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Implementation of Integrated Watershed Management Practice for the Pantanal and Upper Paraguay River Basin

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1. A Geographic Information System (GIS) was created to support managing and monitoring activities as well as reduce the trafficking of wild animals.

2. Creation of the Taquari River Source State Owned Park, which extends over 30,000 sq. km, as well as the definition of area for the Pantanal-Cerrado Ecological Corridor.

3. In order to achieve better integrated environmental management, the project developed a transboundary system which covers 19 munipilaties in the Apa and Miranda river basins and will contribute significantly to the water quality within the region.

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the Project was to promote the formulation and implementation of a Strategic Action Program (SAP) for the Integrated Management of the Pantanal and Upper Paraguay River Basin (UPRB). Project activities were designed to enhance the environmental functioning of the predominant ecological system, protect the wetland biodiversity, and implement strategic activities that address the root causes of environmental degradation. The strengthening of basin institutions responsible for water resources management in the basin, the generation and dissemination of information, and the integration of environmental concerns into economic development activities on a sustainable basis were key elements of this project.

RESULTS: PROCESS

INDICATOR#1 (Participating in the formulation of the SAP)

The project was conceived at the time that the Brazilian Water Law was being approved, which placed special emphasis on the implementation of decentralized and participatory management of water resources at the basin level. The National Water Resources Management System which was put in place provides for the establishment of policies, plans, and regulations for the control of water use and the preservation and restoration of water resources.

The project preparation phase was based on the assumption that the most effective way to actively involve main stakeholders in the project was to involve them directly in the formulation and execution of the project activities. To this end, three regional workshops were organized in the UPR basin and involved more than 200 people representing 60 institutions, while all demonstration projects and studies remained under the coordination of the institutions that originally presented them. For the execution of its activities, the project counted on consultancies that provided additional opportunities for stakeholder involvement, and a total of 116 public events took place, involving more than 4,530 participants and 258 organizations representing the federal, state, municipal and private sectors.

The public consultation process on the SAP process comprised 5 public events, with the participation of 563 stakeholders, and special effort was made to coordinate actions with already existing plans, programs, and initiatives in the basin. Efforts were also made to promote international cooperation, with 4 workshops being held involving authorities from Bolivia and Paraguay from 2003-2005. The involvement of stakeholders provided a common space and meeting point for interaction and discussion among the different sectors working in the basin. The established collaboration with universities, research institutes, NGO's, consultants, local governments, and governmental institutions created the basis for the institutional arrangements required to implement the SAP.

INDICATOR#2 (Conservation of the Pantanal)

The project supported the creation of the Taquari River Springs State Park, in addition to passing a bill that created the Mato Grosso de Sul State System of Conservation Units.

INDICATOR#3 (Integrated Watershed Management Program Implementation)

Conducted two international seminars on the Upper Paraguay River Basin and the Pantanal in 2003, as well as strengthening the CIBHAP-P to facilitate better management in the area.

RESULTS: STRESS REDUCTION

INDICATOR#1 (Water Quality and Environmental Protection)

The sub-project developed a water quality management program for the city of Corumba, a program to regulate urban growth in the city and protect headwater areas, along with a program for social mobilization and another one to develop an information system for the UPRB. A similar program of preventive and corrective measures was put into place for the areas around the city of Cuiaba.

INDICATOR#2 (Aquaculture as an alternative to river harvesting of fish in the Pantanal)

Rules and procedures for the establishment of sustainable fishing activities in the sub-basin were formulated, organized a collective system for the capture and commercialization of live bait fish and developed harvesting techniques that have low environmental impact.

RESULTS: WATER RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

INDICATOR#1 (Development of measures to rehabilitate riparian lands/MT)

Created a map of areas in the UPRB that required rehabilitation, implemented the Protection/Recuperation Plan of the headwater areas in question for the protection of natural resources, stimulated the creation of a management committee for the watershed, as well as implementing the process of rural property licensing and systematizing the process through which toxic materials used for agriculture were received. There was also a comprehensive management program put in place in the upper Miranda and Apa river basins to manage solid residue.

INDICATOR#2 (Identification of the need for an integrated hydrologoical management model for the UPRB)

Developed manuals for the estimation of surface and groundwater resources in the UPRB, identified potential conflicts in water use and environmental rights, and developed a flood control program.