done *outside* the DR. But a system for the research required to develop its own best practices must be developed and established within DR itself. The prospect of rapid climate change affecting biodiversity makes research that much more important to the island country

An element of success to be applied to future biodiversity programming concerns territorial planning. Biodiversity conservation will be effective to the extent that it affects large geographic areas and affects all land uses, not only the category respective of protected areas. Again, the emerging emphasis on climate change adaptation makes the implementation of biodiversity conservation within the context of territorial land use plans even more necessary than in previous years.

The portfolio gave less attention to the effect of gender issues on the conservation of biodiversity than these issues merit, since they almost certainly affect the achievement of project outcomes and results. Future programming should design projects that consider gender not simply in terms of equality for women, but consider how different segments of a community, broadly defined, possess different interests, uses and capabilities related to biodiversity and how those interests will affect the implementation of conservation activities.

Recommendations for USAID

1. The Mission should explicitly link future biodiversity programming to the financial interests of Dominican economic sectors, such as tourism, agriculture, energy and industry;
2. Use Dominican (local) institutions (research or academic) to perform the research required to establish reliable baselines and implement continuous scientific monitoring and evaluation of project activities;
3. Place future projects within the context of territorial land use plans and support the development of such plans when they do not already exist;

4. Program future climate change and biodiversity funds to build on the successful experiences of the biodiversity portfolio and avoid repeating its unsuccessful experiences.

Sustainability and Adoption

Findings

The biodiversity portfolio has demonstrated that the extent to which conservation practices are applied and adopted in the DR depends on the degree to which economic enterprises and the national government perceive them as necessary to maintain their international competitiveness and profitability. In particular, the portfolio's projects have shown that the Dominican tourism sector could compete more successfully internationally if it could effectively protect reefs and national parks and enforce environmental laws and regulations.

The portfolio has also demonstrated how important scale is to the conservation of biodiversity in the DR. For example, the conservation of a few hectares of reefs does little to conserve the country's huge marine areas. Therefore, the portfolio has demonstrated that land use planning and regulation, both in terrestrial and marine areas, is the basis for the sustainability and adoption of conservation measures.

The portfolio also demonstrates that Dominicans are the basis for the sustainability and adoption of conservation measures. Foreign universities, the USFS, international NGOS and the Peace Corps made important contributions to the projects. However, they cannot be the basis for sustainable conservation activities after the projects end or be expected to foment large-scale adoption of conservation practices.

The portfolio paid less attention to gender issues than their importance in achieving sustainability and adoption of conservation practices merits. Insufficient data prevent a more detailed analysis of how gender issues have and will affect the sustainability and adoption of conservation practices promoted by the portfolio.

Conclusions

In the DR, financial interests are the only reliable driver for adoption of sustainable conservation practices and actions. National and local public institutions operate with a time-horizon that is too short and with priorities that varies too much from the establishment of conservation practices, to make them reliable partners with USAID/DR projects for the long-term conservation of biodiversity.

Therefore, the achievement of sustainable, large-scale adoption of conservation practices, requires that private enterprises see them as an essential to their profitability and pressure national and local governments to enforce the environmental laws and regulations, do the territorial planning and regulation and finance the research that are required to achieve such sustainability and adoption.

Local public and private institutions must be the basis for achieving sustainability and adoption of conservation practices in the DR on a large scale. Foreign institutions can and should be considered as providers of technical assistance and training so that Dominican institutions develop their own capacity for doing the research and training that is required to reach adequate levels of sustainability and adoption of conservation practices.

Gender issues are undoubtedly important to achieving sustainability and adoption of conservation practices and should be given their due weight in the programming of future biodiversity funds.

Recommendations for USAID

1. Program future biodiversity funding to strengthen links between large-scale conservation practices and the financial interests of private Dominican enterprises which depend on their international competitiveness and profitability on biodiversity resources;
2. Program future biodiversity funding through Dominican institutions while using US institutions, such as universities and the US Forest Service, to strengthen and increase institutional and human capacity of Dominican institutions to carry out the research and implementation required for large-scale conservation;
3. Base future programming on thorough understanding of how gender issues affect the sustainability and adoption of specific conservation practices in specific geographic areas and socioeconomic situations.

Compliance with USAID Biodiversity Criteria

Findings

The projects in the biodiversity portfolio all complied with USAID biodiversity criteria. EPP, LMS and SFM Project documents stated explicit biodiversity objectives. The seed bank component of the PAPA/USFS was explicit in its biodiversity objective of maintaining the genetic base for reestablishing forest cover with native tree species of the DR, while the ecotourism component was more concerned with assisting communities to establish ecotourism businesses than with accomplishing specific biodiversity objectives. The DSTA/CDCT project, although potentially one of the most promising for achieving conservation objectives, was the least explicit in establishing specific biodiversity objectives.

The LMS and SFM projects, run by scientists, were the most deliberate in monitoring associated indicators for biodiversity conservation. LMS, SFM, and EPP most obviously intended to positively affect biodiversity in biologically important and protected areas. The EPP, DSTA/CDCT and PAPA projects did not provide mechanisms for measuring their effects on biodiversity.

Conclusions

The USAID biodiversity criteria do not require implementation of conservation actions within a favorable social, economic and institutional context. Therefore, projects that adhere to these criteria might not achieve conservation outcomes or results while other projects with no intent to adhere to these criteria could make significant contributions to conservation.

Recommendations for USAID

1. Program biodiversity funds according to the USAID biodiversity criteria, while at the same time ensuring that the proposed conservation activities are feasible given the socioeconomic, institutional and financial context within which they will be implemented;
2. Ensure that all biodiversity conservation projects do measure actual effects of the project on biodiversity itself, rather than simply measure inputs, outputs and outcomes.

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ANNEX B: EVALUATION SCOPE OF WORK

The scope is an external performance evaluation of the implementation of five USAID/DR biodiversity-funded projects. Two of these projects are still being implemented, while the other three were recently completed. While it will be important to gain an understanding of the effectiveness of individual projects within the DR biodiversity portfolio, the primary objective of this evaluation is to determine if and to what extent the multi-project/multi-implementer approach taken by the Mission led to greater development outcomes than might have been expected under a different approach. The evaluation should address the implementation periods of each Mission biodiversity-funded project; project specifics and time-frames are within the body of this RFTOP. Remaining within the level-of-effort of this contract, the selected evaluation team shall conduct two basic levels of evaluation: (1) undertake a performance evaluation that covers each project, and (2) evaluate across the projects to determine if there have been synergies amongst all five, or a portion thereof, leading to positive biodiversity conservation results within the DR.

The evaluation shall provide quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results (direct and indirect), cost effectiveness, and strengths and weaknesses of five USAID/DR biodiversity-funded projects. The evaluation findings will be used to inform the design of potential LAC/RSD/ENV biodiversity programming for Fiscal Years 2012 - 2017 and may be used to set the stage for integrating successful implementation strategies and/or biodiversity goals into future USAID/DR programming. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the performance of the USAID/DR biodiversity programs, specifically:

Analyze to what extent programs have been able to achieve stated (1) objectives, and (2) performance indicators

Determine if program strategies have been effective in achieving results and suggest improvements, if any, for future programming

Document best practices for each program and identify constraints or limitations faced during implementation.

Make recommendations for future LAC/RSD/ENV biodiversity programming utilizing a dispersed program model like that of USAID/DR; and incorporating successful strategies into other Mission programs and/or incorporating select biodiversity elements into other sector project aspects in future USAID/DR programming.

Analyze implementation of environmental programs to determine if there were synergies that allowed for program results that exceeded the sum of the individual programs

Fine tune program activities for the remaining two on-going projects

Investigate opportunities to integrate biodiversity conservation concepts into Mission Climate Change adaptation funding

Evaluate the management and sustainability of the programs

Identify which program components and aspects have been/are working well and why

The evaluation should provide pertinent information, statistics, and judgments to assist USAID/DR to understand what has been, and is being, accomplished technically and organizationally, and what relevant management, financial, and cost efficiency findings present themselves. The evaluation will help all involved to better understand the final results and contributions of the projects. USAID/DR requires this information per new Mission evaluation guidelines to better monitor programming. This evaluation will provide information about which results and outcomes have, or have not, been achieved and whether the projects worked with the appropriate stakeholders.

ANNEX C: LIST OF EVALUATION PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS		ORGANIZATION/ PROJECT
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS		
Eddy Silva		TNC
Francis Santana		DSTA/CTDC
Jose Enrique de Gomez Jose Manuel Montero Isabel Bonelli		Ministerio de Media Ambiente
Jerry Bauer		PAPA/DSTA
Lisette Gil		DSTA/CTDC
Rafael Collado		DSTA/CTDC
Winston Marrero		EPP
Alberto Rodriguez		Peace Corps Volunteers
Charles Beeker		LMS
Francisco Soto		Ministro de Cultura.Sección Sub-Aquatica
Rodrigo Parra Ferro		Peace Corps Volunteer/LMS
Bernabe Manon Rossi William Herrera		Presidente Plan Yaque/Jarabacoa Gerente Técnico Plan Yaque/Jarabacoa
Marta Fernandez		Escuela Ambiental y Recursos Naturales Jarabacoa
Patricia Lamelas		CEPCE/TNC
Don Melnick		The Sustainable Fisheries in Miches
Rafael Almonte		Ex Vice-Ministro de Medio Ambiente
Toby Bloom		PAPA/ DSTA
Yoni Rodriguez		PAPA/DSTA
Odaliz Pérez		USAID/DR
Indira de Jesús		TNC
Iris Perez		Misterio de Turismo
Francisco Nuñez		TNC
Patricia Abreu		Vice Ministra de Medio Ambiente
Antonio Cabreja		

FOCUS GROUPS

PARTICIPANTS	ORGANIZATION/ PROJECT
BARAHONA, HOTEL PLAYA AZUL CDCT	
Maltiano Moreta	Proyecto Cachote
Fernando Urbaéz	SOEBA
Rafel Nojano	Fundación Central Barahona-Consortio Americano Central
Julio C. Osorio	Plan BA
Jorge Brocca	Sociedad Ornitología de la Hispaniola
Elena Nunziatini	Cluster Barahona
Polivio Chirinos	Hotel Casa Bonita
Pedro Peña Rubio	Gobernador de la Provincia de Barahona
BAVARO, CLUSTER OFFICE CDCT	
Dionisio Aristy	Bavaro Cluster
Pablo Jaureguizar	Hotel Be Live
Narciso Herrera	Ministerio de Ambiente
Claudio Castro	Bavaro Cluster
Dionelis Beltre	Guia Recepcionista
Ernesto Veloz	Presidente, CTLA (Cluster Turistico La Altagracia)
Albania Martinez	Empresas Acuaticas
Elizabeth Aponte	Asistente Administrativa CTLA
Jhon Vasquez	Representante Empresa de Servicios Turisticos
Antonio Aponte	Association of Guides
Luz Maria	Artesana
Raysa Feliz	Representante Asociación de Prensa
BAYAHIBE, CLUSTER OFFICE EPP, CDCT	
Jean Christophe Maillet	Cluster-FUNDEMAR- TNC
Glen Brito Brito	Vice Alcadesa- FUNDEMAR- Cluster
Ana Garcia Sotoca	Directora Cluster
Yulibeth Correa	Coordinadora del Cluster
Heidy Santana	Arte Cuseco
Rodrigo Parra	Museo Viviente del Mar-Turismo-Peace Corp
Ruben Torres	Reef Check- PPA-FUNDEMAR
Patricia Lancho	Directora de FUNDEMAR

PARTICIPANTS	ORGANIZATION/ PROJECT
Lorenzo Hunt	Comunidad de Padre Nuestro
Alido Luis Baez	Arte Cuseco
Rachel Rijo	Arte Cuseco
CONSTANZA CITY CDCT, EPP, DSTA/PAPA	
Framan Garcia	Comunicación
Tito Montero	Ministerio del Ambiente
Julio Cesar de los Santos	Propaganda y Ministerio del Ambiente
Jesi Puyos	Ayuntamiento
Juan M. Tactuk	Safari
Jose Delio Guzman	Consejo Interinstitucional para desarrollo de Constanza
Maximino Herrera	PRONATURA
Juan Llamacho O.	PRONATURA
Nathalie Alcantara	Cluster Constanza
Yesenia Victoriano	Cluster
CONSTANZA,EL CONVENTO EPP, DSTA/PAPA, CDCT	
Jose Luis Castillo	EPP/Cluster/ Pro-Natura
Miladys Gerónimo	EPP/Cluster/ PAPA
Cecilia Almonte	Cluster
Carolina Santos	EPP/Cluster/PAPA
Marta Sepúlveda	Cluster
Bienvenido Ramirez	Cluster/PAPA
JARABACOA CDCT	
Luis Garrido	Presidente del Cluster
Jose Cruz	Cluster
Amos Martinez	Director Ejecutivo Cluster
Esperanza Marte	Cluster
Alta Gracia Ramirez	Cluster
Refael Caraballo	Cluster
MICHES SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES OF MICHES	
Justino Perez	CONATURA
Fausto Hernandez	Federation de Institutions de Miche (FEINMI)

PARTICIPANTS	ORGANIZATION/ PROJECT
Andrys Garrido,)	CONATURA Miches y Ayudamento (Alcaldesa
Juan Isidro Nunez	Unidad de Gestion Ambiental Municipal, Alcaldia
Wendy Perez Maldonado	Oficial de Pesca CODOPESCA (Consejo Dominicano de Pesca y Agricultura)
William Thomas	Cooperative Pescadores La Gina
Gregorio Aquino	Alcalde de Miche

**MONTECRISTI, SALON PARROQUIAL MONTECRISTI
CDCT**

Luis Rodriguez	Restaurante Doña Ana
Soneida Sugellas	Alcaldia Puerta Plata
Spenser Meridith	Sociedad Historica de Montecristi
Jose Luis Bouringa	Presidente Cluster
Alana Santana	Camera de Comercio
Vidal Cabrera	Cluster
Jetti Jesus	Consultor CDCT
Nicolas Andujar	Cluster
Jaramillio Perez	Hotel Marina de Mar
Carmen de los Suetos	Vice -Presidente Federacion Junta de Vecinos
Emilio Pérez	
Tania Garcia	Hotel El Morro
Genova C. Paulino	Presidente Junta de Vecinos Emilio Pérez
Pedro Palero	Ministerio de Turismo
Julio Molina	Prensa
Ceneida Peña	Junta de Vecinas EK

**PUERTO PLATA, RESTAURANT NEAR CLUSTER OFFICE
CDCT, DSTA/PAPA**

Yakaira Cid	Directora Cluster Puerta Plata (CDPP)
Fernando Cueto	(Teleférico Senderas)
Sixto Peralta	(CTPP-DSTA)
Ottoniel Regyes	Centro de Promoción Solidaridad Humanitaria (CEPROSH)
Sheila Calderon	(CEPROSH/DSTA)
Bayardo Gomez	(CEPROSH/DSTA)
Giovanni Ferreira	(CEPROSH/DSTA)
Don Ramiro	Lider del Secotr Los Dominguez

PARTICIPANTS	ORGANIZATION/ PROJECT
Emerito Almonte	Comunitario y Junta de Vecinos de los Dominguez
Maria de Leon	Federacion de Junta de Vecino
Gregory Borrough	Director Patronato Teleferico
Domingo Encarnacion	Sendero Loma Isabel
Don Rodolfo	Cursos J. Bauer Sendero Loma Isabel
Franklin Vasquez	Comunitario Participo Cursos de J Bauer
SAMANA EPP, CDCT	
Wendy Cisnero Alcalá	Alcaldía de Samana
Nicolás Medina	Cooperativa La Union
Jesús Chanel Diaz Abranson	Cooperativa La Union
Martin Hernandez	Cooperativa Espiritusanto
Carlos Riveros de la Cruz	Cooperativa Espiritusanto
Wilfredo Benjamin	Foro Ambiental de Samana
Iris Manuel Boyer	Cooperativa Bahia San Lorenzo
Carlos Gonzalez	Cooperativa Bahia San Lorenzo
Virgilio Mercado de Peña	Asociacion de Comunicadores de Samana
Tomas Beinvenido Diaz	CEBSE
Isidro Bone,	CEBSE
Diego Bock	Junta de Vecinos Luz de Dios

ANNEX D: EVALUATION MATRIX

	1. DESIGN	2. IMPLEMENTATION	3. RESULTS
CRITICAL QUESTIONS			
<p>(1) Did the multi-project/multi-implementer approach result in positive synergies between programs, thereby leading to greater development outcomes than might have been expected under a more unified approach?</p>	<p>1.1.1 How did the projects define different synergies? 1.1.2 Did the designs of projects provide for the creation and use of synergies?</p>	<p>1.2.1 What synergies can beneficiaries/implementers identify between the USAID projects? 1.2.2 What technical practices were shared by the projects? 1.2.3 How frequent were meetings between implementers? 1.2.4 Was training/TA from different programs complementary and reinforcing?</p>	<p>1.3.1 What technical practices were established through synergy between different projects? 1.3.2 Did geographic overlap of different projects contribute to the creation of synergies? 1.3.3 What development outcomes are evident in the field that can be attributed to synergies? 1.3.4 Would a more unified approach have achieved the same outcome/result more efficiently/effectively? 1.3.5 Did synergies between projects lead to larger scale, longer-term development results than otherwise would have occurred?</p>
<p>(2) Did the five programs achieve anticipated outcomes and results, especially in terms of changes in attitudes, knowledge and best practices?</p> <p>What factors explain the success or failure of achieving outcomes and results?</p> <p>a. Were the projects designed in such a way that all genders had equal access to project benefits?</p>	<p>2.1.1 What were the anticipated outcomes & results? 2.1.2 Was gender considered in the design of project activities & defining target audiences? 2.1.3 Whose attitudes and practices were targeted in project designs? 2.1.4 What mechanisms were planned for reaching the targeted audiences including gender issues? 2.1.5 How did the project designs intend to measure changes in attitudes, knowledge and best practices and effects of gender?</p>	<p>2.2.1 What audiences were actually reached? 2.2.2 What mechanisms were used for reaching the targeted audiences? 2.2.3 Were different mechanisms used for different audiences?</p>	<p>2.3.1 Which of the expected outcomes & results were partially or fully achieved? 2.3.2 Is it likely that these practices will continue and expand? Why or why not? 2.3.3 Do the best practices make financial sense to the beneficiaries? Do they cause financial or other costs? 2.3.4 Were attitudes, knowledge, practices changed? 2.3.5 Did other people copy the improved practices that you have adopted? 2.3.6 Did project outcomes lead to results, including gender equity?</p>

	1. DESIGN	2. IMPLEMENTATION	3. RESULTS
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CRITICAL QUESTIONS (CON'T)

<p>(3) What are the most relevant elements of success (best practices) and lessons learned that could be applied to improve future biodiversity programming (including consideration of programming affecting all genders)?</p>	<p>3.1 Did the project designs place the adoption of best programming practices within a relevant social and economic framework including gender? 3.2 Did the project designs utilize proven best technical practices? 3.3 Did the project design correctly identify the costs and benefits to potential beneficiaries of their adoption of best practices? 3.4 Did the project design provide for monitoring, evaluating and adapting?</p>	<p>3.2.1 Which best technical practices are relevant for future programming? 3.2.2 Which best implementation practices are relevant for future programming? 3.2.3 Were practices monitored, evaluated and adapted? 3.2.4 How was the introduction of best practices financed?</p>	<p>3.3.1 What best practices should be considered for future programming? 3.3.2 What “lessons learned” do final reports or evaluations report? 3.3.3 What are the main lessons learned? 3.3.4 Are the best practices replicable?</p>
<p>(4) Which program activities are likely to achieve sustainability and reach an acceptable level of adoption by beneficiaries (i.e. GoDR and relevant civil society stakeholders) and why?</p>	<p>4.1.1 What do the project descriptions and work plans say about sustainability? 4.1.2 Did the project design have specific sustainability objectives for each of the different groups of key participants (e.g. local beneficiaries, government, local government, etc.)? 4.2.3 Did the projects have explicit exit strategies? If so, what were they? 4.2.4 Were there measurement tools to monitor behavioral changes associated with the adoption of sustainable practices? 4.2.5 Did project designs calculate funding levels required for organizations to achieve sustainability?</p>	<p>4.2.1 Were expectations regarding sustainability clearly communicated to participants in the various projects? If so, how were these expectations communicated? 4.2.2 Did unexpected issues arise during implementation that affected the ability of the projects to achieve their sustainability objectives? If so, describe which those issues were. 4.2.3 Did the new best practices change costs and benefits to the beneficiaries?</p>	<p>4.3.1 Which program activities have achieved sustainability and why? 4.3.2 Which program activities have been adopted and to what extent and why? 4.3.3 Which type of beneficiaries adopted the practices? 4.3.4 Which type of beneficiaries were involved in achieving sustainability, why and how?</p>

	1. DESIGN	2. IMPLEMENTATION	3. RESULTS
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CRITICAL QUESTIONS (CON'T)

<p>5.0 Did each of the five recipients comply with the four Agency biodiversity criteria?</p> <p>5.0.1 Did the project have an explicit biodiversity objective?</p> <p>5.0.2 Were activities identified based on an analysis of threats to biodiversity?</p> <p>5.0.3 Did the projects monitor associated indicators for biodiversity conservation?</p> <p>5.0.4 Did the projects have the intent to positively affect biodiversity in biologically significant areas?</p>	<p>5.1.1 Did the project design explicitly use these criteria?</p> <p>5.1.2 Did the project have an explicit biodiversity objective?</p> <p>5.1.3 Were activities identified based on an analysis of threats?</p> <p>5.1.4 What indicator(s) of biodiversity conservation did the project design plan to use?</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>	<p>5.3.1 Were the explicit t biodiversity objectives met?</p> <p>5.3.2 Did the project produce a significant positive effect on biodiversity in space and time?</p> <p>5.3.3 Did the activities reduce the threats to biodiversity?</p> <p>5.3.4 Was the positive effect of the project on significant biodiversity measured?</p>
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SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS

<p>(6) What were the most successful aspects of projects for improving biodiversity conservation that were introduced by the projects?</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>	<p>6.3.1 Were some types of activities consistently more successful than others?</p> <p>6.3.2 Did the location, the institutions, the implementation, the type of activity make them more successful?</p> <p>6.3.3 Under what conditions would the successful aspects be replicable and expandable to a large-scale?</p> <p>6.3.4 How much would it cost to replicate the successful aspects of the projects?</p>
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	1. DESIGN	2. IMPLEMENTATION	3. RESULTS
(7) How effective was the technical assistance provided by Cooperative Agreement recipients in contributing to achieving program objectives?	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	7.3.1 Were some types of technical assistance consistently more successful than others? 7.3.2 What made some types of technical assistance more successful than others? 7.3.3 What preparations/conditions are required to make technical assistance successful? 7.3.4 Does the length of technical assistance influence its success?
SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS CONTINUED			
(8) What external factors influenced positive or negative results?	8.1.1 What do project documents say about the type of and influence of external factors? 8.1.2 Did the projects designs explicitly take external factors into account? 8.1.3 Did the project design correctly identify all of the principal external factors? 8.1.4 Could the project design have better analyzed and accounted for external factors?	8.1.1 How did external factors affect project implementation? 8.1.2 How did projects change implementation in response to external factors 8.1.3 Were the projects successful in overcoming negative external factors? 8.1.4 Did projects take advantage of positive external factors during implementation?	8.1.1 What should future projects do to handle external factors? 8.1.2 Can external factors be foreseen and managed or not? 8.1.3 What types of external factors are most likely to affect project results? 8.1.4 Should external factors be a primary factor in choosing project activities?
(9) How effectively have biodiversity-funded projects coordinated with GODR entities, private sector conservation/ tourism organizations/ NGOs and amongst USAID biodiversity funded activities?	9.1.1 Was coordination with GODR entities, private sector, NGOs and amongst USAID activities part of the project design? 9.1.2 Did the project design identify means of coordination? 9.1.3 Did the project design identify the other organizations with which to coordinate? 9.1.4 Was the project design after consultation with other organizations?	9.2.1 How much coordination occurred during project implementation? 9.2.2 Were the coordination events/meetings useful in furthering the objectives of the project? 9.2.3 What factors made it more difficult or easier to coordinate? 9.2.4 Were some types of activities easier to coordinate than others and why?	9.3.1 Coordination between what organizations proved to be particularly effective? 9.3.2 Is there a method of coordination that is more effective than other types? 9.3.3 Was coordination worthwhile from the point-of-view of the implementers or just a distraction from complying with USAID requirements? 9.3.4 How many organizations can coordinate effectively with each other?

	1. DESIGN	2. IMPLEMENTATION	3. RESULTS
(10) Was there ownership of project practices by the intended beneficiaries? Have beneficiaries increased their knowledge and changed their attitudes related to biodiversity conservation?	<p>10.1.1 What are this projects' distinguishable "practices"?</p> <p>10.1.2 What do project work plans and evaluations say about beneficiaries in terms of ownership of projects and changes in their knowledge, attitudes and practices related to biodiversity?</p> <p>10.1.3 Was it part of the projects' design for participants to assume ownership?</p> <p>10.1.4 Did the project design activities that target beneficiaries' biodiversity conservation behavior?</p>	<p>10.2.1 Were the projects implemented by the beneficiaries or for them?</p> <p>10.2.2 Was increase in knowledge and change in attitudes measured during implementation as a means of adaptive management?</p> <p>10.2.3 Were project practices adapted during implementation in order to increase ownership, knowledge and change in attitudes?</p> <p>10.2.4 Was there more ownership and increase in knowledge and change in attitudes in some practices because of the way they were implemented?</p>	<p>10.3.1 What portion of the target population feels ownership of practices?</p> <p>10.3.2 To what extent has increase in knowledge resulted in changed attitudes?</p> <p>10.3.3 Were the intended beneficiaries the actual beneficiaries?</p> <p>10.3.4 Were the changes on a scale that made a difference for conservation?</p>
(11) What evidence, if any, is there that biodiversity programming has directed attention to the concept of the sustainability of the country's biodiversity resources?(10) Was there ownership of project practices by the intended beneficiaries? Have beneficiaries increased their knowledge and changed their attitudes related to biodiversity conservation?	<p>11.1.1 Did the project designs provide for directing attention to the concept of sustainability?</p> <p>11.1.2 Was a baseline established in the designs for the degree of attention to the concept of sustainability?10.1.1 What are this projects' distinguishable "practices"?</p> <p>10.1.2 What do project work plans and evaluations say about beneficiaries in terms of ownership of projects and changes in their knowledge, attitudes and practices related to biodiversity?</p> <p>10.1.3 Was it part of the projects' design for participants to assume ownership?</p> <p>10.1.4 Did the project design activities that target beneficiaries' biodiversity conservation behavior?</p>	<p>11.2.1 During implementation were there systematic actions to direct attention to the concept of sustainability?</p> <p>11.2.2 Was the concept of sustainability clearly transmitted to the intended audiences?</p> <p>11.2.3 What groups of people were the intended audiences for the transmission of the concept?</p> <p>11.2.4 Were their measurements of the effects of the activities to transmit the concept and were these measurements used to adapt the activities?10.2.1 Were the projects implemented by the beneficiaries or for them?</p> <p>10.2.2 Was increase in knowledge and change in attitudes measured during implementation as a means of adaptive management?</p> <p>10.2.3 Were project practices adapted during implementation in order to increase ownership, knowledge and change in attitudes?</p> <p>10.2.4 Was there more ownership and increase in knowledge and change in attitudes in some practices because of the way they were implemented?</p>	<p>11.3.1 What policy reviews and number of by-laws have been released (related to environment and biodiversity management) as a result of this project?</p> <p>11.3.2 To what extent is the monitoring of endangered species practiced and/or inventories registered?</p> <p>11.3.3 Are there government officials trained and furnished with equipment for surveillance and control protocols?10.3.1 What portion of the target population feels ownership of practices?</p> <p>10.3.2 To what extent has increase in knowledge resulted in changed attitudes?</p> <p>10.3.3 Were the intended beneficiaries the actual beneficiaries?</p> <p>10.3.4 Were the changes on a scale that made a difference for conservation?</p>

	1. DESIGN	2. IMPLEMENTATION	3. RESULTS
(12) How can successes of Mission biodiversity programming be used to influence national, regional, and local governments of their appropriate role in biodiversity conservation?	<p>12.1.1 Was “influence” built into project design?</p> <p>12.1.2 Were the project activities designed in such way that could be replicable by other institutions?</p> <p>12.1.3 Did the project design target specific institutions operating at different levels?</p> <p>12.1.4 Did local government authorities participate in the design of the projects?</p>	<p>12.2.1 How did the projects influence governments during their implementation?</p> <p>12.2.2 Could project implementation have been changed to achieve more influence on governments?</p> <p>12.2.3 During implementation was the appropriate role of governments clear or not clear?</p> <p>12.2.4 Did local government authorities participate in the implementation of the project?</p>	<p>12.3.1 Have the successes been studied rigorously and documented well?</p> <p>12.3.2 Do the success respond to the interests of national, regional and local governments?</p> <p>12.3.3 Do the successes clearly indicate the role of local, regional and national governments in conserving biodiversity?</p> <p>12.3.4 What audiences do the successes have to convince?</p>

ANNEX E: KEY PROJECT DEFINITIONS

1. **Synergy:** Activities complement and reinforce each other across the USAID projects.
2. **Coordination:** how much and how well do the projects financed by USAID work together
3. **Sustainability:** keeps on going by itself after USAID funding ends
4. **Replicability:** can it be repeated at least in part in other places
5. **Success:** achieve the adoption of best management practices for renewable natural resources
6. **Outcomes:** Establishment of the condition(s) necessary to achieve conservation of biodiversity; for example, people have changed their knowledge, attitudes, and technical abilities.
7. **Results:** actual change in condition of biodiversity; for example, the population of an endangered species increases permanently

ANNEX F: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP GUIDES

CRITICAL QUESTIONS/ PREGUNTAS CRITICAS

1. **Did the multi-project/multi-implementer approach result in positive synergies between programs, thereby leading to greater development outcomes than might have been expected under a more unified approach?**

Key Informant

I. Cree que el enfoque de multi-proyectos y multi-implementadores resulto en sinergias positivas entre los proyectos? Y cree usted que si estos proyectos hubieran estado unificado como programa hubiera dado resultados mayores resultados.

Focal Group

I. Aqui han funcionado (decir número de proyectos y cuales).Creen que estos proyectos en los que ustedes han participado se han coordinado, se han relacionado lo suficiente como para lograr mas y mejores resultados positivos. Hubiese sido mejor que estos proyectos (número de proyectos) se ejecutaran como un solo proyecto?

2. **A. Did the five programs achieve anticipated outcomes and results, especially in terms of changes in attitudes, knowledge and best practices? What factors explain the success or failure of achieving outcomes and results?**
B. Were the projects designed in such a way that all genders had equal access to project benefits?

Key Informant

A. Cree que los cinco programas han alcanzado los resultados y productos previstos, especialmente en relacion ha cambios de actitudes, conocimientos y mejores practicas? Cuales son los factores que explican el exito o el fracaso para lograr los resultados y productos?
 B. Cree que los proyectos fueron diseñados de tal manera que todos los generos tuvieran igual acceso a los beneficios?

Focal Group

A. Aqui han funcionado (decir el número de proyectos). Cree que estos proyectos han cambiado sus actitudes, conocimientos y practicas?
 B. Han tenido la misma oportunidad hombres, mujeres y jóvenes?

- What are the most relevant elements of success (best practices) and lessons learned that could be applied to improve future biodiversity programming (including consideration of programming affecting all genders)?**

Key Informant

Cuales son los elementos mas relevantes de exito (las mejores practicas) y las lecciones aprendidas que podrian aplicarse para mejorar una futura programacion en el manejo de la biodiversidad (incluida la consideración de programas que afecten a todos los generos)?

Focal Group

Piensen ustedes que se han introducido buenas practicas y hay lecciones aprendidas que ustedes puedan utilizar para proteger mejor la biodiversidad?

- Which program activities are likely to achieve sustainability and reach an acceptable level of adoption by beneficiaries (i.e. GoDR and relevant civil society stakeholders) and why?**

Key Informant

Que actividades del programa tienen posibilidades de lograr la sostenibilidad y alcanzar un nivel aceptable de adopción por los beneficiaries (es decir Gobierno Dominicano y las partes interesadas de la sociedad civil) y por que?

Focal Group

Aqui han funcionado (número de proyectos financiados por USAID). Piensan ustedes que las actividades iniciadas por los proyectos se continuaran aun despues de que estos proyectos hayan terminado?

IMPLEMENTATION (KIIS)		
NO.	ENGLISH	SPANISH
1.2.1	What synergies can beneficiaries/implementers identify between the USAID projects?	Cuales son las sinergias que los beneficiarios/implementadores pueden identificar entre los proyectos de USAID?
1.2.2	What technical practices were shared by the projects?	Cuales son las practicas que fueron compartidas entre los proyectos?
1.2.3	How frequent were meetings between implementers?	Con que frecuencia se reunieron?
1.2.4	Was training/TA from different programs complementary and reinforcing?	Fue la capacitacion o asistencia tecnica complementaria y fortalecedora, enriquecedora?
2.2.1	What audiences were actually reached?	A que audiencia se llevo?
2.2.2	What mechanisms were used for reaching the targeted audiences?	Que mecanismos se usaron para llegar a la audiencia afectada?
2.2.3	Were different mechanisms used for different audiences?	Se han usado diferentes mecanismos par alas diferentes audiencias?
3.2.1	Which best implementation practices are relevant for future programming?	Cuales son las mejores practicas de implementacion que relevantes para futuros programas?
3.2.2	Were practices monitored, evaluated and adapted?	Fueron las practicas monitoreadas, evaluadas y adaptadas?
4.2.1	Were expectations regarding sustainability clearly communicated to participants in the various projects? If so, how were these expectations communicated?	Fueron las expectativas relacionadas con sostenibilidad claramente comunicadas a los participantes de los diferentes proyectos? Si la respuesta es si, como se comunicaron estas expectativas?
4.2.2	Did unexpected issues arise during implementation that affected the ability of the projects to achieve their sustainability objectives? If so describe which those issues were.	Surgieron situaciones no esperadas durante la implementacion, que afectaron las habilidad de los proyectos para alcanzar los objetivos de sostenibilidad? Si la respuesta es si, describa cuales fueron?
4.2.3	Did the new best practices change costs and benefits to the beneficiaries?	Estas nuevas practicas cambiaron los costos y beneficios de los beneficiarios?

RESULTS (FOCUS GROUPS/ OBSERVATIONS)

NO.	ENGLISH	SPANISH
1.3.1	What technical practices were established through synergy between different projects?	Cuáles son las prácticas que se establecieron a través de la coordinación y complementariedad de estos proyectos?
1.3.2	Did geographic overlap of different projects contribute to the creation of synergies?	Cree que la superposición de los diferentes proyectos contribuyó a la creación de coordinación?
1.3.3	What development outcomes are evident in the field that can be attributed to synergies?	Cuales son los resultados que se pueden ver en el campo, que se pueden atribuir a esta coordinación?
1.3.4	Would a more unified approach have achieved the same outcome/result more efficiently effectively?	Cree que una visión más unificada (de todos los proyectos) hubiese permitido lograr el mismo resultado o mucho más?
1.3.5	Did synergies between projects lead to larger scale, longer-term development results than otherwise would have occurred?	Cree que esta coordinación entre los proyectos son de largo plazo y mejor escala, que de otra manera no hubieran ocurrido?
2.3.1	Which of the expected outcomes and results were partially or fully achieved?	Cuales resultados esperados fueron logrados totalmente o parcialmente?
2.3.2	Is it likely that these practices will continue and expand? Why or why not?	Cree que estas practicas pueden continuar y expandirse después de finalizado el proyecto? Por qué sí o por qué no?
2.3.3	Do the best practices make financial sense to the beneficiaries? Do they cause financial or other costs?	Cree que estas “ mejores practicas”, tienen sentido económico? O estas prácticas ocasionan más costos financieros ú otros costos?
2.3.4	Were attitudes, knowledge, practices changed?	Cree que los cambios en: actitud, conocimientos o mejores practicas son importantes?
2.3.5	Did other people copy the improved practices that you have adopted?	Cree que los cambios en actitudes, conocimientos o mejores practicas que ustedes practicaron han afectado a la gente involucrada directamente como resultado de las actividades del proyecto?
2.3.6	Did project outcomes lead to results, including gender equity?	Cree que las actividades del proyecto condujeron a los resultados esperados, incluyendo la participación de todos (hombres, mujeres y jóvenes)?
3.3.1	What best practices should be considered for future programming?	Cuáles son las mejores prácticas que deben considerarse para futuros programas?
3.3.2	What do final reports or evaluations report say about “lessons learned”?	
3.3.3	What are the main lessons learned?	Cuáles son las principales lecciones aprendidas?
3.3.4	Are the best practices replicable?	Son las mejores prácticas replicables, (imitables)?
4.3.1	Which program activities have achieved sustainability and why?	Cuáles actividades del Programa son sustentables?
4.3.2	Which program activities have been adopted and to what extent and why?	Cuáles actividades del Programa han sido adoptadas y hasta que punto y por que?
4.3.3	Which type of beneficiaries adopted the practices?	Cuáles son los beneficiarios que han adoptado estas prácticas?
4.3.4	Which types of beneficiaries were involved in achieving sustainability, why and how?	Quienes son los beneficiarios que han estado involucrados contribuyendo para que los cambios sean sostenibles? por qué y cómo?