

Summary of the UNDP – Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean Biodiversity Initiative Ecuador Consultation: Biodiversity and Ecosystems: Why These are Important for Sustained Growth and Equity in Latin America and the Caribbean: 24-25 November 2009

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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) held a consultation in Quito, Ecuador on Tuesday, 24 November and 25 Wednesday, November, as part of a regional initiative entitled: “Biodiversity and Ecosystems: Why these are important for Sustained Growth and Equity in Latin America and the Caribbean.” The two-day consultation was held with representatives from various organizations in order to prepare a national report regarding the role of biodiversity and sustainable development in the long term economic wellbeing of the nation and the region. The first in this series of consultations took place in Mexico City, Mexico on 13-14 August, the second in Lima, Peru on 24-25 September, and the third in Caracas, Venezuela on 4-5 November. Similar consultations are scheduled for: Bogotá, Colombia on 30 November - 1 December, Guatemala City, Guatemala (consultation of Central American nations) on 3 - 4 December, Brasilia, Brazil (date to be determined), and Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago (consultation of Caribbean nations) on a date to be determined. Each consultation seeks the input of national experts and stakeholders.

The Ecuadorian consultation included participants from: national, state and local governmental bodies; conservation groups; the academic and scientific communities; and representatives from the Amazonian and highland regions of Ecuador. On Tuesday morning, representatives from the UNDP, the National Secretary of Development and Planning (SENPLADES in Spanish), Ministry for the Coordination of Cultural and Natural Patrimony, and the Ministry of Environment made presentations on the regional initiative and on the importance of incorporating biodiversity and sustainable development into the national agenda. In the afternoon, participants broke out into four working groups to identify and discuss emblematic cases and policies in Ecuador, their implementation and coordination, and consider how these projects have impacted development and equity within Ecuador, identifying the specific areas of: employment; green market opportunities; production; and the alleviation of poverty. At the end of each session (two were held in the afternoon), a representative from each group made a presentation to all participants with the floor opened up for further discussion after each presentation. These deliberations continued on the following day, with participants breaking out into two larger working groups. Each group was given a case study, in either Paraguay or Indonesia, and asked to discuss the insights generated from each case and how they would apply to their country. In the final plenary, participants were asked to recommend key dissemination strategies and identify areas of concern in order to strengthen the regional Initiative.

Brief History

The 2008-2011 UNDP Regional Programme for LAC has identified the Initiative as one its strategic regional areas. Organized in partnership with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and the Secretariat for the Convention on

Biological Diversity (CBD), the initiative aims to convince key policy- and decision-makers in the region to invest in and maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The Initiative's primary product will be a Regional Report examining a number of issues including: financial and economic benefits and costs to countries from sustainable ecosystem management; the contribution of biodiversity and ecosystems to sectoral production and outputs; their economic values; and the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in promoting growth and equity. The report's production is supervised and guided by a Commission for Biodiversity, Ecosystems, Finance, and Development composed of distinguished regional political leaders, economists, businessmen, and civil society representatives. The report's quality control will be overseen by a technical advisory committee of regional, finance, and economic experts, while much of the report's actual preparation will be done by a central technical committee composed primarily of environmental economists. With a view to reflecting the diverse experiences and views of the LAC nations, a series of consultations across the region was initiated in August 2009 to seek direct input from representatives of governments, civil society, indigenous communities, academia, and the private sector. The outputs of these meetings will be incorporated into the report.

The final report is intended not only to contribute to national policies but also to global and regional key policy events that will be held in 2010, including: the Tenth Conference of the Parties to CBD; the International Year of Biodiversity: Latin America, Ibero-American and European Union/Latin America and Caribbean summits; and post-Kyoto negotiations. The Initiative also will contribute to a global study being undertaken on Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity sponsored by the European Commission and the German Ministry of Environment.

MEXICO CONSULTATION:

The first consultation under the Initiative took place in Mexico City, Mexico on 13-14 August and was attended by: representatives of government entities; conservation groups; indigenous communities; the academic community; and Pemex, the state hydrocarbons firm. Participants held discussions on four themes: contributions of biodiversity and ecosystem services to LAC's development and equity, paradigmatic cases of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services in Mexico and their impact on development and equity, strategic areas and mechanisms to promote investment in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services, and inputs to the regional report.

PERU CONSULTATION:

The second consultation under the Initiative took place in Lima, Peru on 24-25 September and was attended by representatives of: government entities; conservation groups; the academic community; organizations representing Peru's regions; indigenous communities; and associations and companies in the forestry, finance, hydrocarbon, fishery, and ecological product sectors. The opening plenary was addressed by Peru's Environment Minister, Antonio Brack Egg. Working primarily in two discussion groups, participants examined four themes: contributions of biodiversity and ecosystem services to LAC's development and equity, paradigmatic cases of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services in Peru and their impact on development and equity, strategic areas and mechanisms to promote investment in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services, and inputs to the regional report.

VENEZUELA CONSULTATION:

The third consultation under the Initiative took place in Caracas, Venezuela on 4-5 November and was attended by: representatives of government entities; conservation groups; associations and companies representing the hydroelectric, hydrocarbons and fisheries sectors; and members of the academic community. Participants divided into four working groups and were asked to consider the following themes; contributions of biodiversity and ecosystem services to LAC's development and equity, paradigmatic cases of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services in Venezuela and their impact on development and equity, strategic areas and mechanisms to promote investment in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services, and inputs to the regional report.

REPORT OF THE ECUADORIAN CONSULTATION

Opening Plenary

In the opening session of the consultation, Yolanda Kakabadse, former Minister of the Environment, welcomed all those present and introduced the speakers; Claudio Providas, Regional Representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); René Ramirez, National Secretary of Development and Planning (SENPLADES in Spanish); Guido Mosquera, Vice-Minister, Ministry of the Environment; and Maria Fernanda Espinosa, Minister for the Coordination of Cultural and Natural Patrimony. Kakabadse also introduced the team of representatives for the Initiative; Carlos Eduardo Young, member of the regional report's preparation team and Professor of Economics, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; Alex Pires, Programme Officer, United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP); Economist Oscar Zapata, consultant to the United Nations Development Programme; and María José Baptista, Project Manager to the United Nations Development Programme.

In his welcome speech Claudio Providas stressed the importance of the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services as ways to guarantee equity and sustainable development. Furthermore he suggested that the nation should strive to create a dialogue between the various Ecuadorian actors. He highlighted that the purpose of the consultation was to gather information and insight from the experiences in Ecuador which in turn would strengthen the regional report. Alex Pires then introduced the initiative, detailing that it was a collaborative effort between UNEP, ECLAC, and the Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). He explained that the LAC region was at a key moment in regard to setting the course towards the preservation of biodiversity. He outlined that the main objectives of the report were to find linkages between ethics, equity, and economy. René Ramirez then addressed the participants. He pointed to the importance of incorporating biodiversity into the strategy of building of post-petroleum economy towards the goal of creating a green economy. Ramirez suggested that the Gross Domestic Product indices should expand to include new variables such as ecological footprint, equity, and intergenerational justice. He highlighted the necessity of generating bio-knowledge. He stressed that the steps taken in Ecuador would reach beyond national borders. Additionally he spoke about a paradox which Ecuador now faced. At the moment when the country has the greatest potential to advance change, Ecuador is faced with a severe brain drain due to high levels of outmigration caused by asymmetrical power relations with other nations. In order to think about long term planning and the continuity of any environmental program, Ecuador needed to focus on keeping this generation in flight in order to be able to advance real change and be able to create an economy that bases itself on knowledge. In the end Ramirez stressed that the necessary investigations which would inform future projects needed to be collaborative between public and academic institutions. Furthermore he indicated that the Bank of the South should provide funding for these investigations.

Guido Mosquero added to the discourse stating that the Ministry of the Environment had the responsibility to formulate key political strategies regarding the conservation of biodiversity, highlighting the interrelation between conservation and the economic sectors. He referred to the New Constitution of Ecuador which is set to include rights for nature geared towards generating sustainable development. This, he stated, was part of a fundamental framework for future politics. He outlined six key political goals of the Ministry: a reassessment of the criteria of value in regards to the goods and services of the nation, the efficient use of the nation's natural resources, an adequate adaptation to climate change, the prevention of pollution, support for public participation, and the strengthening of institutions.

Maria Fernanda Espinosa outlined that one of the challenges of creating a sustainable society which supported a good quality of life, a right for all citizens, rested in clearly defining what was meant by 'good life' and sustainability that went beyond those definitions generated by international agencies. She stressed that it was clear in the current economy that capitalism was not sustainable and that Ecuador should move towards establishing a new kind of economy. She stated that the distinction between culture and nature was artificial since culture was a product of human interaction with nature. To clarify her point, she asserted that the existence of native forests today were the result of human decisions or interventions. In this way biodiversity represented the interconnections between cultural and natural patrimony.

Session One: Contributions of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to the Region's Development and Equity

In the first session of the morning, Carlos Eduardo Young provided an orientation regarding the goals and underlying rationale of the regional Initiative. He stated that the divisions between development and equity need not exist as a plan towards the conservation of biodiversity, and that ecosystem services could incorporate both objectives and even contribute to the economic growth of nations. In addition to outlining the principal objectives, which range from broad reaching dissemination of the findings in the report to presentation of those findings in such a way as to convince key decision makers of the cost effectiveness of discarding Business as Usual (BAU) practices, Young pointed out that these practices faced a number of barriers. Among the obstacles were the lack of human, technical, and financial resources in LAC, the competition over land, depleting forests and accelerating the loss of biodiversity, and the lack of governmental legislation which effectively controlled and optimized access to natural resources. He indicated that the goal of the final report is to make key decision and policy-makers aware that sustainable ecosystem management (SEM) is important for economic growth, and that SEM could alleviate conditions of poverty, as well as find methods to increase the social pressure on these decision makers to pursue SEM practices. He explained that the purpose of the consultation was to gather information that would increase the effectiveness of the regional initiative citing that Ecuador was exceptional in that the present government clearly understood the comparative advantage of biodiversity and development. He then outlined the report's methodology as identifying the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services for economic growth and equity in focus sectors; agriculture, including products, agro-forestry and cattle ranching; forest management, including wood, non-wood products and CO2 emissions; the fishing industry, including aquaculture and sports; tourism, both domestic and international; and protected areas.

Participants questioned the composition of the report preparation team and suggested that the final report would benefit from the inclusion of academics from other fields. A suggestion was also made that the report include an assessment of the comparative economics of different consumption practices. While making concessions to concerns that were voiced, Young reminded participants that the goal of the consultation was to collect this kind of constructive feedback.

In the second half of the first session, economist Oscar Zapata presented preliminary findings which highlighted key Ecuadorian cases that were emblematic of the benefits of and challenges to the conservation of biodiversity. He explained that the national report would be submitted to the research team that is preparing the regional report. As part of the presentation, Zapata highlighted four key areas related to biodiversity conservation; native forests, water, agriculture, and tourism, in order to highlight the differences between BAU and SEM practices. Examples ranged from a cost assessment of the eradication of non-native goats on various Galapagos Islands to the relationship between forest preservation, pollination, and crop output.

In the ensuing discussion participants expressed concern that the case studies in Ecuador were not conducted over long enough periods of time and as such did not provide for in-depth analysis of the actual benefits. Another participant expressed concern that, for local farmers, the choice of using a sustainable method of eradicating plagues was not yet economically viable and as such the report needed to find a way to demonstrate the short and long term benefits to these agriculturalists. Another participant highlighted that in order to make the investment in the transition from BAU to SEM practices attractive to policy makers, the report needed to demonstrate future alternative markets. In terms of its dissemination, participants strongly suggested that the findings of the report be made accessible to the public in a language that was clear and easily understood as well as make the personal benefits clear.

This session was followed by a presentation of the participants.

Session Two: Emblematic Cases of Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services in Ecuador and their impact on Development and Equity

In the afternoon, participants divided into four working groups to identify which Ecuadorian experiences and policies could be considered emblematic and should be mentioned in the regional report. At the end of the group discussions, a representative from each group presented the key cases that they had identified following the schematic distributed by the UNDP staff.

Dania Quirola, Advisor for Quality of Life and the Environment of the Ministry of the Environment, reported that Group One identified four cases as emblematic. The group had divided these cases according to the different regions of Ecuador. The cases were: the management and conservation of biodiversity in the agro-forestry cultivation of coffee in San Placido (coastal region); a collaborative governmental project on the preservation of quality and quantity of water in the valley of Guayllabamba (northern highlands, urban); an inclusive conservation system of the ecological preserve of the Achuar (Amazon region), and the preservation of the high barren plains and agro-diversity in Chimborazo (central rural highland region). Quirola suggested that Ecuador had some 200 projects that could prove of interest to the Initiative. The group suggested that the criteria for what constituted an emblematic case be outlined more clearly and came up with criteria which included; changes in attitudes among a population in their relation to their environment; the possibility to be

replicated, innovative focus, initiatives regarding the conservation of ecosystems, and environmental recovery initiatives.

Zornitza Aguilar, representative of Ecociencias, Ecuadorian Foundation of Ecological Services, presented the findings of Group 2. Participants in this group considered six cases from various regions to be emblematic; the Jambi Kiwa Foundation (Chimborazo Province) which generated community support, recovery of ancestral practices, and the encouraged the participation of women; the Chankuap Foundation of Pastaza and Morona Santiago which supported links between different actors to offset the costs of production; FAPECAFES of the Loja, El Oro, and Zamora provinces, an organization of small coffee producers; the Kallari Association of the Napo province which cultivated and produced organic chocolate products; and lastly the alternative cultivation of mushrooms in the Napo Province which received support from GTZ.

For Group 3, Alfredo Carrasco Valdivieso, Project Coordinator for the Fourth National Report to the CBD, presented a few examples that had been discussed which included; the project undertaken by the National Institute for Investigations of the Agricultural and Livestock Industry (INIAP in Spanish) to develop germ banks in 1984 and which also keeps genes of other biodiverse organisms. Valdevieso also reported that the group had discussed projects that focused on sustainable practices and the preservation of the mangroves in the Manabi, El Oro, and Guayas provinces.

Julio Zambrano, representative of the Ministry for the Coordination of Political Economy, gave a presentation for Group 4, but conceded that a number of the cases that they had identified had already been discussed but gave special mention to Posanoda, a microfinance project which produced plantain chips and marmalade, and was run collectively by women in the region of Loja.

One of participants pointed out that all of the projects discussed were evidence of the classic economic model based on the primary sector; and, therefore, precluded the inclusion of emblematic cases which extend beyond said model. Additionally, participants identified the following as key ideas to be promoted: nutritional sovereignty, improved quality of life, association formation processes, recuperation of ancestral practices, and administrative capacity building at the local level for projects that make way for future local appropriation. Participants also suggested the regional report could contribute to the preparation and adoption of proper policies.

Session Three: Strategic Areas and Mechanisms to Promote Investment in Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services

During the last session of the afternoon, the four working groups were asked to identify: strategic sectors for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services; opportunity costs and existing barriers to sustainable management; how best to provide incentives to invest in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services; and innovative financing mechanisms towards these ends. After the group discussions, a representative from each working group presented to the rest of the participants. A general consensus was reached during the third session that more collaboration needed to exist between academic and public institutions as well the need to make the language of the report accessible to the general public and decision-makers. Additionally participants pointed out that science and scientific development were the major axis on which all strategic sectors for the conservation of biodiversity hinged and that, in the case of Ecuador, these should be reinforced.

Ricardo Tapia, representative of the Ecuadorian Office of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), presented for Group 1. Participants in this group outlined, in order of priority, the following five strategic sectors; conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity, integrated management of water resources; nutritional sovereignty, which guarantees the right to a healthy, nutritious and culturally appropriate diet; ecotourism; and bio-knowledge.

For Group 2, Manuel Bustamante, Director of Investments and Projects in the Southern Region of SENPLADES, identified that within biodiversity initiatives, the preservation of ecosystems should be the top priority as these impacted all the economic and social sectors. The group cited as barriers the overdependence of the state on fossil fuels as well as the lack of clarity in current legislation, stating that hyper-regulation does not necessarily generate clear agendas. The group cited three strategic sectors as ecosystems, which included environmental services, water, CO₂, tourism; species preservation, and genes, defined as bio-technology and bio-prospecting. In terms of financial mechanisms the group suggested greater participation from the private sectors, a reduced dependency on the state, as well as more collaboration between the state and the academic institutions in regards to technological development and applied investigations.

Bruno Paladines, Director of Project Administration and Community Development, presented for Group 3. Participants in this group identified the three strategic sectors as agriculture, tourism, and forestry, in the inclusive sense given the links with resource management of water and energy. In terms of agriculture, the group stressed that exports would remain important but this should be coupled with a greater understanding of health and agro-diversity, suggesting that agricultural products should be organic. In terms of tourism, tourists should be given a greater vision of Ecuador that moves beyond the attraction of the Galapagos Islands. This should be reflected in promotions distributed in different countries.

For Group 4, Felipe Serrano, representative for the Podocapus Biosphere Reserve of El Condor, presented the list of strategic areas in order of priority. First on the list were water resources because this had an impact on all sectors; second, sustainable tourism, which had the potential to distribute wealth more broadly and, if managed well, did not deteriorate resources; third, coastal and marine resources, a key export and wealth generator, and lastly bio-commerce, bio-technology, and bio-production, given that Ecuador is one of the most diverse nations, this could provide national and regional advantages. In terms of barriers the group cited the lack of proper regulation, coordinated policies, and weak institutions.

Session Four: Discussion of Case Studies

On Wednesday morning, the facilitator presented an overview of key topics from the previous day. After her short review, participants contributed a few additional points. First among these was the need to include specific variables in regards to emblematic cases that would help generate a new model for development. Additionally any emblematic case study should include input from the political decision-makers as most cases were initiated by the civil society and not the state. This presented the problem of whether or not these kinds of projects could be sustained by the state. Furthermore political decision-makers should participate in analyzing which local governments have the capacity and intention to follow innovative methods. As well, there should be an overall increase in the sharing of information across all sectors of society.

Participants were asked to convene in two working groups. Each group was given a The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) case study, one on ecosystem service payments (PES) access in Paraguay and the other on motivating Indonesian authorities to adequately protect Leuser National Park in Aceh Province through studies on the economic losses. The groups were asked to consider the lessons from each case and ways in which they might relate these to the context of Ecuador.

Group 1 was asked to review the case study on Indonesia. Katiuska Miranda (SENPLADES) suggested that in order for the economic assessment of biodiversity loss to be compelling, there needs to be a greater visibility of the benefits of natural resources and the costs that will be avoided if ecosystems are properly maintained. Participants were concerned that making a compelling case needed to move beyond the economic benefits but rather find other forms of intrinsic value in the assessment. Additionally the benefits needed to be defined in relation to various levels, both national and regional. The group highlighted that the technical or scientific language of the reports needed to be translated to a more common one so that decision-makers could easily access the information. Furthermore the group stressed that the environmental services be managed by its users and that political entities should intervene to prevent environmental infractions.

Milton Callera, of Achuar nationality, presented for Group 2, which had reviewed the TEEB case study on retribution for environmental services in Paraguay. In response to the question on whether PES schemes have worked in Ecuador, participants stated that according to the Ecuadorian Constitution, natural resources are not subject to appropriation. Some argue that this forbids any PES scheme. However, they expect this could be interpreted differently once specific regulation (laws, and others) is in place. Participants provided certain examples of existing schemes that were implemented through the government (not private individuals). The competition for payment has contributed to divisions within communities as individuals tend to pursue their own interests. However the prospect of collective rights versus individual rights may have more traction and should be considered within the recognition of constitutional rights. Each project should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Jose Vicente Troya indicated that these systems could eventually become perverse incentives creating social rupture, if not well construed. In terms of the requirements for the population to consent to payment for environmental services, there should be a process for effective participation. It was stressed that the consent of the population should be acquired before any project is undertaken. Also, it was said that PES schemes should include a cost-benefit analysis. The group also highlighted that in order for these schemes to work, the diversity of cases needed to be understood and the proper mechanisms needed to be in place depending on the situation. This critique is aimed at the complications of replicating similar projects in diverse regions. Participants pointed out the importance of follow-up mechanisms and co-responsibility in order to promote long-term sustainability of the system. At the end of the presentation, Callera stressed that among the indigenous communities biodiversity is understood differently and turned a critical eye on organizations that produced texts that did not result in anything tangible.

At this suggestion the facilitator reiterated a concern that had been expressed at various points throughout the consultation as to what purpose the report would serve. Additionally participants suggested that a focus on preventative measures should be stressed in the report. Participants also indicated the need of changing a punitive vision of the response to environmental damages for a more preventive one, in all productive sectors, or rather, preventative investments.

Session Five: Inputs to the Regional Report

During the last session on Wednesday, the two working groups were asked to reflect on three main questions; what are the principal arguments for promoting biodiversity and ecosystem services for generating growth and equity; how best to convince decision-makers of the need to invest in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services as cross-cutting axis in national development plans; and what action should be taken to disseminate the regional report? Following the group discussions, the working groups presented to the participants.

Laura Altimirano (MAE) spoke for Group 1 and stated that the value of biodiversity should also be understood in terms of spiritual value. The group suggested that the government should take advantage of the environmental crisis and climate change in order to send a message to citizens and implement a preventative model. Additionally the state should articulate with territorial divisions. The group suggested that the report should strive to reach all audiences and generate a shared responsibility between all citizens in its efforts towards conservation. Lastly the group reiterated the need for the recuperation of ancestral knowledge and its implementation at the national level. Felix Matt (NCI) added that until people in all communities shared an emotional relationship with the natural environment, they were not going to assume responsibility. Projects should aim to raise consciousness among all people if the initiative were to work.

The facilitator pointed out that the recovery costs from the damages caused by El Niño reached close to US\$ 3 billion, a large portion of which could have been prevented if ecosystems in various regions had been in good condition.

Group 2 reported that the principal arguments should be that biodiversity is a common good for all people. Furthermore biodiversity conservation has the potential to generate investments, stimulate production, equality, and provide for all the elements for a good quality of life (buenvivir). Within this argument, a need for a different development model should be stressed and that a new transitional economy can be guided by conversation of biodiversity and ecosystem preservation. In order to convince key decision makers, the report should take aim at strategic organizations in each governmental body, such as the Environmental Ministry in Ecuador. The benefits and services should be clearly outlined and a code of coexistence between humans and nature should be elaborated. Environmental education at all levels of society should become a permanent element of state policies. This may have the benefit of maintaining political pressure from social groups. Additionally a star project should be undertaken which incorporates broad reaching participation and which is cast as maintaining a territorial advantage for the country. Lastly a strategy for dissemination was discussed and participants emphasized that a communication strategy needed find the connections between biodiversity, daily life, and culture. The report should also be made available to other regional forums and make sure it is included in the agendas, such as the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

After the presentations, another participant contended that the regional report should place emphasis on shared ecosystems, such as the Andean and Amazonian regions or the coastal strip, given that there is an urgent need to place them under strict conservation regimes. Furthermore, participants mentioned the direct incidence of biodiversity conservation over cultural preservation. One of the participants questioned the role of current consumption patterns and the need to change them as a means to achieving a social economic model based on the solidarity principle. A participant pointed out that native species are no longer being consumed given the difficulty in maintaining ancestral practices. This will at the same time have a significant

economic effect on a large number of rural communities. Finally, participants agreed that biodiversity valuation exercises should not only include economic valuation but other intrinsic values.

Closing Plenary

In the closing plenary, Kakabadse invited participants to brainstorm on ways to enrich the regional report, strategies for its distribution, and ways to make it more impactful. On these points, participants suggested that the report should:

- Be distributed widely and present significant cases that are compelling to key decision- and policy-makers;
- Generate strong social pressure on these decision makers;
- Identify niches in the global market for agro-biodiverse and organic food products;
- Include an analysis of consumption, so that decision-makers anticipate demand for greener options as it is precisely hyper-consumption that is depleting natural resources;
- Highlight the most fragile ecosystems and connect these to best practices that can be undertaken;
- Include the scientific and technological benefits that would be generated by investigations of biodiversity and identify the value in increasing bio-knowledge;
- Include compelling visual elements;
- Create a Presidential Commission to link, within the new Financial Architecture Plan, economic and environmental policy. Promote a collaboration between the Commission and the Report;
- Make the language of the report accessible and clear to broader populations and politicians;
- Suggest that environmental education should be incorporated into national policies;
- Highlight the importance of biodiversity, not only for potential economic growth but also for the Buen Vivir elements as defined by the Ecuadorian Constitution;
- Outline how certain practices can be incorporated into the design of a new political economy
- Take advantage of multilateral and multiregional fora, such as MERCOSUR and UNASUR, for greater distribution;
- Highlight the ecosystems shared across the region's borders;
- Strive to make regional areas free of pesticides for the production and export of organic products;
- Outline ways in which the state can enter into what has heretofore been largely civil society based initiatives, promote state action and financing for conservation;
- Encourage bilateral efforts between different LAC countries, such as the organic soy product export from Bolivia to Venezuela;
- Bring private business into the discussion to develop links between the academia, the state and the private sector; and
- Include emblematic cases from the GEF Small Grants Program.

The facilitator asked participants to provide detailed information of the emblematic cases discussed in the consultation and/or make themselves available for follow-up so that these cases could be included in the national report that was being prepared by Oscar Zapata.

The consultation came to a close at 1:30pm.