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MANAGING FRESHWATER INFLOWS TO ESTUARIES

Workshop Summary: Proceedings from "Sharing the Results of the Evaluation of the Impact of the Yuna River's Watershed on Samana Bay"

Francisco Núñez



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Report of the workshop sharing the results of the evaluation of the impact in the Yuna river's watershed.

The workshop was held at the Fundación Campesina Hacia el Progreso de Bonaó's facilities, during February 17-18, 2006. A total of 36 participants attended the activity in representation of several organizations. Among these organizations were: Club Hermanas Mirabal, Asociación Nuestra Señora de Fátima, Nuevo Amanecer, Junta de Vecinos Los Pomos, Asociación San José, GRUSCOA, Unión de Jóvenes Ecologistas, CEBSE, Federación CHP.

The event started at 8:00 PM on the 17th with an exchange of information between all the participants. Topics such as: reforestation in the area, land legal property, rehabilitation of the Federation's physical facilities, environmental problems with Falconbridge, mining impacts in Cotuí and the local road construction, were discussed. The next day the agenda proposed for the workshop was carried-out (see the attached agenda). The TNC's Team was integrated by Angel Ripol (socio-economic component), Antonio Ortiz (aquatic component) and Elianny Dominguez (Marine component).

A. List of key actors (organizations) proposed by the participants to be contacted/integrated into the project (some of them already in, others to be contacted).

La Federación de Campesinos hacia el Progreso.

Nearby communities: Los Quemados, Los Pedregones, Brisa del Yuna, Tireo, Junta de Regante de Bonaó.

El movimiento de campesinos comunidades unidas y los campesinos de Los Haitises, Juntas de vecinos del área de interés como la Junta de Vecinos de la ribera del Yuna

La Federación de Junta de Vecinos La Pascuala, Samaná

Fundación Lomas Verdes

Asociación de Jóvenes Ecologistas

Iglesias de la zona

MCCU

Comité Comunitario COBIDese

NAPA

Junta Agropecuaria del Bajo Yuna

CEBSE

Los pescadores de Sánchez, de Samaná y de Hatillo.

COMUSA comité comunitario Sancho

ASESAL Asociación comunitaria eco turística de salto del limón

CODOCATE

Asociación de Dueños de Barcos de Samaná.

El Gobierno Dominicano (Secretaria de agricultura, Turismo, Medio Ambiente, Ayuntamientos Municipales, la CDE, INDHRI, etc.)

El Distrito Educativo de las diferentes zonas

FalconBridge

INAPA y sus corporaciones en las provincias.

Zonas francas, la nueva esta en la entrada de Falconbridge que van a tomar agua de la cuenca cerca del río Yuboa.

B. Proposed activities by the participants to be implemented in the near future.

1. To carry out awareness workshops with the participation of companies of the free zone.
2. To support the Federation of Farmers so that it manages to establish agreements with the larger commercial companies of the zone.
3. To establish a Directive Committee in Bonaó, that will be responsible to follow up the project in this locality.
4. To carry-out projects of economic solutions to the black water problem.
5. To improvement the treatment plants that exist at the moment in some cities and towns of the river Yuna basin.
6. To hold forums with the community organizations in the zone, in which the technicians of the government authorities participate to explain the impacts of some agricultural practices on the water resource.
7. To use mass media to make aware the local population on the subject of black waters and the impacts that it has on the human health, aiming to get the collaboration of all the citizens.
8. To make more workshops in Bonaó, Constanza and other localities of the zone to continue socializing the project, specially aiming the community organizations.
9. In the long term, to create committees to support the reforestation activities involving the youth associations like the Youth Ecological Association and others.
10. To face the problem of the black waters that is unloaded directly to the sources of water. To promote alternatives like the latrines or ecological baths that in addition produce installment (exists local experience in the construction of such). To work with the Juntas de Vecinos.
11. To implement a campaign directed to the children, to support the efforts of the Basic Education within the Secretariat of Education. In the Education Centers there is an environmental committee directed by teachers and young people, for those who can be involved in campaigns of education of the community.
12. To make the pertinent contacts with the Education District so that it recognizes or authorizes organizations like the Federation of Farmers and other similar institutions, to organize the 60 labor hours that must make the high school students (the signature of the Forest Management office should be required).
13. To ask the Secretary of Education to execute awareness campaigns on the contamination of the water, this can be work through the local schools. Emphasis should be placed in children of 4 or 6 years that are excellent receivers of this type of information. Also it is important to adapt the education campaigns to the situation of each community (if they are agriculturists, or they are fishermen, etc.).
14. The INDHRI has an education program which is called "the Culture of the Water". The program includes the presentation of several related subjects and the training of teachers so that they serve as multiplying sources. Lic. contact Juan Francisco Saldaña (next to planning), telephone 809-532- ext.3594.

15. To manage so that the institutions that work in the zone can offer direction through programs in the mass media, that serve like means of propagation and diffusion.
16. To create at public places the disposal of diapers or pampers whose volume is considerable.
17. To establish which is the minimum volume that must reach at the bay of Samaná in order to maintain a balance between fresh and salty water. This should be supervised with the responsibility of the Secretariat of Medio Ambiente and the INDHRI.
18. To create new groups that follow up the implementation of present projects and of new ones. There are around 15 organizations in the watershed basin that can assist with those new groups.
19. To take advantage of the proposed production and use of organic fertilizer, since it constitutes an economic proposal. In Samaná there is a project that produce organic fertilizers from garbage.
20. To come up with a solution to the problem of the plastic wastes, due to its great volume and to its persistence in the environment. Some attempts of recycling have been made in the zone. For example, the Foundation of Moscoso Puello has a machine that uses the wasted plastic to produce flowerpots. The possibility of an agreement can be raised.
21. To raise and educate farmers on agricultural practices that are sustainable, like the implementation of parcels with barriers, to avoid the erosion and the contamination.
22. To establish a work plan with activities, including workshops for the different actors from the zone, in the short and long term, settling down priorities.
23. To create a system for direct communication between the TNC team and local beneficiaries/actors, preferably by electronic mail.

B. Findings/recommendations of the TNC team.

Through the direct interchange with the participants the TNC team was able to determine and know the environmental and the social problems that the community has being facing. We considered that the community of Bonao has a level of excellent integration and awareness, and in addition it maintains close relations with some communities and associations of the province of Samaná. All the previous will allow the implementation of environmental projects more easily with the approval and collaboration of the communities in those two areas of the country.

Considering the concerted effort of the community of Bonao to surpass the numerous problems they have faced, it would be very important to propose feasible projects that they will really implement, always avoiding raising false expectations in the population. –

The community of Bonao wishes to be involved more actively in the project, especially in the accomplishment of the different proposed solutions. Also, it is necessary to incorporate the populations located/living in the low and medium part of the river basin. This positive desire of the community is a solid base and of great importance that must be taken into consideration as soon as possible for implementation of activities.

The participants are conscientious of the vital roll that has the Environmental Education in the solution of many of its problems. Again, this level of conscience of the population is vital for the implementation of activities aiming to the solution of environmental problems in the region. We have to consider this aspect to be effective in the execution of the project.

The representatives of the province of Samaná also expressed their desire to implement activities in their province, focusing the efforts in the fishing communities. It would be very beneficial to the project to promote interchanges between agriculture of Bonao and fishermen of Samaná, so they will see the importance of their efforts in the protection of the Yuna watershed in connection with the Samaná basin.