

1. Natural Resources and Environment

a. Strategic Guidelines

Vision of the Government The MPNRT includes the environmental objectives of the current Government with reference to: 1) protecting the environment, in order to develop, conserve and use it for the benefit of present and future generations; 2) developing a potential for ecotourism and conservation of the national biological heritage; 3) achieving the participation of the different sectors that compose civil society in the process of decision-making.

Cooperation between the Public Sector and Civil Society. Environmental management and land-use regulation require close cooperation between public institutions at the central level and municipal governments in order to make viable and to harmonize the activities entrusted to them and to NGOs, OPDs, community groups, businesses and educational centers.

Decreasing Hydrological Risks. An urgent task is to decrease the hydrological and geomorphological risks associated with the passing of Mitch through immediate activities to rectify the course of drainage in the middle and upper basins and in the valleys, in order to reduce and/or avoid the negative impacts of the next rains.

Environmental Planning. The premises and principles of environmental planning need to be incorporated into the sectoral programs and projects of reconstruction, in accordance with the provisions contained in the General Environmental Law and its regulations, in the Law of Municipalities and in the Health and Engineering Codes.

Decentralized Land-Use Regulation. Flexible and progressive guidelines and basic strategies will be formulated. These will favor local participation in municipal land-use regulation for urban and rural areas, and will take into consideration natural threats and allow for the design and introduction of basic elements, using watersheds as the foundation for environmental planning.

Removal of subsidies that Harm the Environment. The gradual removal of subsidies that harm the environment, such as credit policies and rate structures that do not include the costs of environmental management, would be appropriate. This measure has proven to be one of the most cost-effective means for sustainable management of natural resources.

Consolidating the National System of Protected Areas of Honduras (SINAPH). The decentralized operational consolidation of SINAPH, and its expansion as a repository of environmental and biodiversity services, is proposed. This strategy will include mechanisms for co-administration and management by local entities (municipalities, NGOs, community organizations, educational centers, etc.) and, in some special cases, by entities of the central government.

The Role of the Educational System. In order to achieve effective citizen participation in environmental management, the educational system, formally and informally, must include the theme of the environment within the framework of a strategy oriented toward changing

attitudes and fomenting the adoption and application of the premises of land-use regulation and environmental management.

b. Specific Objectives

- ◆ Incorporate the environmental dimension and the management of natural risks into the design and implementation of the programs and corrective measures of reconstruction and transformation, in order to ensure their technical, socioeconomic and financial viability.
- ◆ Organize the use of space and land in an integral manner at the municipal level, by respecting economic, social, cultural, ethnic and environmental values, and by including the activities of prevention, mitigation and preparedness against future natural disasters.
- ◆ In the long run, hydro-geomorphological and ecological systems in general, soil productivity, and environmental services in the middle and upper basins and other strategic ecosystems will be recovered and maintained, through programs of integral management of natural resources and protected areas, managed and implemented at the local level.

2. Risk Management: Prevention and Mitigation of Disasters

a. Strategic Guidelines

The hurricane has demonstrated the need to adopt a new risk-management model that includes as a fundamental element a **National Emergency System**, responsible for establishing and developing a national capability to take action in all areas related to disaster prevention, including the reduction of vulnerability, preparedness, response, and restoration. Several coordinated activities are required to make this system operational:

- ◆ **Modernization of the relevant legal framework**, with a preventative and integrated focus (before, during and after). A new law and related dispositions are needed to make such a focus viable.
- ◆ **Strengthening of the institutional and participatory structures**, directly responsible in these areas, centralized and decentralized, providing them training and technical support, especially in their initial stages. The law would provide for the establishment of a Permanent Executive Directorate for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, as well as the creation of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Units within the institutions, charged with integrating risk management into these institutions' normal activities.
- ◆ **Local and participatory focuses**. The new law would include various interrelated aspects, relative, for example, to soil use and the organization of certain public services, for which up-to-date and detailed knowledge about social, cultural and economic conditions in each region and local community would be required.

b. Specific Objectives

- ◆ Establish an organized, permanent and efficient system for preventing and mitigating disasters.
- ◆ Promote coordination and negotiations among various social actors and institutions for the reduction of vulnerability.
- ◆ Support initiatives for cooperation developed in the Central American arenas, as well as the creation of a Framework Law that would allow for the establishment of regional systems for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Attention.

c. Financing

To confront the challenges of protecting natural resources and the environment, financing in the amount of US\$617.9 million is required. Of this amount, US\$590.5 million is needed from external sources and US\$27.4 million will be the local counterpart contribution. The funds would be used for protection of natural resources (US\$336.7 million) and for prevention and mitigation of disasters (US\$281.2 million). (See the summary table on page 26.)

E. Democratic Participation in the MPRTN

Honduras entered into a sustained process of democratic transition in 1981. Hurricane Mitch found this process in a phase of full consolidation, as evidenced by institutional and electoral-system reforms as well as the design of formal and informal channels of participation by various sectors of civil society in strategic areas of national development. Other important aspects of democratic participation where advances are evident include the decentralization of public functions, the battle against corruption and measures associated with increasing transparency, strengthening of the justice system, and activities to eliminate gender, ethnic and class discrimination.

The crisis generated by the disaster has consolidated the will of Honduran society to strengthen mechanisms of reconciliation within a framework of broad citizen participation. Many communities responded to the crisis with a determined attitude of cooperation and consensus-building in a swift and efficient manner. Moreover, the responses to the crisis have come in large measure from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private development organizations (PDOs). These have strengthened their structures and their role as promoters of citizen participation, with ample external support.

The success of the MPNRT and of its objective of obtaining rapid, equitable, sustainable and participatory socioeconomic growth will depend in large part on long-term efforts to strengthen the processes of democratic participation in Honduran society.



a. Strategic Guidelines

The MPNRT has been designed on the basis of a broad concept of democratic participation, conceived as an operational link between the organizations of civil society, the State and private enterprise. It includes participatory democracy at the local level, within a process of administrative decentralization. Participation, as an indispensable element in the consolidation of the rule of law, includes such important themes as the following:

Perfecting the democratic political system. The process of reconstruction and transformation of Honduras should be accompanied by greater advances in the consolidation of a legal and institutional framework for the participation of the various sectors of society in the election of citizens to decision-making positions in the government. In addition, the exercise of participatory democracy should be compatible with the more efficient use of the country's resources.

Strengthening the administration of justice. An efficient and reliable administration of justice is important not only to strengthen personal security but also to achieve other objectives of the MPNRT. In this respect, the country should be able to rely on a strong and modern Judicial Branch that can exercise the administration of justice in a manner compatible with socioeconomic development, citizen participation and equity based on gender, ethnicity, educational level, income or any other consideration.

Guarantees to personal security. The MPNRT emphasizes management and control of crime as well as the need to confront its causes. It is recognized that the modernization of the National Police Force and the judicial system will not be sufficient to significantly improve personal security, unless the principal causes of delinquency are confronted, especially at the level of unemployment and underemployment of young people.

Decentralization of government programs. The process of development of participatory democracy is taking place for the most part on the local level. The MPNRT will support mechanisms for participation, such as Open Town Meetings used by the Honduran Fund for Social Investment (FHIS) to prioritize the construction of small social-infrastructure projects, and other programs focused on low-income populations, and for community participation in the implementation of the Honduran Project for Community Education (PROHECO), which promotes decentralization, not only in decision-making about programs and public budgets but also in the transfer of responsibility to the citizenry and organizations of the civil society.

Support for fora of organized civil society. The success of the MPNRT is directly related to the active participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of activities carried out to confront this national crisis situation, as a valuable complement to the State in the social and economic development of the country. In this context it is especially worth mentioning the incorporation of the National Convergence Forum (FONAC) into the preparation of the MPNRT, as well as that of other representative organizations, such as NGOs, ethnic groups, farmers, urban workers and business people.

Incorporation of women into the process of socioeconomic development. The MPNRT considers women to be a central focus in the process of development. It emphasizes not only aspects of equity with relation to the distribution of benefits generated

by economic growth, but also the need to include the capabilities of women as an indispensable element in the intergenerational transmission of education and health, including reproductive, neonatal and childhood health. Also important is the potential for women to participate in the creation of micro and small businesses. The MPNRT likewise recognizes the willingness of women to cooperate with civil groups to seek answers to community problems.

Incorporation of ethnic groups. A basic postulate of the MPNRT is the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and blacks. The Plan will support the economic and social rehabilitation of these minorities, taking advantage of their traditions in community organization under informal leadership, and respecting their autonomy to forge their own paths of development.

b. Specific Objectives

- ◆ Incorporate into the phases of implementation and monitoring of the MPNRT various mechanisms to ensure the effective participation of the citizenry in programs and projects, keeping in mind sector-specific circumstances and actual abilities to efficiently perform these tasks.
- ◆ Promote, in conjunction with political organizations, reforms to the political system that help perfect the democratic system.
- ◆ Implement policies and programs for the prevention of violence and crime, taking into consideration the international success these programs have had when they were designed, implemented and monitored by the community itself, as well as the high social rate of return of violence-prevention activities.
- ◆ Promote necessary legislative changes so that women and minority groups might have equitable access to the benefits of the programs and projects of reconstruction and transformation. In this respect, support will be given to proposals such as the Law for Gender Equity and the creation of a National Council for Ethnic Groups to serve as a forum for consultation, participation and problem-solving.

c. Financing

To guarantee an adequate level of democratic participation in the process of implementing the reconstruction and transformation of Honduras, financial requirements of US\$94.9 million have been estimated. Funding expected from external sources totals US\$90.6 million, of which US\$47.1 would be grants and US\$43.5 million, loans (see summary table on page 26).