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MANAGING FRESHWATER INFLOWS TO ESTUARIES

Workshop Summary: Proceedings of "The Influence of the Yuna Watershed on the Estuary of Samana Bay"

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Workshop Summary

The Influence of the Yuna Watershed on the Estuary of Samana Bay

**Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
21 September, 2004**

The workshop was convened by TNC/DR, CRC/URI and CEBSE and brought together the Directors and technical staff from key institutions, such as INDRHI, Department of Biology/UASD (University Autonomous of Santo Domingo), CIBIMA (Center for Biological and Marine Studies, UASD), and the Ministry of Environment (Protected Areas Office, Office of Coastal Resources, Office of Environmental Information and Natural Resources, Office of Soil and Water).

Below we highlight some of the principal reactions and comments made by participants during discussion.

On a number of occasions participants emphasized that they would like to see that the project produce practical results and strengthen planning and policy.

The importance of collaboration was also highlighted in order to generate the best product possible with limited resources. TNC/DR is working with INDRHI and SEMARN to sign an inter-institutional MOU in support of the project. DIARENA (Office of Environmental Information and Natural Resources in the Ministry of Environment) also expressed support for the project, including the possibility of conducting land use/land cover change analyses with spatial information technologies.

Another project just starting with a similar focus was brought to the attention of the group with the suggestion that we meet to learn more about it and explore opportunities for collaboration. This is an eighteen-month project executed by INDRHI in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank with a focus on identifying watershed/coastal priorities.

There was interest in seeing that the project improves understanding of the links between the sources of pressure and ecological impacts in the Bay.

Dr. Gerald, Director of CIBIMA/UASD, suggested that the project should identify and perhaps focus on hot spots of biodiversity in Samana Bay

The potential for alternative development scenarios to occur in the watershed and bay was noted as an area of concern with regard to future impacts on the watershed and Samana Bay. Another concern is the absence of regulations and oversight in the construction of cabanas and access roads in the mountains of the upper watershed.

Suggestions for other information needs, studies and activities included:

- Socioeconomic data (including population)
- Map of potential land use (land use plan)
- Survey of community awareness of the watershed and natural environment
- Oral history of the watershed to collect local knowledge
- Seismology in the region of the watershed

A list of key stakeholders for the combined watershed/bay area was developed as part of a break-out group exercise:

- Communities
- Teachers
- Town managers
- Elected officials
- Fishermen
- Churches
- Port authority
- Congressmen
- Neighborhood associations
- Producer associations
- Tourism sector
- Navy
- Local NGO's

Finally, participants identified an extensive list of additional available information:

1. Plan de Manejo y Gestion de los Haitises, 1992. Four volumes. These volumes have information on the whole zone, including maps and syntheses of earlier studies. Should be available at Protected Areas Office or the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation.
2. Documents of the GEF initiative prepared by CEBSE, 1997/98
3. Cornell studies on mangrove change (contact: Lourdes Brache at Cornell)
4. CEBSE description of the coastline and characterization of ecosystems (mangrove, seagrass, corals), 1993/94
5. Aerial photos of the Bay. The earliest are from the 60's. DIARENA
6. CIBIMA study of plankton using a network of 35 monitoring stations and 3 levels (depth) of samples, 1982/83. CIBIMA analysis of turbidity, salinity and nutrients in the same network of monitoring stations, 1993. Nina will try to locate the summary report from this data analysis.
7. Studies conducted as part of phase 3 of the AGLIPO project
8. Study of Piedra Gorda, INDRHI
9. Study of heavy metals from the Falconbridge mine, 1996-98. Two reports: one conducted by UASD, the other by UCAMIMA (sponsored by Falconbridge)
10. Study on changes in the path (meandering) of the Yuna over 40-year period. Dr. Manon, Department of Geology, UASD
11. Corps of Engineers groundwater report, 2003
12. Information on groundwater, follow-up with Manon. Subsec. Suelos y Aguas, Departamento de Cuencas Hidrograficas/Geotecnia: Report on groundwater quality in the watershed
13. Informes de los consejos de manejo de las cuencas hidrograficas de Blanco y de Camu (Subsec. de Suelos y Aguas)
14. University of Florida study of Samana Bay with students, 2002

15. Management plan of the Camu and Blanco rivers (Blanco plan is not ready yet)
16. UASD- Studies (student theses) on the Bay fishery and fishery of the reservoirs of the Hatillo and Rincon dams
17. IMPA- Study on parasites, including information on lead contamination in the Bay
18. Environmental impact studies prepared for construction of the dams
19. IMPA- Report on possible causes of mortality of fish in the Bay and Hatillo reservoir

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